

The Banyan Begins Mental Health Module at Green Valley High School

Part of The Banyan's Urban Outreach Project is about encouraging more people to understand and investigate their mental health - it is thought that you cannot start early enough with these practices of exploration and appreciation and it is from this stand point that The Banyan has produced a module for secondary school children in 7th, 8th and 9th Standard.

Read on for more details

On Saturday 18th July, two members of Banyan staff and one volunteer visited Green Valley High School in Moggapair armed with a presentation and a couple of games to spark the students' excitement about mental health. It seemed to work; after a short questionnaire, the students mingled over People Bingo and then worked in groups to answer various questions on their understanding of mental health.



Some interesting insights were produced by the students including the following delicious quotes that can be taken home by anyone:

- 'We should share our sorrows and our worries with our family and friends. If we are not sharing it will affect our mental health'
- 'We should have only positive thinking in our minds'
- 'Mental health is important throughout the lifetime'
- 'Mental health is important because it affects a person's attitude and behaviour'.

Some of the groups interpreted mental health as simply memory power, a misconception that was corrected to ensure that students think holistically about their mental health and realize the areas of their life to which it is related. The aim of the course is to develop all areas of the student's mental health around the following topics:

- Finding out who you are
- Thinking about how you feel
- Realising your motivation and using it
- Being aware of those around you
- Celebrating our differences

Through addressing these topics, The Banyan team hopes to provide the students with techniques and strategies that they can use through out their lives - or at least start them thinking about their lives along these lines. The session concluded with a progressive relaxation exercise to be practiced at home.