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'Parents need special skills for autistic children'

Chandigarh: Parent empowerment is the need of the hour. Keeping the acute shortage of trained mental health professionals in mind and the shortage of schools for special children, experts strongly advocate parent education to deal with autistic children.

Interacting with parents of autistic children at a workshop organised by the psychiatry department of Government Medical College and Hospital (GMCH), noted disability activist Merry Barua stressed on the need for parent education. "Parents need to be educated and equipped with special skills to be able to deal with autistic children. This becomes all the more pertinent keeping in mind that the number of schools for special children are very few and that there exists an acute shortage of trained mental health professionals," she said. Mother of a 22 year-old autistic child herself, Barua is the founder member of the World Autism Foundation. THE