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## **Counsellors soon on corporation payrolls to help students**

CHENNAI: Karthika (name changed), a Class 10 student at a corporation school in Kilpauk, was admitted to a hospital last week after she tried to commit suicide. She was allegedly tortured by an uncle.

The girl was then taken in by the headmistress of her school, Vedavalli.

"It took me hours of counselling to make Karthika admit that the uncle was the reason for her attempt to commit suicide," she said.

Karthika's is not an isolated case. Many students resort to extreme steps due to abuse and torture at home. Here arises the need of counselling in schools.

The corporation has decided to recruit 30 counsellors to help students. Each of the 15 zones would get two counsellors each, who would move from school to school. "We are targeting students in adolescent age," said a senior corporation official.

The civic body has not had counsellors on their payroll so far. The only counselling programmes the students had been exposed to were value education CDs and books.

Authorities say regular counsellors would be able to form a bond with students. "We advertised for people involved in counselling or with a background in psychology and sociology," the official said. "These counsellors may find it easier to win students' confidence as they will not be a part of everyday staff but would still be regular visitors."