

Be there for your child, experts tell parents

Hetal Vyas | TNN

Bangalore: Three suicides in two days by teenage students in the city have come as a wake-up call for parents. They have left a question mark on parenting skills and emotional support available to children in our society. Child counsellors and psychologists feel the suicides portend a breakdown of communication and confidence between children and parents.

Says Swarnalatha Iyer, consultant psychologist: "Today's parents are providing their children with everything, except guidance. Children need parental love and care more than their money. Children are burdened with peer and academic pressure. If they don't get emotional support from parents, their mental health will be weakened."

Children today don't get guidance from their parents. "Parents should build confidence in children. At home, children should be made comfortable to discuss their problems with parents. They need emotional security," she adds.

Seconding Iyer, Meera Ravi, child counsellor, Prerna Academy, says: "Children are under a lot of pressure. If parents don't understand them, who will? Parents should learn to acknowledge child's emotions and their needs. What they need is unconditional love and support. Just tell your child you are readily available for them whenever they need you."

Dr K John Vijay Sagar, associate professor, child and adolescent psychiatry, Nimhans, says: "Parents should spend quality time with children. Listen to their talks and keep encouraging them. They should try and find out if a child is facing academic or peer pressure or is comfortable at home."

"It is important for parents to avoid giving harsh punishment to children. In case a child has to be punished, parents should give him or her reason for the same," he asserts.