

Personal Safety Education Programme India



Type of intervention



Classroom setting



Group Work



Individual Work

Target group, level of prevention and sub-groups:

Primary prevention



Children (6-11 Years) | Male & Female | Classroom Setting, Group Work, Individual Work | English

Target population

Children aged 6-12 years.

Delivery organisation

Arpan, India (a non-government organisation)

Mode and context of delivery

The Personal Safety Education (PSE) Programme aims to enable and empower children by providing them with information and skills via workshops to prevent the risk of sexual abuse. Children are targeted in private, semi-private and government schools as well as in shelter homes and within communities. The PSE project also involves awareness building and skill enhancement in adults including parents, teachers and institutional caretakers who are the primary stakeholders and caregivers in a child's life. These stakeholders are given adequate information and skills with regard to child sexual abuse, to create strong safety and support networks around children in their respective environments.

Level/Nature of staff expertise required

Teachers, residential staff and youth workers trained by Arpan, deliver the PSE programme.

Intensity/extent of engagement with target group(s)

Age appropriate information is provided across four to six lessons.

Description of intervention

The Personal Safety Education Programme (PSE) is a preventive programme, delivered by Arpan, which is based on a life skill module to empower children and their stakeholders (school management, parents, and teachers) with the knowledge, attitude and skills to minimise the risk of child sexual abuse and to seek support if such a case has occurred. Children who report sexual abuse (including attempts) are provided with psychotherapeutic support to facilitate their healing process. Arpan advocates with the school and NGO management to make systemic level changes within their current infrastructure, programmes, systems and policies etc. in order to sustain the social impact of PSE.

PSE focuses on teaching children that they are special and have a wonderful body and that they have a right to be safe and protected. In order to keep themselves safe they must know the “Personal Safety Rules” and names of private body parts. They learn to identify safe and unsafe situations and touch, how to say “No” to a potential abuser and how to tell a trusted adult.

During the PSE lessons, the children are given assignments that parents are encouraged to be a part of. The assignments enable children to voice questions, apprehensions, confusions and thoughts and encourage them to seek help whenever necessary. This process of interaction between the children and the guardians provides a non-threatening means for the guardians to talk to children about issues that they would otherwise feel uncomfortable about.

Each module is age appropriate and designed for differing developmental levels. Personal Safety Lessons use various activities like songs, puppet shows, role plays and worksheets. Modules are interactive and provide space for children to process the information and to use the skills which have been taught. In addition, after the lessons are completed, children see the trainers on a one-to-one basis to reiterate the important messages. These interactions, along with an evaluation of homework sheets, also help trainers to assess the comprehension level of the children and to refer children with special needs to school/external counsellors. In order for children to retain the messages it is crucial that schools continue with the PSE module every year. Parents are also encouraged to discuss these messages with their children at regular interval.

Apart from conducting the PSE module, Arpan also advocates for the institutionalisation of the PSE curriculum within the existing school system and motivates the senior management of the school to develop and strengthen the existing child protection policies and systems within their environment.

Evaluation

No evaluation data is available.

References

Website: <http://arpan.org.in/personal-safety-education/>

Empowering the Child: An overview of Arpan's Personal Safety Education model by Pooja Taparia, Arpan: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxuN_ToxfJk

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