IGNORANCE IS NOT AN EXCUSE

by:
Cindy C. Lalunio
Mariveles National High School - Cabcaben

One topic in which the educational sector here in the Philippines lacks understanding and action is the ‘Autism and Special needs’ of students.

Here in the Philippines, Autism is almost related to Down Syndrome or to the more ignorant people; insanity. There are HUGE of differences between ‘Autistic’, ‘Down syndrome’ and ‘Insane’.

In a third world country that has a deficiency in so many aspects of a self-supporting nation, it is not surprising that a problem this tiny is not given the right attention. Who cares if a child is inadequate in some subjects or if they have a defect in understanding? They are just one grain in a sack of rice. But cases if undetected Autism, ADHD and ADD were more often than what we think of.

Mild Autism is almost unnoticed to the eye. A child can be normal at sight but can be autistic. Although signs and hits of autism may show every now and again it can just be mistaken as the usually unpredictable behavior of children ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyper Active Disorder) on the other hand is much more noticeable, but then again it is common in children to be hyper.

So how can it be determined if a child has Autism or ADHD? The truth is there is no over the counter way, it has to be diagnosed by a professional in order to be sure. Test and observation should be done. This is where the coordination of the parents and the school personnel comes in. Both private and public schools should have proper knowledge of what cases they have in hand. It is highly unusual for a parent of an ordinary student to know about such disorder, so the school, more importantly the teachers should start the initiative to be open the topic to the parents. More likely than not hey will either be offended or they will be in denial. It will be the teacher’s job to
explain and enlighten the parents that having autism or ADHD/ADD is not a hindrance to the child; it is not a synonymous to being crazy or mental.

But it will be relatively difficult to employ due to lack of funding, lack of manpower and lack of awareness. Because the sad reality is that most of the time the discrimination comes from those who were supposed to be the one spreading the positive awareness towards thus kinds of cases.

References:

Teaching Students with ADHD