

# DECCAN HERALD



**LIFE IS BEAUTIFUL:** Students of Jain College perform a skit at a competition held to mark World Suicide Prevention Day at the Centre for Management Studies, Jain University, in Bangalore on Monday. DH PHOTO.

## 'Suicide risk group getting younger'

**BANGALORE:** Every day, five to six cases of attempted suicide are admitted to the Victoria Hospital. Nearly 30 per cent of the ward space and 50 per cent of the ICU beds in the hospital are occupied by patients who attempt suicide, said Dr H Chandrashekhar, secretary of the Karnataka State Mental Health Authority and head of the department of psychiatry at the hospital.

Speaking at an awareness programme 'strengthening protective forces and instilling hope' on the occasion of 'World Suicide Prevention Day 2012' organised by the Medico Pastoral Association on Monday,

Chandrashekhar said Chennai was the new suicide capital and not Bangalore.

"Although the trend of youngsters committing suicide has not come down, it is shocking to note that the age group has gradually regressed in the past few years. Earlier, it was the age group between 18-29 years. Now, there are more cases of students in the age group of 15-19 years," he said.

### Training for caretakers

Spandana Health Care had organised a day-long educative programme to caregivers of persons affected with mental illness and substance depend-

ence. The day also saw the launch of "A Handbook on Training Volunteers in Suicide Prevention".

Spandana Health Care has a 24-hour suicide helpline initiated in 2010. Dr Mahesh R Gowda, Director and Consultant Psychiatrist of Spandana Health Care, highlighted the need for awareness that suicide is preventable.

Prof Sridhara Murthy, Department of Clinical Psychology, NMKRV College, said the high level of burden, parental stress on academic excellence are main triggers for increased suicide rate among youths.

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