

“Managing Behavior Problems in Adolescents – New Challenges”

We have a great pleasure in organizing a summit of school principals, counselors, child development sisters in charge, community leaders and teachers on **“Managing Behavior Problems in Adolescents – New Challenges”**.

It was organized in partnership with Institute of Counselor Training Research and Consultancy India (ICTRC) and a joint initiative of Ave Maria Convent Negombo on 2nd of July 2018. It was a great opportunity to gather as school principals, counselors, community leaders and those who handle adolescence of this era. It was a memorable day for all of us.

Welcoming ritual was well organized and guests were welcomed officially.

The input sessions were delivered by Dr. Ravindran, an international well-known resource person from India.

“Youth today love luxury, have bad manners, no respect for older people and talk nonsense when they should be working.” This was what Shakespeare wrote about adolescents and youth in the 16th century. Even in the 21st Century this description seems to fit adolescents or so the adults think. While researchers today have dismissed the notion that adolescence is an inherently challenging period of development, educators and parents seems to have retained it. Despite adults’ negative perception about adolescents, they are often energetic, thoughtful and idealistic with a deep interest in what is fair and right. It is not the adolescents who are at fault but the contemporary socio-cultural environment.

Today’s adolescents are growing up in a rapidly changing social, cultural and educational environment. They are confronted with the new age of information, communication and entertainment. The electronic media is setting new norms of lifestyle. Materialistic culture has assumed monstrous proportions. All these put tremendous pressure on adolescents. This is a crucial period when adolescents need proper guidance, support of caring adults and good role models. In the absence of these, adolescents become rebellious, aggressive, violent, anti-social and indulge in all types of high-risk behaviors. As a result, they become a threat not only to their own well being but also to people around them. Students spend whole of their adolescent period in school and therefore the task of bringing them up as mentally healthy individuals falls summarily upon the school. In this scenario, the role of school principals, counselors become vital.

The objective of this summit was to equip the caregivers of adolescence with knowledge, skills and attitude which are simple to adopt in everyday practice and easily transferable to teachers, students and parents.

There were open discussions and posing questions to the resource person. Overall it was a very good session and the participants appreciated it very much. We learnt positive approaches towards adolescence in daily encounter.

We are looking forward to organizing many more sessions in the future. Grateful to all those assisted generously. Special thanks to Ave Maria school principal and to the organizing committee.

Sr. Lakshmi Fernando

