New edge to fight against autism

NEW DELHI, Oct. 10

Our Staff Reporter

Over two million autistic children are estimated to be living with varying degrees of autism in India, with only a fraction of them being diagnosed and receiving badly needed help. However, awareness of autism and the need for autism-friendly schools have already brought the light at the end of the tunnel closer.

This was amply demonstrated at a national workshop on autism organised by Autism Foundation of India for parents and professionals, which concluded at the Asha Foundation in Delhi on Friday. Parents of newly diagnosed children and professionals from across the country attended the workshop.

The workshop, being held annually for several years, addressed issues like parental acceptance of the condition, interaction and communication, and information sharing.

The Children's Foundation, which organised the event, said that the workshop was attended by about 1,000 children and their parents from across the country.

"We had a very productive and informative session today," said one of the parents who attended the workshop.

"We learnt a lot about how to communicate with our children and how to make them feel comfortable in social situations," she added.

The workshop also highlighted the need for more autism-friendly schools in the country, with many parents expressing the need for such facilities to be more widespread.

"We need more schools like this one that are autism-friendly," said another parent.

"Our children deserve the same opportunities as any other child," she added.

The workshop was concluded with a panel discussion on the challenges faced by parents and professionals in dealing with autism.

"The biggest challenge we face is the lack of awareness," said a professional at the workshop.

"We often face resistance from the community when we try to educate them about autism," she added.

"But with more awareness and support, we can make a difference," she concluded.

The workshop was attended by several parents and professionals who shared their experiences and challenges in dealing with autism.

"Our children are our biggest source of inspiration," said one of the parents.

"They teach us to appreciate the little things in life and to see the world through their eyes," she added.

"I have learnt a lot about autism and my child," said another parent.

"I hope that this workshop will help make a difference in my child's life," she concluded.

The workshop ended with a promise to continue the fight against autism and to work towards creating a more inclusive society for all children, regardless of their disabilities.