

WE ARE ALL EQUAL HERE
Women's Day Celebration 2021
By MSSW PTA in collaboration with Women's Cell

"Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back." The Women's Day Celebration conducted by the Madras School of Social Work PTA in collaboration with Women's Cell took place on March 5th from 2-4.45pm. Women students from different departments of MSSW attended the event in the Auditorium.

The emcee for the event was Ms. Varshini (1st Year HROD) who started by welcoming the Principal, Dr. Raja Samuel, Dean, Dr. Subhashini, PTA President, Mr. Malolan Sarangapani, PTA Coordinator, Ms. Sivaranjani and Women's Cell Coordinator, Ms. Ruby Wesley George onto the stage. Ms. Varshini then extended her welcome to the Chief Guests who would be leading the Panel discussion, Ms. Madhu Saran, Ms. Abida Aneez and Dr. Deepa Shree.

The event began with the traditional Tamil Thai Vazhthu and our college song which was then followed by the inaugural address given by the PTA President, Mr. Malolan Sarangapani. He shared the agenda of the event and ended with how acknowledging women should be something done on a daily basis and that women power is needed for India to rise as a superpower.



Our respected Principal, Dr. Raja Samuel and Dean, Dr. Subhashini wished the audience a 'Happy Women's Day' and then briefly addressed their thoughts on the importance of women and how celebrating women's day is a celebration of how far we have come but also a reminder that there is still a long way to go for further changes in the society/nation.



PANEL DISCUSSION on Women in Leadership

Ms. Varshini then invited the PTA Secretary, Ms. Sandhya, to take over as moderator for the Panel Discussion on 'Women in Leadership'. The chief guests were invited to take their place on stage and the discussion went on for a total of 30-40 minutes.

The Panelists:

- Ms. Abida Aneez, a woman recognized in the top 100 HR, heads CSR in Legron Group and sponsors scholarships for women engineering.
- Dr. Deepa Shree, a motivational speaker, encourages holistic health development, currently working on her book "Magnetic Mind".
- Ms. Madhu Saran, a multifaceted entrepreneur with 16 years of experience and her own NGO, River, which help women become independent and forefront in anything they do.

The major questions and takeaways from the discussion were as follows:

1. What does women's day mean to you, both professionally and personally?

- Ms. Madhu shared that women's day was to congratulate and wish all women but irritate the men, especially because of the different events celebrated over several days. She also shared the responsibility of her NGO was to uplift women in different industries and the upcoming projects.
- Ms. Abida explained that celebrating and recognising women was a more recent trend which should therefore make us feel proud with wherever we are and to have passion in whatever we're doing. In the professional world, perception and recognition has evolved with women being deserved to be appreciated.
- Ms. Deepa shared that we're living in a world of free will where celebration is up to an individual wanting happiness and also that it's a day for recognition on how much women have achieved, seeing where we were, where we are now and where we can go in the future.

2. What is the change in outlook?

- Ms. Abida spoke on how compared to the 80's, girls are now more bold, courageous, have more freedom, are more independent and also have the supporting system to back them. Reasons for this include the education which has empowered women, supportive parents and balancing family and work life.

3. How to balance mental well-being?

- Ms. Deepa stressed on how women are undoubtedly strong and the problem lies in the lack of awareness and confidence in our own potential/strength. She also spoke

on how guilt kills us and that we must replace selfishness with self-love because it's okay to take care of yourself first.

- Ms. Madhu shared about her personal experiences and that as an entrepreneur, in order to balance mental well-being, one must see the ups and downs as an opportunity to grow, must sustain in difficulty, be confident in what you want to achieve and also think on your feet.

4. What are some key challenges faced and how did you overcome them?

- Ms. Madhu faced a major financial crisis and shared that we are conditioned not to look at challenges but that's where the most learning takes place.

5. What do you think about work-life balance?

- Ms. Deepa spoke on how instead of differentiating between the two, it should be more about integrating the professional and private life so that both the emotional mind (family) and rational mind (work, earn money) can be in sync with the other. Perception must be changed and the mind conditioned.

- Ms. Abida shared that women are seen to be content with what they have and that married women are intellectual, analytical and ambitious but after motherhood and with domestic responsibilities they are both required and feel more attached to their families. In the professional world, family is seen to be a barrier for many women.

6. Perception to growth and hurdles?

- Ms. Madhu shared that as an entrepreneur you are at your own liability.

- Ms. Deepa spoke on the problem of self-pity and the empowerment dynamic and how instead of remaining in victim mode, women should create their own destiny and reality.

7. Role of men in women leadership?

- Ms. Deepa boldly stated that there is none. Yes, we look for support systems which are definitely a bonus, however if not available it doesn't mean we can't support ourselves.

- Ms. Abitha stated that her opinion was different and went on to share about how her father inspired, supported and gave her the opportunities to follow her passions. Then how she was given the opportunity to prove herself in her first job and also how her husband supported her.

- Ms. Madhu shared that it is important to have a trustworthy husband because then you have the support to balance work and family.

The Panel Discussion ended with the PTA President giving each of the Chief Guests a token of appreciation.



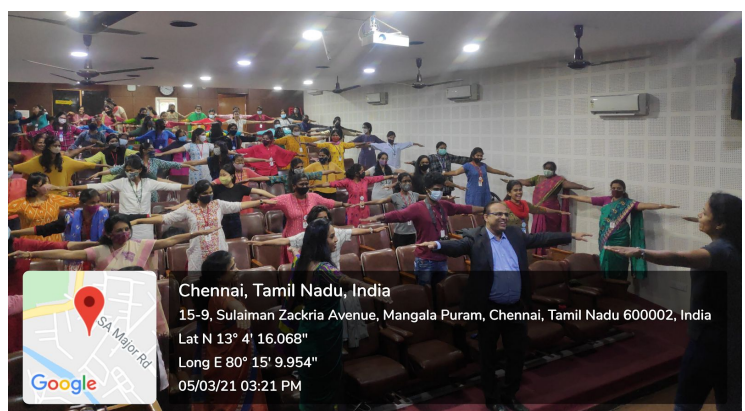
FUN & FITNESS

Ms. Anu Shankar, the Director of Fitness Fionis, was welcomed on stage by Ms. Varshini. Addressing the audience as 'beautiful girls' and getting everyone to stand up got everyone bustling with excitement for what Ms. Anu had planned for the next session. This lasted for 15-20 minutes.

The activities done included

- Arm exercises- stretching your arms out horizontally and making small circles both clockwise and anti clockwise.
- Sitting exercise- sitting comfortably without actually sitting on a chair.
- Balancing exercises- lifting one feet off the floor and standing for a certain amount of time with eyes open one time and eyes closed the next time.

Through these short but fun exercises Ms. Anu stressed on the importance of working on improving yourself on a daily basis. All the exercises done in the session can be done anywhere at any time so with that the fact that fitness is important but can also be fun was conveyed.



WOMEN & WELLNESS

Ms. Varshini invited Dr. Akila Ravikumar onto the stage to take over for the session on women and wellness. Dr. Akila started by saying that we give great importance to health when it involves our family and loved ones but when it comes to ourselves, the priority is usually very low. She went on to share important aspects to wellness for a woman and also some health problems in women.

- White Discharge- Leucorrhoea: normal (does not stain/smell) and abnormal (stains/smells, could be bacteria infection). It is treatable.
- Osteoporosis- fragile: Women are more affected because of hormones, painkillers, steroids for asthma, estrogen levels being low. Must calculate the T-score for hip and spine. The treatment is calcium which needs vitamin D in order for it to be absorbed- the sun, having egg and fish.
- Obesity- definitely a disease: It is a silent epidemic and the real mid-life crisis faced by many. Obesity causes problems with the heart, sugar, back/knee/ankle pain, hypertension and snoring. Abdominal obesity is seen to be very common in India.
- Menstrual disorders: Amenorrhea- When you don't get periods; Menorrhagia- excessive bleeding or inter cycles; Menopause- irregular periods. Important to understand the causes for changes in mood or emotions in loved ones, if any problems with the menstrual cycle it should be checked.
- Mammography- self examination of your breasts: Find out your family history, stand in front of your mirror and self examine, don't use fingers but the top of the palm. Not all lumps are cancerous but it's important to check often.
- Exhaustion- extreme tiredness: can happen because of anaemia, thyroid disorders, diabetes, heart problems and chronic fatigue syndrome.

Dr. Akila ended the session by reiterating the importance of health to you, your family, the society and the nation as a whole. Be aware of the problems and take advice accordingly, invest in health and reap a dividend- a QALY: Quality Added Life Years. She ended with the quote, "We cannot hold a torch for others without brightening your own."



ROLE OF MEN IN WOMEN'S LIFE

The last session for the Women's Day Celebration included 3 men sharing about the role of men in women's lives.

1. Mr. Vekat, the PTA Treasurer shared that every man's life is touched by women, they shape man's life, their character is built by the influence of women and the value of a mother and the need for women's day is something that must be given great importance. He spoke on three areas where the role of men in women's life must be portrayed: family- provide support and give opportunities; organisation- opportunities given and not denied, equality; society- give protection and provide space.
2. Mr. Satheesh Kumar, a first year student of HROD, shared his personal story on how he lost his father in 2009 and the fear of not being able to pay for fees or eat or have a house were avoided because his mother took up the role of father and provided the means for food, housing and education for his family. After getting married, his wife instead of studying further, encouraged him to build on his career and supported him.
3. Mr. Bharat Kumar, a first year student of HROD, also shared a personal story on how while facing a financial crisis as a family, his mother took the initiative to start a business and earn. His sister is another woman who gives him great inspiration because of her hard work and success.



Ms. Varshini ended the event for Women's Day celebration by giving the formal vote of thanks which was then followed by some refreshments for the audience and chief guests.

Photography- Ms. Lathika, Mr. Adithyan, Mr. Katheem (1st year HROD)

Content collection- Ms Ezrela, Ms. Suchitra (1st year HROD)

Documentation- Ms. Ezrela (1st year HROD)