

Mpower Announces "Mpowering Minds Summit 2026 – Advancing Women's Mental Health as a National Priority"

Category: Business

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Mpower, an initiative of the Aditya Birla Education Trust, today announced the second edition of the [Mpowering Minds – Women's Mental Health Summit](#), a national full-day forum to be held in Bengaluru on 27 February 2026. The event will be led by Mrs. Neerja Birla, Founder & Chairperson, Aditya Birla Education Trust and Mpower, and graced by Chief Guests Lakshmi Hebbalkar, Minister of Women and Child Development, and Disabled and Senior Citizens Empowerment, Government of

Karnataka, Prathima Murthy, Director and a Senior Professor of Psychiatry at the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) and Rohini Nilekani, Chairperson of Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies and a Co-founder and Director of EkStep –each of whom has championed women-centric progress in health, policy, and community empowerment. Anchored in the pillars of Acceptance, Action and Advocacy, the 2026 edition places women's wellness at the heart of the country's journey toward a Viksit Bharat, recognising that sustainable national progress is possible only when women's mental and social well-being is secured.



The banner for the Mpowering Minds Women's Mental Health Summit 2026 features a white header with a blue swoosh at the bottom. The Mpowering Minds logo is in the center, with 'powering' in orange and 'Minds' in blue. Below it, '2026' is written in a smaller blue font, followed by 'Acceptance • Action • Advocacy' in orange. The main title 'MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT 2026' is in large white letters on a blue background. Below it, the subtitle 'Championing Women's Mental Health' is in blue. The central section is blue and contains the heading 'Why women and why now?' in yellow. It includes four white boxes with text: '1 in 3 women globally will experience a mental health condition in her lifetime', 'Women are nearly twice as likely to experience anxiety and depression', '75% of unpaid caregiving is carried by women – a major mental health stressor', and 'Less than 2% of global health budgets are dedicated to mental health'. The bottom section is yellow and titled 'What's happening at the summit?'. It features four icons with descriptions: 'Lived experiences that spark empathy and insight', 'Expert-led sessions grounded in science and practice', 'Fireside Chat with Global Industry Experts', and 'A focused spotlight on women's mental health across cultures'. At the bottom, there is a dark blue footer with a person icon, the date 'Friday, 27th February | Bengaluru', and a 'Register Now' button.

Mpowering Minds Women's Mental Health Summit 2026, organised by Mpower

Speaking ahead of the summit, **Neerja Birla, Founder & Chairperson Aditya Birla Education Trust and Mpower**, said, “As India accelerates its growth trajectory, safeguarding women’s mental health must be integral to our national priorities. This summit is designed to translate awareness into measurable action by building stronger support ecosystems, influencing policy conversations and encouraging institutional accountability for women’s psychological well-being. The 2026 edition reinforces our belief that investing in women’s emotional health is an investment in the country’s long-term social and economic resilience.”

This year’s summit will bring together globally respected clinicians, mental-health practitioners, policy advocates, researchers, and lived-experience speakers to examine women’s mental-health needs across life stages. The agenda includes conversations on intergenerational trauma featuring leading international experts Eamon McCrory, CEO, Anna Freud and Professor of Developmental Neuroscience and Psychopathology, UCL, and Peter Fonagy, CBE Professor of Contemporary Psychoanalysis and Developmental Science at UCL. Their participation will provide a research-driven foundation for understanding how early experiences shape lifelong mental health. A powerful conversation on resilience and overcoming adversity will feature trans rights activist Dr. Akkai Padmashali and Olympian Anju Bobby George, offering deeply personal perspectives on identity, stigma, and perseverance.

Maternal mental health, reproductive well-being, and life-stage transitions will be discussed by experts such as Dr. Janhavi Nilekani, Founder of the Aastrika Foundation; Dr. Duru Shah, renowned gynaecologist and reproductive health specialist; Dr. Padmaja Samant, Head of Obstetrics & Gynaecology at KEM Hospital; and Dr. Meghna Singhal, founder of Raising Family Academy. These discussions will highlight

the critical need for early intervention, perinatal support, and long-term mental-health care for mothers.

Workplace well-being, leadership pressures, and burnout will be addressed by Masaba Gupta, Founder of House of Masaba; Sunita Wazir, Head of Transformation – Global Health & Wellbeing at Hindustan Unilever. Their discussion will explore the unique emotional load carried by women professionals and the systemic reforms needed to create supportive, psychologically safe workplaces. Policymakers and public-health experts such as Sarah Fathima (IPS) DCP Southeast Division Bengaluru City and Jasmine Kalha (Co-Director and Senior Research Fellow at the Centre for Mental Health Law & Policy,) will address the broader need for gender-responsive mental-health systems that reach women across socioeconomic and geographic contexts.

The summit will conclude with a future-facing dialogue led by Ira Khan Founder and CEO of Agatsu and Dr. Zirak Marker Child, Adolescent & Family Psychiatrist; Chief Medical Advisor-Mpower; Sr. Psychiatrist & Advisor on adolescent and youth mental health—an urgent priority as young women navigate complex emotional, academic, and digital landscapes.

Mpower's mission is to create an inclusive platform that fosters mental well-being and empowers changemakers to redefine mental health in society. This vision was exemplified at its flagship Mpowering Minds Summit 2025, held in Mumbai and focused on youth mental health, which convened global and national leaders from institutions such as Harvard Medical School, NIMHANS, the World Economic Forum, and Mental Health First Aid International, among others, to advance dialogue on systemic reform and scalable solutions. The Mpowering Minds Women's Mental Health Summit 2026 will further accelerate national momentum toward advancing women's mental health as a

national priority.

About Mpower

Mpower, an initiative of Aditya Birla Education Trust is a pioneering social enterprise dedicated to transforming India's approach to mental health. Founded 10 years ago, Mpower has emerged as a leading force in spreading awareness, reducing stigma, and delivering holistic mental health care. With a robust team of over 200 trained professionals, Mpower impacts more than 121 million lives across seven cities, including Mumbai, Bengaluru, Kolkata, Delhi, Kota and Pune. Operating through five key verticals—Movement, Clinical Care, Outreach, Academia, and Mpower 1 on 1—Mpower offers a comprehensive range of services. The Movement focuses on changing cultural perceptions and alleviating stigma. Clinical Care provides world-class mental health services through the Centre, the Foundation, and the Cell, catering to various needs from holistic care to affordable support for the underprivileged. The Outreach vertical drives awareness and capacity-building through IGNITE Programs for schools, colleges, NGOs, and corporates. Academia equips individuals and professionals with skills to handle mental health crises and foster empathy. The Helpline offers 24/7 multilingual support, while special projects like Samvedana enhance mental health care in primary health centers. Mpower's integrated approach and collaboration with government agencies underscore its commitment to creating a supportive and stigma-free mental health landscape.

