

Dear Parents,

Greetings from **The Millennium School, Greater Noida (W)**!

This is to notify you that on **January 13, 2023**, we organised an **online session** on **"Inculcating Awareness About Privacy & (Un)Safe Touch"** in association with our partner **Da One Sports** for the parents and students of **grades I to IV**. The session was led by **Ms. Kiran Singh (Manager, Programs and Development at the Shikhar Dhawan Foundation)**. Ms. Singh is a professional psychiatric social worker with experience in therapeutic counselling & rehabilitation of victims of abuse. She has been nominated for the UN SD Action Awards for "Buddygiri," her mental awareness programme. The informative session focused on the **"Significance of teaching kids about good touch and bad touch so they could protect themselves from abuse."** It also encouraged open communication between parents and children in order to avoid the child becoming involved in unexpectedly dangerous situations.

During the session, Ms. Singh helped us understand:

- The **meaning, need, and importance of privacy**,
- The **difference between good and bad touch or feelings**: how they are interrelated,
- Why the desire to seek comfort through "touching" is a natural human psychology,
- How to **differentiate between 'safe' and 'unsafe' touch or contact that 'provides comfort' vs. one that 'makes us feel uncomfortable'** and
- How to prevent or deal with uncomfortable situations and their aftermath.

Encouraging the students to be more mindful of their feelings and observant with regards to their surroundings, Ms. Singh mentioned that they must:

- Discover what kind of physical contact makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable,
- Understand that any kind of contact with the **'personal zones'** in their body (like their chest or private parts) falls under the 'unsafe category' except in the case of medical diagnosis or hygiene maintenance,
- Avoid or prevent any attempts at tickling if it gets suffocating or unpleasant for them,
- Seek physical comfort in the form of hugging, handshaking, etc., only from trusted adults,
- **Strictly say "NO"** to anyone who makes them feel uncomfortable by touching their body, and
- Reach out to adults right away to report any such incidents, without being shy or hesitant.

Ms. Singh also urged the parents to develop **"safe words"** and have **transparent discussions** with their children on topics like *privacy, sexuality, physical contact*, etc., so they don't feel the need to keep any secrets from them.

As an educational institution, The Millennium School understands the importance of ensuring students' privacy and safety away from home. We would like to assure our parents that **the school follows all the safety guidelines and preventive measures in accordance with the POCSO Act to ensure the safety of students on campus**. Our educators and other staff members are regularly informed and trained about child safety laws to prevent and stand up against any instance of abuse or exploitation.

We encourage our parents' and students' active participation in such interventions, believing that collectively we can create a safe and nurturing learning environment for all our students. The school will continue to hold informative sessions like these to ensure the social, physical, mental, and emotional well-being of children.

Best Regards,

Himani Tyagi

Dr Himani Tyagi
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