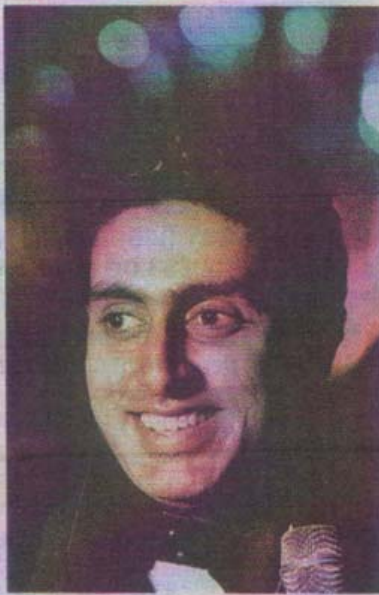


A helping hand for near-geniuses

THE YOUNG Bollywood star Abhishek Bachchan has been appointed brand ambassador to spread awareness about dyslexia, a neurological condition in children with high IQ that makes for special educational needs.

The near genius character of these children puts them in the same league as Albert Einstein, Beethoven, Winston Churchill, Walt Disney and Thomas Edison -- all of whom were dyslexics.

Dyslexia, also termed specific learning disability, is a neurological condition due to which children and adults experience difficulties with reading, spelling or writing. It is estimated to occur in 15 per cent of all school-going children worldwide. An estimated 30 million children are known to be dyslexic in India. It is more prevalent among boys than among girls, and roughly the ratio is 4:1. Expressing his support for



Film actor, Abhishek Bachchan, is all set to support the cause of dyslexic children.

dyslexic children, Abhishek said: "Children with dyslexia have IQ that takes them to the zone of genius, but their neur-

ological construct combines with unaware educational methods to plunge them into the bottom of the ladder. As parents and teachers, they rely on us to understand their challenge of relating to everything a little differently. Let's work together as parents and teachers to help our little geniuses find their true place under the sun. The sooner we are able to help dyslexic children, the better we will be able to unlock their trapped genius and help them contribute their genius to society."

The junior Bachchan will be promoting national awareness on dyslexia through a combination of mass media messages and on ground out-reach programmes for dyslexic kids in collaboration with Prerna, a public trust based in Ahmedabad involved with the education of dyslexic children.

Welcoming his support to the cause, the founder and chairperson of Prerna, Manjula Poo-

ja Shroff, said: Abhishek Bachchan will be a path-blazer voicing the concern to parents, educationists, policy makers and society that 30 million children are potentially ignored. His support will help thousands of kids with specific learning disability become confident adults."

Kids with dyslexia think through mental or sensory imagery, rather than using words, sentences or internal dialogue (self-talk) in their minds. Because this method of thinking is subliminal -- faster than the person can be aware of -- most dyslexics are not aware that this is what they're doing.

So while teaching these children the most important thing that should be considered is that if a child cannot learn the way we teach, we must teach him the way he can learn," said Ms. Shroff.

By Bindu Shajan Perappadan