



## **Child Counselling – The Need of the Hour**

Why do children need counseling? What 'issues' could a child possibly face that would require professional intervention? These are some of the most commonly asked questions. While in a majority of the cases, it is ineffective parenting skills that lead a child to behavioral and academic difficulties, the fast pace of life and the competitive world we live in are also major contributors.

With the ever growing demands, be it for a 98% in the board exams, the latest Android phone or an increase in pocket money, children and parents find themselves at loggerheads on multiple issues. When parents are unable to cater to these demands, children find themselves at the receiving end of ridicule from friends, exclusion from peer groups, etc. The peer pressure dictates of experimenting with drugs, alcohol & truancy are now not only confined to the teenage age group but also to pre-teens. Children unable to live up to their parents' expectations often have to face comparisons with siblings, 'nagging', insults etc.

To add to the mix, the current generation lives in the age of instant gratification. Failure to meet needs immediately result in increasing amounts of frustration which if not handled carefully works as a ticking time bomb.

Working with children in a counselling session always begins with listening to the child's perspective. Feeling 'listened to' can, in itself, be highly therapeutic. It helps them sort through issues, be it concerns about peers, self-esteem and self-image. Often, career-related queries are also covered. Working with parents is an extremely crucial part of counseling children, as they are instrumental in bringing about change in the child's life. Very often the counselor acts as the liaison between the parent and child, helping each look at the perspective of the other.

Depending on the age of the child, stories, puppets, role plays are used as 'tools' in the session. The child can then use these 'tools' to narrate painful experiences or instances, they view as threatening, so as to create some distance between themselves and the experience. For example, narrating an instance that happened to the child, but as if it had taken place to the puppet.

With an ever growing increase in the theories and techniques for counseling children, and multiple courses being offered on the same for those who would like to enter the field, there are no longer any excuses for us, as adults, to not get our children the help they may need.

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