

Diploma ^{Toi} course for autistic ^{1/11/03} children

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

New Delhi: In the first step of its kind, the Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) has launched a year-long diploma course in autism spectrum disorders to address the educational requirements of children with autism.

It has been a long-pending demand and this course, a diploma in special education, is a pre-service teachers training programme. The qualification for enrolment is Class XII or its equivalent. Two institutes selected to run the course are Delhi-based Action for Autism and School of Hope, Tamanna. The two other centres are the Spastics Society of Karnataka and Mind's College of Educational Research in Mumbai.

The RCI, in charge of the regulating training policies in this field, says that given the benefits of intensive early intervention in preventing the ill-effects of autism, the course aims to mainstream children with autism by creating professionals who will use structured strategies and give intensive training to them.

Approved by the RCI on a pilot basis, the course curriculum has been developed with the help of special educators, policy makers and parents.