

Women Dialogue Digital Forum

'PARENTING CHILDREN IN DIFFERENT CULTURES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Open Discussion Forum with Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria (DBSV)

Guest Speaker: Dr Arun Raj Kunwar, M.D, Renowned Child and Adolescent Specialist

With ongoing dedication and commitment to promote gender equality and build a platform especially for women, Didi Bahini Samaj Victoria (DBSV) has been successfully organising women dialogue digital forum, an open digital discussion forum, every two months since March 2021. It is a forum for all women to share experiences, challenges and raise awareness to empower women and their families to work towards equality and a just society.

After completing three digital forums, this time DBSV facilitated the forum "Parenting Children in different Culture: Challenges and Opportunities" on the 8th of November 2021. The digital platform brought together 75 participants from the Nepalese community living in Australia and provided them with an interactive session with a place for discussion and raising their queries related to parenting children in different cultures.



As the world moves towards being an inclusive community, more and more people move across and settle in a society that culturally differs from their home country, thus, increasing the number of children born in diverse cultures. Thus, the prime focus of the digital forum was to address parents' challenges faced in parenting and raising children in diverse cultures and to discuss the opportunities and strategies to deal with those challenges. The panel speaker Dr Arun Raj Kunwar, M.D was invited to discuss the challenges faced in different cultural settings and tips to deal with such challenges when they occur. Different cultural expectations, values, beliefs which bring about the challenges in parenting in a different culture and strategies for overcoming those encounters was elaborated by Dr Arun throughout the session.

'Parenting in a different culture is bound to have even more challenges given the fact that they are from a different country, cultural background, values, the language of communication, religious beliefs and other factors that may not act in the same direction. However, understanding children's perceptions, expectations and setting up

clear parenting models, rules and expectations, spending quality time with the kid and being flexible and familiarised with their circumstances and the country they live in might help parents to overcome cultural clashes .and to raise a child in a multicultural environment.'

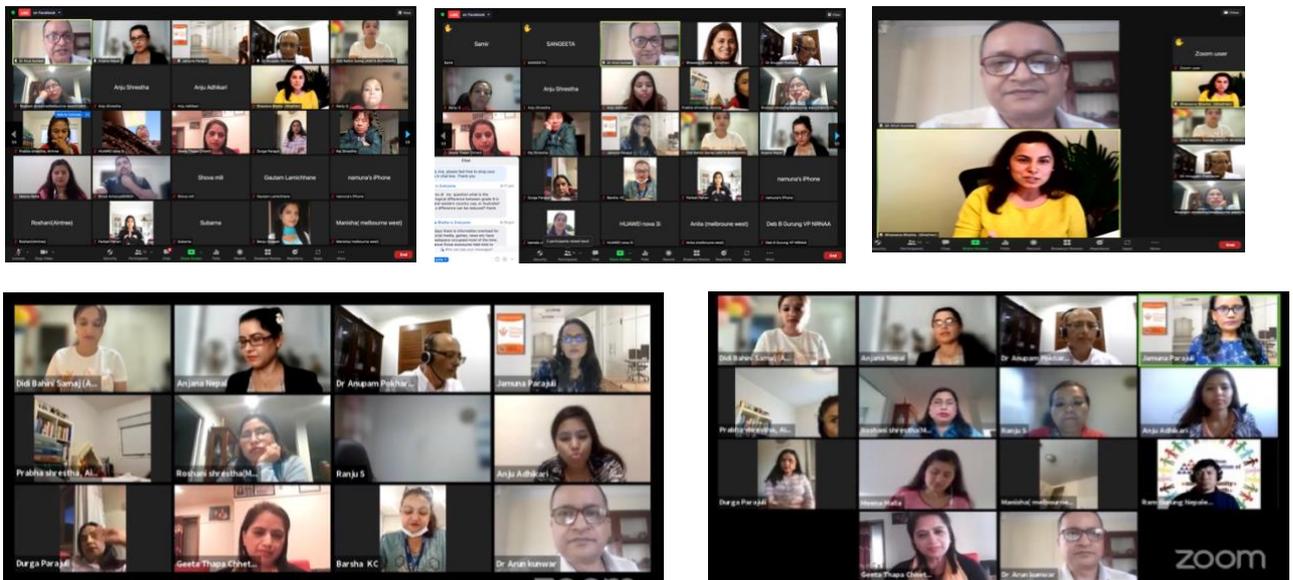
- Dr Arun Raj Kunwar, M.D

The Takeaway:

The session was concluded successfully by Dr Anupam Pokharel, Consultant Psychiatrist; a mental health specialist, by unpacking key concerns related to parenting in a multicultural environment:

- Differences in how children are raised compared with what parents were used to.
- Differences in how parents from diverse cultures show affection to their children and how independent their children are
- Attitudes towards rewards and punishment
- Parent's responsibility to their children, family and community
- Parent's and children's expectations towards each other

Some snapshots of the session:



The program was successfully facilitated by Anjana Nepal. Technically, the session was coordinated by Anita Bhandari and Benju Gnawali. Live session via DBSV Facebook was also facilitated. Around 340 people viewed the live stream during and post-session. Hence, very positive feedback and comments were received during and post-session. The forum was remarked as an interactive and informative session which was witnessed by the active participation during the session followed by a Q&A

session. Few highlights of the burning queries or concerns raised during the session are as follows:

1. Communication barrier- language barrier, understanding, identity crisis- whether Nepali or Australian
2. Late-night out/ parents stress, low confidence/stress, thinking differences in children and parents: -Late night out of children- hard to tolerate to parents
3. The communication gap between children and parents (over-sensitive of reality and fact) parents are scared with children to ask about where they go and what they do as it may escalate the situation worst. Understanding confusion between parents & children due to language barrier
4. Lack of understanding of the situation of parents and children or vice versa. Poor Interpretation difference between children and parents

Scenario:

- 11/12 years old children want to go out if parents say no situation gets worst how to handle the situation.
- 13-15 years children school dropout / early pregnancy issues for girls. Substance misuse issues for boys.
- Drug/Alcohol/party/hangout/violence- some people are blaming that these kinds of cultures are more raised by migrants?
- Children's Habit of living alone in room engaging more in screening how to reduce these situations.?
- Kids, have low patience levels these days, why?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMpeLAnU3Zw>