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Fortis School Mental Health organises internship programme

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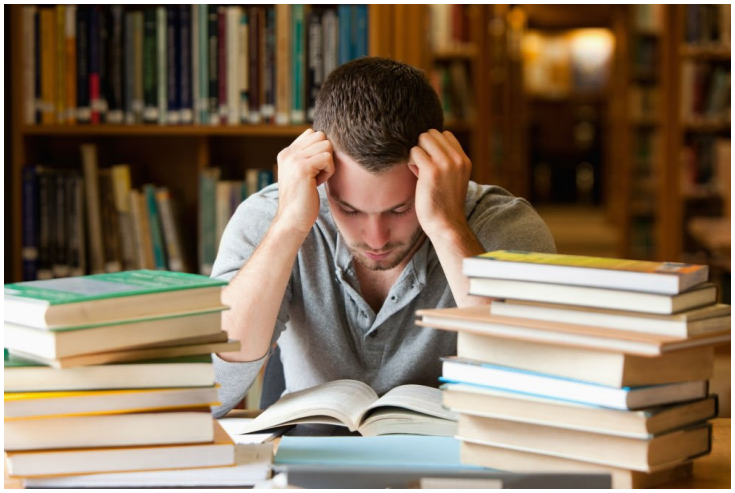
More than 180 students from 20 schools of Bangalore are taking part



The Department of Mental Health and Behavioural Sciences at Fortis Healthcare, under the aegis of Dr. Samir Parikh, is organising the psychology-based internship programme, ‘Fortis Summer School Internship Program, 2019.’ The 6-day internship programme is designed for students of Class XI & XII. Several leading schools of Bangalore like Inventure Academy, St. Joseph are participating along with other prominent schools from Mumbai, Kolkata, Mohali, Ludhiana, Jaipur, Delhi NCR and Chennai.

Involving a one on one interaction with a multidisciplinary team of experts, the internship is going to address topics including clinical disorders, psychological interviewing and the role of psychology in healthcare. A session on the applied areas of psychology will encourage students to learn about the scope and various upcoming super specialties in the field. At the same time, students participating in experiential arts-based activities to enhance self-awareness. A key aspect of this week-long internship was a social-media project on mental health that students were to prepare and showcase at the end of the week, which saw students writing poetry, vlogging, creating innovative posters and works of art. The objective of the internship is to expose students to psychology, to build their curiosity, and give them an opportunity reshape conversations around mental health.

Speaking about the programme, Dr Samir Parikh said, “Mental health has always been stigmatized, with those suffering being at the receiving end of ridicule and discrimination. We thought it was time to build an alternative, more positive narrative around mental health, and that is how the idea of the summer internship was born. We realized that given the amount of time that children spent on social media, we could channelize it to be meaningful and be positive, so that the generations to come do not experience the kind of stigma that we did. And the response we got from students has been truly heartwarming.”

One in four to five people in the world are affected by a mental illness at some point in their lives. Depression is the world’s largest illness, impacting 300 million people across the globe. Yet, conversations around mental health continue to remain taboo in society today. There is an 800% shortage of mental health experts in India today. Given the rising prevalence of mental health related problems, more and more students must take up the field of psychology to cope with the burden of the illness. This internship is a step in that direction – to expose students to psychology, to build their curiosity, and give them an opportunity reshape conversations around mental health.