SCHOOL-BASED TEEN COUNSELLING

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In every stage of our lives, we are bound to face various crises. An infant who is dependent on his mother for food and nutrition can either develop trust or mistrust; a toddler who undergoes toilet training might develop autonomy or shame and doubt from it; a pre-schooler who is dedicated in plays and early learning either develops initiative in doing things or guilt for being bad at them; a school-age child either becomes industrious or feel inferior from others; an early adult either finds intimacy or have himself isolated; a mid-adult concentrates in making their lives stable and productive so that he does not see himself in a stagnant state; late adults assess the quality of their lives and reflect if they have lived it well or in despair. Like these crises, teens face a crisis in their life as well--- and this crisis is an expedition towards the discovery of oneself. According to Erik Erickson’s Psychosocial Theory (1963), failure to overcome such crisis may lead to significant impact on our psychosocial development.

Discovering one’s true self is a challenging task for teens since they are confronted with innumerable influences like social media, peers, and familial plans and inhibitions. Teens have a great fear of being rejected and a strong need to belong, the very reasons why a number of teens have some of their ideas and emotions suppressed. These circumstances somehow create a barrier in the expression of oneself which might lead to potential problems like depression which in turn affects almost all aspects of one’s life including academic performance.

Depression presents in several forms. Suicidal thoughts, expressions, and acts are common stories among teen-agers in secondary schools. Others present themselves as being excessively happy people to mask their depression. The large ratio of students to
teachers makes it tough for teachers to assess students’ behaviour which could give hints about existing or potential problems.

Like the Teen Information Center which targets minimizing early pregnancy by spreading awareness among teens, a School-based Teen Counselling Center could be an effective way to address teen-age crises. With various issues facing teen-agers, School-based Teen Counselling Centers can serve as a platform towards expression of oneself and significant concerns which need to be heard and evaluated in order to be properly addressed. Addressing the main problem would also mean addressing problems that branched out from it.

Putting this analogy in the context of education, it could be said that if the students’ personal concerns, issues, and crises were addressed, distractions would be minimized which could lead students to perform better in academics.

References:
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