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Medical package for school children

By Krishnendu Bandopadhyay, The Times of India Service

CALCUTTA : A ready ambulance, half yearly health check up, personal medical report carrying blood group and Rh factor, personal identity cards with important details, group insurance for individual students - sounds too good to be true? Project Guardian, a unique package for schoolchildren has been prepared by the Calcutta based National Institute of Behavioural Sciences.

Dr. Kedar Ranjan Banerjee, a psychiatrist, conceived the project. Speaking of his experience during a NIBS survey in different schools to determine average child health, he says : Most schoolchildren, irrespective of their academic standard, are exposed to health hazards and prone to accidents".

The death of five year old Pragya Dalmiya within the premises of a central Calcutta school reaffirms Banerjee's idea of helplessness of kids in school.....Against a subscription of Rs. 480 per year, the facilities of Project Guardian can be availed of by any student. Besides medical services and insurance, each student can have regular pathological test at concessional rate. The medical report drawn up gives a clear picture about the disease a student already has. This would help the attending doctor.", Banerjee adds.....Card holders can also get tele counseling services, optional psychometric report, lists of specialists, health awareness programmes plus first aid classes in schools for both students and teachers. Empirical evidences, Banerjee claims, showed that most of us are not properly informed that affect children in their formative years.