

CHILD PROTECTION-2

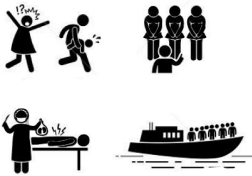


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Introduction

Child abuse is when a parent or caregiver, whether through action or failing to act, causes injury, death, emotional harm or risk of serious harm to a *child*. There are many forms of *child maltreatment*, including neglect, physical *abuse*, sexual *abuse*, exploitation, and emotional *abuse*.

Child abuse and neglect occurs in a range of situations, for various reasons. Physical and sexual abuse among the young can occur at home, school, workplace or the streets. Most sexual abuse is perpetuated by family members or persons known to the family. Children and adolescents are exposed to a range of abuse from rape, forced kissing and sexual advances and exposure to pornographic materials.

Substance Abuse is another area of concern in children and adolescents these days. Tobacco consumption is widely prevalent in adolescence and early adulthood periods. Factors like access to money, parents who use tobacco, and the perception that tobacco using girls/boys have more friends appears to be associated with smoking. Tobacco addiction is the first step in the path of addictions an individual can get into.

Substance use does not restrict to tobacco alone. There are many other substances ranging from the use of inhalants such as petrol, glue, correction fluids, and non-prescription drugs like the pain-killers and cough syrups.

Studies have also shown the use of alcohol, cocaine and other drugs too are prevalent among high school going children and among college students. Curiosity, peer pressure, depression and being tricked by others are some of the reasons pushing adolescents to the use of unwanted substances.

Both print and visual media are important sources of information and influence on young people's minds. Majority of young people are exposed to television and movies and the evidence shows the negative impact especially for tobacco, alcohol consumption, aggression and violence on the society through films and advertisements.



SUBSTANCE ABUSE



Adolescence is a critical period when the first initiation of substance use usually takes place. Substance use includes tobacco, alcohol, non-prescription pharmaceutical medications, narcotics and other addictive substances such as glue and adhesives. Encouragement by peer groups, the lure of popularity, and early availability of tobacco, alcohol and various other non prescription drugs make adolescents an easy prey.



Activity 1 (35-40minutes)

Materials needed: 2 pieces of paper, marker, large open space

Note: Write "YES" on a large sheet of paper and tape it to a wall on one end of the training room. Write "NO" on a second large sheet of paper and tape it to the opposite wall.

Some Ground Rules:

1. Please, no talking during the exercise unless you've been called on to share.
2. Don't make eye contact with other participants as you move to your place on the Line of thought.
3. Keep all initial thoughts and reactions to yourself so you don't influence anyone else.
4. Speak only for yourself when asked to share. Give your own opinion and listen to the opinions of others.

Statements:

Note: Leader reads each statement allowing time for movement along the imaginary "Line of Thought". After each statement provide time for sharing—NOT DISCUSSION. Ask a few volunteers from each group ("Yes" group, "No" group, and "Middle" group) to share why they chose that spot. After the exercise, ask the whole group to participate in the discussion questions.

Peer leader talks, *"Imagine that I'm standing in the middle of a line that runs the entire length of the room. On this end of the room (point) is the "Yes" area and the opposite end of the room (point) is the "No" area. In between you can imagine a variety of responses anywhere between "Yes" and "No."*

I'm going to read a list of statements and, after each one; I'll ask you to move to a point on the line that best represents your views or beliefs. All of the statements are vague.

After everyone has moved, I'll ask for volunteers to support their points of view. I'll ask for volunteers from the "Yes" group, from the "No" group, and from the "Middle" group.



1. Smoking is a status symbol among friends
2. It's OK for grown up people to drink in front of children
3. Penalties for underage drinking are consistently applied
4. It's OK if my friends drink alcohol
5. It's OK if a friend uses illegal drugs
6. It is important that people are held responsible for things they do when they're drunk or high
7. An alcoholic or addict who is working in some organization should be fired
8. An alcoholic, whose drinking has caused irreparable liver damage, should be given a second chance with a liver transplant
9. Manufacturers of alcohol/cigarettes should be allowed to advertise their products on TV
10. I know about drugs

Discussion Questions

1. What did you learn as you participated in this activity?
2. Did anything surprise you? What?
3. Do you believe this discussion might bring people together? Why or why not?
4. Do such forums or discussions help youngsters in bringing out their issues and help them to solve it?

Substance Misuse

A drug is a chemical substance which, when consumed by the body alters its function physically or psychologically. It could be a chemical preparation or a naturally occurring substance like opium. Substance misuse refers to the excess use and dependence on a stimulant (smoking, drugs), depressant, chemical substance, and herb leading to effects that are harmful to the individual's physical and mental health.



There are two types of substance users:

- a) **Experimenters:** Begin smoking/drinking or drugs largely because of Peer pressure, Curiosity or in Party settings
- b) **Compulsive Users:** Habitual users who devote their time and energy in getting the substances that they have become addicted to.

There are currently an estimated 215million tobacco users aged 10 years and above in India. The majority of users start using tobacco before the age of 18, while some even start as young as 10 years. A recent Global Youth Tobacco Survey (2009) conducted with 10,112 students aged 13-15 in India found that 14.6% of 13-15 year olds were current user of tobacco in any form and 4.4% were current smokers.

Causes for Substance misuse:

The exact cause of substance abuse is not clear, with theories including: a genetic disposition; learned from others - or a habit which if addiction develops, manifests as a chronic unbearable disease.

Use and abuse of substances such as cigarettes, alcohol, and illegal drugs may begin in childhood or in the teen years. Certain risk factors may increase someone's likelihood to abuse substances.

- ▶ Factors within a family that influence a child's early development have been shown to be related to increased risk of drug abuse.
- ▶ Drug or alcohol use, running in the family
- ▶ Lack of nurturing and parental attachment
- ▶ Factors related to a child's socialization outside the family may also increase risk of drug abuse



- ▶ Inappropriately aggressive or shy behavior
- ▶ Poor socializing skills
- ▶ Poor school performance
- ▶ Association with a unusual peer group



TOBACCO

- ▶ Consists of crushed and dried leaves of tobacco
- ▶ It is one of the most commonly used drugs.
- ▶ The user's pulse rate and blood pressure increases
- ▶ Over a period of time person develops shortness of breath,cough and slowly develops cancer of lungs,mouth, kidneys
- ▶ It starts with gutka and slowly addiction increases to taking cigarettes and alcohol

Ex: Gutkas, beedi, cigarettes, hookha



ALCOHOL

- ▶ It is another commonly used drug
- ▶ It is a depressant that slows down the activity of the central nervous system
- ▶ At first the person feels relaxed and less inhibited,but gradually the person's reflexes become slow
- ▶ Large amount of drinking on a single occassion may slowdown respiratory system and hangover
- ▶ A person who is a heavy drunkard may develop severe damage to liver, brain, pancreas and lead to death





DRUGS

- ▶ Drugs are chemically prepared or naturally available substances which alters the functions of the body physically and psychologically
- ▶ Repeated use of drugs to the extent that the user is periodically intoxicated, and shows compulsion to take the preferred drug or substance ,has great difficulty in changing his/her behavior and tries to obtain it by almost any means.

Symptoms of substance abusers:

- ▶ Lose interest in studies, school, and work
- ▶ Sudden mood swings, irritability and aggressiveness
- ▶ Have an unexpected need for money and start stealing or selling objects
- ▶ Appear fearful, anxious or suspicious for no reason
- ▶ Have tremors, slurred speech or impaired coordination

Impacts of Substance abuse may show up on the following:

- ▶ Relationships
- ▶ Job/Employment
- ▶ Behavior
- ▶ Financial aspects and Insecurities

In many cases criminal or anti-social behavior occurs when a person is under the influence of a drug/substance, and long term personality changes in individuals may occur as well. In addition to a possible physical, social, and psychological harm, use of some substance may also lead to criminal penalties, although these vary widely depending on the local laws.



Government Initiatives:

- ▶ To halt the growing trend of tobacco consumption the government of India rolled out “CABLE TELEVISION NETWORK (regulation) Amendment Bill” in 2000, that prohibits cigarette and alcohol advertisements on television further since 2008, smoking in India is prohibited in public places under the “Prohibition of Smoking in Public Places Rules”, 2008 and cigarettes and other tobacco products (Prohibition of Advertisement and Regulation of Trade and Commerce production, supply and distribution) Act 2003. The sale of tobacco products within hundred yards of educational institutions has also been banned.
- ▶ To check drug abuse in India, the government passed the NARCOTICS DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES ACT, 1985, thereby making it illegal for a person to produce/manufacture/cultivate, possess, sell, purchase, transport, store and/ or consume any narcotic drug or psychotropic substance except for medical or scientific purposes and in accordance with the terms and conditions of any licensed, permit or authorization given by the government.

Our Role to combat Substance Abuse:

- ▶ “Prevention is better than cure.” This adage holds good in fighting substance abuse too.
- ▶ At individual level **“Saying NO”** to any temptations and being firm is the first step to fight against any form of abuse.
- ▶ The way to say NO could be: Polite Refusal, Being Firm and assertive and may be Giving in an argument.
- ▶ Parents, friends, cousins or a trusted adult can easily identify the person who is under the influence of substance misuse by looking for the symptoms. They are also the people, with whose help the offender can fight the urge and help him/her to become normal. Support of the



family and of the near and dear ones is hence an important support system in early identification of the issue and further to treat it.

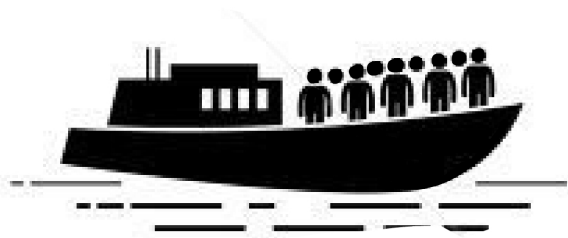
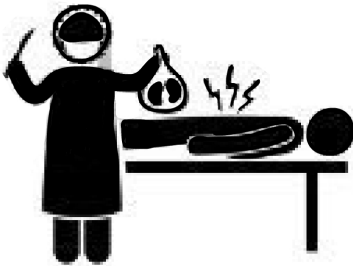
- ▶ Unresolved issues, conflicts and problems lead to Anger, anger in turn can disturb or cause harm or lead to other habits, hence finding an amicable solution and talking out the issues with the concern person is another important way to resist bad habits.
- ▶ Public education campaigns and stricter laws regarding purchase and use of illegal substances could be one of the measures in addressing the problem.
- ▶ **Finally consulting a Doctor is a very necessary solution to find help in case of addiction.**

There are also DE-Addiction centers locally in Visakhapatnam which can guide and help individuals under the influence of any of the substances. Some of them are

1. Green Valley Foundation,
Email: contact@addictionfreelife.org
<http://www.addictionfreelife.org>
2. Helping Hand De-addiction centre
3. Mind Power psychological health and de-addiction centre,
Phone: 092478 83617



EXPLOITATION



Meaning of Exploitation

1. The act of utilizing something in an unjust or cruel manner. Exploitation includes political economy, economics, and sociology, exploitation involves a persistent social relationship in which certain persons are being mistreated or unfairly used for the benefit of others.
2. "Exploitation" refers to the use of people as a resource, with little or no consideration of their well-being. This can take the following basic forms: taking something off a person or group that rightfully belongs to them. Making somebody to work using somebody against his will, or without his consent or knowledge, imposing an illogical differential treatment of people to the advantage of some and the disadvantage of others.

The word exploitation is used to refer to economic exploitation; that is, the act of using another person's labor without offering them an adequate compensation.

Activity 1 (45 minutes)

Definitions—The Words We Use

Materials : Chart Papers, Sketch Pens/Markers, Tape

The goals of this activity are for students

1. to explore their pre-existing knowledge of the sex trade
2. to learn the definitions of terms associated with the sex trade, enabling them to discuss the topics further.
 - ▶ *The peer leader should break up the group into groups of five or six and give each group a large piece of chart paper.*
 - ▶ *Tell each group to use the paper to come up with definitions to the following terms: sexual exploitation, prostitution, and human trafficking.*
 - ▶ *Allow each group 15-20 minutes to create their definitions.*



- ▶ *When everybody is finished, go around the room and have each group present their definitions. Take time to discuss the similarities and differences between the various definitions.*
- ▶ *Then present the given definitions (set forth below) to the class after all the groups have shared. Use this as an opportunity to discuss any or all of these terms in greater detail.*

Sexual Exploitation Definition: The abuse of power or social position to make money by harming someone sexually; it includes supplying of men/women, sex trafficking, pornography, and other adult entertainment.

Prostitution Definition: Engaging in or offering to engage in a sexual act in exchange for something of value, such as money, drugs, clothing, or shelter.

Human Trafficking Definition: Forcing, pressurizing or deceiving people into labor or commercial sex. A trafficking victim is a person who believes she or he would experience serious harm if she or he tried to leave a labor or commercial sex situation. (Note: anyone under 18 who is engaging in commercial sex is also considered a trafficking victim; it is not necessary to prove force, coercion, deception, or fear of serious harm.)

There are different forms of Women Exploitation and abuse:

Domestic Violence: Wife beating is the most prevalent form of violence against women in the Indian society and it is viewed as a general problem of domestic discord

Female Infanticide and Feticide: Poor families in certain regions of the country sometimes resort to killing baby girls at birth, sometimes from the womb to avoid an unwanted burden on dowry and family resources. Sex selective abortion has also been common in our country. (It's dangerous to abort the fetus after 18 weeks of pregnancy and quite harmful for mother too at such a late stage.)

Dowry: Dowry is one of those social evils that no educated woman will own up with pride; still many are adhering to it. Practices of dowry tend to subordinate women in the society.



Psychological/Emotional Abuse: Any act that provokes fear, diminishes the individual's dignity or self-worth, and/or intentionally inflicts psychological trauma on another person. E.g. yelling, intimidation, silence, playing on emotions, degradation,

Sexual Abuse: Any unwelcome or forced sexual activities. E.g. any unwanted sexual contact, forces to have sex, forces to have sex with others, utters threats to obtain sex, forces sex when one is sick, etc.

Apart from the above forms of exploitation serious concern that looks at us is that of Trafficking.

Child Trafficking



In simple terms, child trafficking involves recruitment, transport, or receipt of children or adolescents (under 18) into a situation involving severe exploitation, such as forced labor, slavery, debt bondage, prostitution, pornography or the unlawful removal of organs. Some child trafficking requires force, deception or coercion and some does not (adult trafficking always requires force, deception or coercion).

Causes and consequences of Trafficking:

The global problem of human trafficking is the result of a various factors, including widespread poverty, lack of livelihood opportunities, gender discrimination, and displacement. Frequently, trafficking is accomplished through the deception of girls and their families. In many villages it is reported that traffickers have obtained access to girls by pretending to be grooms without dowry demands. In other cases, trafficking has been facilitated by relatives or friends' of the victims, as well as teachers and placement agencies. Girls who have been exploited are also commonly used to lure girls from source areas.

Children at particular risk for trafficking include:

- ▶ Orphans and children in custody/hostels
- ▶ Institutions away from families
- ▶ Children from broken families
- ▶ Disabled children



- ▶ Children living in rural poverty
- ▶ Children living in slums or on the streets
- ▶ Children in brothels/children in communities practicing religious and cultural prostitution
- ▶ Children stigmatized by abused children born to victims of AIDS/children of bonded
- ▶ Laborers/children from scheduled caste and tribes

Trafficking can be of many types such as:

- ▶ **Trafficking for forced labor:** Victims find themselves held in conditions of slavery in a variety of jobs.
- ▶ **Trafficking in adolescent for sexual exploitation:** Adolescents or children are forced into sexual slavery and held in inhuman conditions under constant fear and pressure.
- ▶ **Trafficking for tissue, cells and organs:** Trafficking in humans for purpose of using their organs, in particular kidneys is a rapidly growing field of criminal activity.

The role of every citizen in fighting the above social evils in some of the ways could be:

1. To make ourselves knowledgeable and create awareness among peers, family and in the immediate surroundings about the intensity at which these evils are spreading and the care to be taken for security reasons.

After talking about all these issues of abuse the peer group should try to brain storm and come up with an action plan to educate and motivate themselves and their other partners and adults in the society of the ways and means to reduce these incidences of abuse.



- a. Awareness rallies and events at colleges and select venues of community
 - b. Advocacy meetings with community stakeholders / influencers on adolescents' issues and their rights and entitlements
2. Education is the main tool which helps to overcome ignorance and thus enabling to think the ways and means to fight such evils.
 3. Because the roots of trafficking lie in attitudes regarding gender violence in general, educate young men and women about gender violence, masculinity and sexual oppression. Raise awareness about the negative impact that all forms of exploitation have on boys, girls and transgender people too.
 4. Teenage is an age of curiosity, swimming in hormones, thus pushing one into experimenting and risk-taking behaviors. The ability to negotiate and saying "NO" to any act of inconvenience is a youngster's right and necessity.
 5. Silence in case of being a victim to any of the evils of the society perpetuates those actions again and again, so learn to "SPEAK OUT" and fight for your rights
 6. Help children/friends to understand their bodies and sex in a way that is appropriate for their age
 7. Develop an open and trusting relationship, so they feel they can talk to you about anything
 8. Explain the difference between safe secrets (such as a surprise party) and unsafe secrets (things that make them unhappy or uncomfortable)
 9. Teach children to respect family boundaries, such as privacy in sleeping, dressing and bathing
 10. Supervised and controlled internet, mobile and television use avoids getting exposed to many unwanted evils.



What does the law say?

Immoral Traffic prevention Act, 1986 (source: www.childlineindia.org.in)

In 1956 India passed the suppression of immortal traffic in women and girls Act. 1956 (SITA)

The act was further amended and changed in 1986, resulting in the immoral Traffic prevention act also known as PITA The following is an outline of the provisions in this law that pertains to children below the age of 18

Section five of the act states that if a person procures, induces or takes a child for the purpose of prostitution then the prison sentence is a minimum of seven years but can be extended to life , To ensure that the people in the chain of trafficking are also held responsible the act has a provision that states that any person involved in the recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring , or receiving of persons for the purpose of prostitution if guilty of trafficking in addition any person attempting to commit trafficking or found in the brothel or visiting the brothel is punishable under this law.

If a person is found with child it is assumed that he has detained that child there for the purpose of sexual intercourse and hence shall be punishable to seven years in prison up to life imprisonment or a term which may be extended to ten years and also maximum fine of 1 lakh rupees .If a child is found in a brothel and after medical examination has been found to have been sexually abused it is assumed that the child has been detained for the purpose of prostitution .

Any person committing prostitution in public with a child shall be punishable to seven year in prison, up to life imprisonment, or a term which may extend to ten years and also maximum fine of one lakh rupees. If prostitution of a child is being committed with knowledge of an establishment owner such as a hotel the license of the hotel is likely to be cancelled along with the given prison sentence and/or fines.

Any child found in a brothel or being abused for the purpose of prostitution can be placed in an institution for their safety by a magistrate, landlords,

Leasers, owner, agent of the owner who unknowingly previously rented their property to a person found guilty of prostituting a child, must get approval from a magistrate before releasing their property for three years after the order is passed.



Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act 2012)

- ▶ To deal with child sexual abuse cases, the Government has brought in a special law, namely, The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012. The Act has come into force with effect from 14th November, 2012 along with the Rules framed there under.
- ▶ The POCSO Act, 2012 is a comprehensive law to provide for the protection of children from the offences of sexual assault, sexual harassment and pornography, while safeguarding the interests of the child at every stage of the judicial process by incorporating child-friendly mechanisms for reporting, recording of evidence, investigation and speedy trial of offences through designated Special Courts.



UNDERSTANDING GENDER



Activity-1 (45 minutes)

Step-Out Exercise

This activity deals with popular gender stereotypes. The goal is to understand that gender stereotypes are not an abstract theory; they actually exist in the real world. This activity will allow the group to explore their thoughts and emotions regarding gender stereotypes.

Directions for Part 1:

- ▶ *Have the young men and women line up separately on opposite sides of the room, facing each other.*
- ▶ *Explain that the following exercise will be done in two parts; first, you will read a question for the young men and then one for the young women.*
- ▶ *The students should remain silent. If they feel the need to talk, laugh, or make noise, ask them to notice the uncomfortable feelings they are experiencing rather than to express them and distract others.*
- ▶ *Explain that although everyone is expected to participate in the exercise, individuals may choose to pass for any reason.*
- ▶ *Read each statement below and ask all the male students to whom it applies to take two steps forward. Notice who has stepped forward and their reactions. Ask them to step back into line and then read a statement for the females, asking them to step forward in the same manner.*
- ▶ *Remind the students they have the right to pass if they do not feel comfortable.*

Men's Step-Out Exercise

Please step forward silently if...

- a. Have you ever tried to grow facial hair (beard)?
- b. Have you ever been forced to play a sport/game you did not want to play?
- c. Have you ever been told not to cry?



- d. Have you ever been physically injured and hid the pain or kept it to yourself because you are a boy/man.
- e. Have you ever worried you were not strong/fit enough to be a boy/man.
- f. Have you ever changed your diet or exercised to make yourself look more masculine.
- g. Have you ever been in a fight because you felt you had to prove you were a man?

Women's Step-Out Exercise

Please step forward silently if..

- a. Have you ever limited your activity, or changed your plans, out of fear for your physical safety.
- b. Have you changed your diet or exercised to make yourself more feminine.
- c. Have you ever worn uncomfortable or restrictive clothing to show you were a woman?
- d. Have you ever been forced to cook or wash dishes while the boys and men relaxed?
- e. Have you ever felt less important than a man?
- f. Have you ever remained silent, or were ever ignored, because boys or men were doing all the talking.
- g. Have you ever worried you were not feminine enough.

Directions for Part 2:

- ▶ Have the group break into same-gender pairs to discuss the feelings that arose during the exercise. Then ask for students willing to share the feelings that arose for them with the whole class.
- ▶ Ask the group to discuss if the above statements are a result of Sex or Gender Roles. What is the difference between these two?



Sex	Gender
<p>'SEX' refers to biological and physiological characteristics between male and female</p> <p>Ex: Males have testicles and females have ovaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sex is permanent. • Sex is natural <p>Sex refers to Male or Female</p>	<p>'Gender' is a socio-cultural term- behaviors, roles, expectations, and activities of an individual in society</p> <p>Ex: Women tend to do more of the house- hold work than their spouses do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender can be changed (ex: Men can cook) • Gender roles are artificial and man made • Gender refers to Masculine or Feminine like lifting heavy weights is masculine and sweeping and moping is feminine.

Gender' is a socio-cultural term referring socially defined roles and behaviors assigned to 'males' and 'females' in a given society; whereas, the term 'sex' is a biological and physiological phenomenon which defines man and woman. In its social, historical and cultural aspects, gender is a function of power relationship between men and women where men are considered superior to women. Therefore, gender may be understood as a man-made concept, while 'sex' is natural or biological characteristics of human beings.

Gender Inequality, in simple words, may be defined as discrimination against women based on their sex. Women are traditionally considered by the society as weaker sex. She has been accorded a subordinate position to men. She is exploited, degraded, violated and discriminated both in our homes and in outside world. This peculiar type of discrimination against women is prevalent everywhere in the world and more so in Indian society.

But it is important to remember that the gender roles are learned. They are not "natural". All of us begin to observe and learn gender norms from our elders, teachers, religious leaders and the immediate surroundings. For example men are discouraged from helping women at home saying those are "women's works" (cutting vegetables,



changing nappies, cleaning and tidying the house)while women are restricted from taking up careers like joining army, police or running trains).

There are many reasons for Gender discrimination all over the world. Gender Inequality, in simple words, may be defined as discrimination against women based on their sex. Women are traditionally considered by the society as weaker sex. She has been accorded a subordinate position to men. She is exploited, degraded, violated and discriminated both in our homes and in outside world. This peculiar type of discrimination against women is prevalent everywhere in the world and more so in Indian society.

Gender inequality manifests in varied ways. And in India the major indicators are:

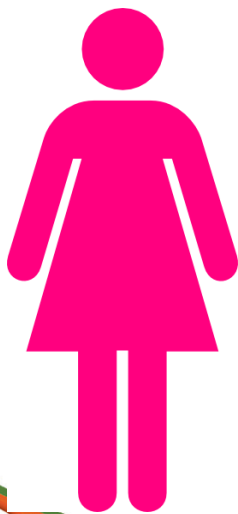
- ▶ Female Feticide: the practice of aborting a fetus when a person finds out that the fetus is **female** after undergoing a sex determination test known as prenatal diagnostic tests.
- ▶ Female Infanticide: the deliberate killing of newborn **female** children
- ▶ Sex ratio: 927 girls for every 1000 boys
- ▶ Female literacy: 64%
- ▶ Maternal mortality rate: 178 deaths per 100000 live births



These above mentioned indicators show the status of a woman in our country. Despite the Prenatal Diagnostics Techniques (Regulation and prevention of misuse) Act, 1994 Sex selective abortions in India are still high. One estimate done by Mac Pherson shows that more than 1 lakh illegal abortions are being performed in India for the reason that the foetus is a girl child. Due to this there is an alarming decrease in the male and female sex ratio in the country.

Female illiteracy is 65.46% in 2011 as against 82.14% of the male literacy. This gap indicates a wide gender disparity in India that the Indians do not give enough importance to the education of girls. The female child in India is often deprived from her right of an education. The number of girls dropping out of school far exceeds the boys because girls are expected to help at home, either with household work like washing and cooking or with taking care of younger siblings. Since girls spend more time performing domestic duties and this increases the gap between female and male equality in rural parts of India, it perpetuates the myth that education is of no help to the girl and her primary job will be to look after the household work, get married early, have children and then raise them. If this is the job she has to do, then education is of no importance to her and it is not imparted. Also, even with education and financial independence, women might not get the same rights and liberties which a man may have. It is through education in the early days of a child that we can bring about behavior changes and open doors to opportunities that will enhance their confidence, personality, and career.

Women's Health in India:



In Western nations women typically live about six years longer than men, but this is not true in India. Evidence shows that girls are given less food and health care than boys, especially in Northern India. Girls are breastfed for shorter periods, given less medical attention, fewer consultations and visits to the doctor, and are often taken very late to the hospital in an emergency.

Female children are given less food, both in quality and quantity, and therefore are undernourished compared to male children. This in turn leads to health issues like anemia and intrauterine growth restriction during pregnancy. If a woman gives birth to a female child while malnourished, then the child's survival issues and nutritional issues increase.



The female child's status is the result of general societal attitude towards women at large in India. Girls in India face higher risks of malnutrition, disease, disability, and retardation of growth and development. They have no access to or control over the resources because their work toward raising a family and in the household chores is undervalued.

A popular Telugu saying from Andhra Pradesh says, "Bringing up a daughter is like watering a plant in another's courtyard." Due to this understanding, she is considered a liability and outside commodity and is deprived of good food and nutrition.

According to a global study, India is the fourth most dangerous country for a female child in the world.

Steps to address Gender Discrimination:

Be Alert: Recognise a person at risk by being alert

Ask Questions: Ask questions in private and in a non-judgemental way

Access to Health Services: Provide appropriate healthcare and escort the person if necessary

Emotional Support : Help the victim to overcome the feelings of guilt, anger, shame, fear and depression. Provide safe places to live

Legal Aid: Share information on legal options. Help them with institutions/organizations that provide support services



Legal and Constitutional Safeguards against Gender Inequality

Indian Constitution provides for positive efforts to eliminate gender inequality; the Preamble to the Constitution talks about goals of achieving social, economic and political justice to everyone and to provide equality of status and of opportunity to all its citizens. Further, women have equal right to vote in our political system. Article 15 of the Constitution provides for prohibition of discrimination on grounds of sex also apart from other grounds such as religion, race, caste or place of birth. Article 15(3) authorizes the State to make any special provision for women and children. Moreover, the Directive Principles of State Policy also provides various provisions which are for the benefit of women and provides safeguards against discrimination.

Other than these Constitutional safeguards, various protective Legislations have also been passed by the Parliament to eliminate exploitation of women and to give them equal status in society. For instance, **The Sati (Prevention) Act, 1987** was enacted to abolish and make punishable the inhuman custom of Sati; **The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961** to eliminate the practice of dowry; **The Special Marriage Act, 1954** to give rightful status to married couples who marry inter-caste or inter-religion; **Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill (introduced in Parliament in 1991, passed in 1994** to stop female infanticide and many more such Acts. Furthermore, the Parliament time to time brings out amendments to existing laws in order to give protection to women according to the changing needs of the society, for instance, Section 304-B was added to the Indian Penal Code, 1860 to make dowry-death or bride-burning a specific offence punishable with maximum punishment of life imprisonment.

Institutions working towards protecting the rights of Adolescents

- ▶ **National Commission for protection of Child Rights (NCPCR <http://ncpcr.gov.in/>)**

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) was set up in March 2007 under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005, an Act of Parliament (December 2005). The Commission's Mandate is to ensure that all Laws, Policies, Programmes, and Administrative Mechanisms are in consonance with the Child Rights perspective as enshrined in the Constitution of India and also the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Child is defined as a person in the 0 to 18 years age group.



- ▶ **State commission for protection of Child Rights** ncpcr.gov.in/statecom.php
- ▶ **CHILDLINE INDIA FOUNDATION**

<http://www.childlineindia.org.in/>

CHILDLINE is a platform bringing together the Ministry of Women & Child Development, Government of India, Department of Telecommunications, street and community youth, non-profit organizations, academic institutions, the corporate sector and concerned individuals. They work for the protection of the rights of all children in general. But their special focus is on all children in need of care and protection, especially the more vulnerable sections.

Child Line Toll Free Number 1098



What does the law say?

Immoral Traffic prevention Act, 1986 (source: www.childlineindia.org.in)

In 1956 India passed the suppression of immortal traffic in women and girls Act. 1956 (SITA)

The act was further amended and changed in 1986, resulting in the immoral Traffic prevention act also known as PITA The following is an outline of the provisions in this law that pertains to children below the age of 18

Section five of the act states that if a person procures, induces or takes a child for the purpose of prostitution then the prison sentence is a minimum of seven years but can be extended to life , To ensure that the people in the chain of trafficking are also held responsible the act has a provision that states that any person involved in the recruiting, transporting, transferring, harboring , or receiving of persons for the purpose of prostitution if guilty of trafficking in addition any person attempting to commit trafficking or found in the brothel or visiting the brothel is punishable under this law.

If a person is found with child it is assumed that he has detained that child there for the purpose of sexual intercourse and hence shall be punishable to seven years in prison up to life imprisonment or a term which may be extended to ten years and also maximum fine of 1 lakh rupees .If a child is found in a brothel and after medical examination has been found to have been sexually abused it is assumed that the child has been detained for the purpose of prostitution .

Any person committing prostitution in public with a child shall be punishable to seven year in prison, up to life imprisonment, or a term which may extend to ten years and also maximum fine of one lakh rupees. If prostitution of a child is being committed with knowledge of an establishment owner such as a hotel the license of the hotel is likely to be cancelled along with the given prison sentence and/or fines.

Any child found in a brothel or being abused for the purpose of prostitution can be placed in an institution for their safety by a magistrate, landlords,

Leasers, owner, agent of the owner who unknowingly previously rented their property to a person found guilty of prostituting a child, must get approval from a magistrate before releasing their property for three years after the order is passed.



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Notes





Improving the Lives of Adolescents