

Life Skills make a person life-ready



Life Skills, in a nutshell, are a set of behaviours that contribute positively to being life-ready. The WHO recognises it as "the abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of every day."

While there is no definitive or exhaustive list of skills that can result in the defined objective, studies in social behaviour have identified a few core skills that pave the way for a happy, peaceful and productive life. These include communication & interpersonal skills, decision making & problem solving, creative thinking & critical thinking, awareness and empathy, assertiveness & equanimity and resilience.

Important as they are, these skills are often taken for granted as an individual's character traits. The presence or absence of these skills are attributed to the home environment which a person grows up in. Though this is partially true, it is equally true that life skills are learnt outside of a home environment as well. The fact that a child learns to behave as a part of a team in a school playground is a perfect example of this.

In the past, very little structured effort has been made to recognise that much like language, math or geography, life skills need to be learnt. In the off-chance that these skills are not imbibed from the home environment, a child is left wanting in some of the most important lessons in her or his life.

Even a casual look around will tell us that life skills deficiency is a huge problem. More often than not, several behaviours that are not conducive to civic life stems from the lack of life skills – be it throwing a candy wrapper on the sidewalk, or not making way for an ambulance, or road rage...

Since there is too much at stake to leave the learning of life skills to chance, there is immediate need to address it in a concerted manner. In schools and colleges, in personality development centres, as part of skill-building programmes, governments, academic institutions and civic society must come together and work with each other to make life skills a part of the curriculum.

Life Skills Collaborative is an initiative that works in this space. We put our several stakeholders in touch with each other, draw up customised frameworks and execute action in the critical area of imparting life skills to a generation of youth, with the intent of leading them towards being life-ready.