

Over 70 Guyanese Educators Trained to Support Student Mental Health and Well-Being

IDRF and Ministry of Education equip Guyanese teachers with skills to foster inclusive classrooms and address student mental health challenges.

GEORGETOWN, GUYANA, January 23, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The International Development and Relief Foundation (IDRF), in partnership with the Ministry of Education (MOE), successfully wrapped up a three-day Mental Health and Well-being Training workshop designed to equip educators with the tools to better support student mental health. Held at the Ministry's National Centre for Educational Development (NCERD), the training brought together over 70 teachers, guidance counselors, welfare officers, and school administrators from across Guyana.



Mental Health Training workshop in session at the National Centre for Educational Development in Georgetown

Facilitated by Dr. Richard Khan, Psy.D., Associate Director and Director of Training at Pace University in New York, the workshop was part of the Safeguarding the Human Dignity and Rights of Populations At-Risk (SPAR) Project, funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC).

Adam Loyer, Head of Cooperation for the Canadian High Commission in Guyana, described the initiative as Canada's flagship mental health project not only in Guyana but across the entire region. Speaking on the pivotal role of educators, he remarked:

"Teachers play a vital role in promoting and supporting the mental health of their students and are often the first adults to notice signs of mental health issues. Teachers and school administrators have an enormous impact on the lives of students, so taking proactive measures to support their mental health should be an utmost priority."

Loyer's comments reflect the program's broader goal of equipping educators with the knowledge and strategies to identify early signs of mental health challenges, foster supportive environments, and take action to address these issues in schools.

Over the course of the training, participants were provided with practical tools to create safe and inclusive classrooms, promote open communication, and address societal stigma surrounding mental health. The program also offered guidance on self-care practices for educators, emphasizing the importance of their well-being in providing effective support to students.

Elyas Burney, IDRF's Director of Programs and Social Impact, expressed his admiration for the dedication of the participants, stating:

"It is truly inspiring to see over 60 teachers from across all regions of the country come together in Georgetown to learn and develop strategies for supporting students facing challenges related to mental illness. By fostering a commitment to enhancing the mental health and well-being of Guyanese students, this program aims to ensure that fewer young people will suffer in silence."

Mrs. Gaitri Singh-Henry, Senior Education Officer at the Ministry of Education, praised the workshop's alignment with national education goals, adding:

"This program has strengthened our ability to support both students and teachers. By fostering awareness and providing practical tools, we are ensuring every child has the chance to learn in a supportive environment."

A standout achievement of the workshop was its inclusivity, with participants traveling from remote regions to access training and share experiences with their peers. Educators from across Guyana valued the opportunity to connect with colleagues and access resources that are often limited in their home communities.

As the workshop concludes, IDRF and the Ministry of Education reaffirm their commitment to promoting mental health awareness and supporting educators as critical pillars of their communities. The initiative marks a significant step forward in building a future where every child can thrive in a safe and supportive school environment.

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