

Peer Educator Training on Health, Nutrition & Wellbeing of Students in Residential Schools



A. OVERVIEW

PEER is a person who has equal standing with another as in age, background, social status, and interests. They play significant role generating positive behavioral transformation among peer adolescent. Equipped peers can communicate accurate and adequate information solving emerging queries related to physical and emotional changes. This means of communication powerfully controls the life of adolescents. Peers play a critical role in the psychosocial development of most adolescents. They, in fact, provide opportunities for personal relationships, social behaviors, and a sense of belonging. Therefore, peer education is considered as a health promotion strategy in adolescents.

Studies have shown that equipping adolescents with life skills help them to make informed decisions, solve problems, think critically and creatively, communicate effectively, build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and manage their lives in a healthy and productive manner. In India, adolescent girls account for nearly 11% of the population but remain an invisible group (UNFPA 2003- Adolescents in India: A Profile). Society usually fails to respect their human rights, leaving them powerless to act in a way that improves their lives at home, school, or work.

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in its County Programme - 8, was successfully advocate and introduce the life skills education programme in residential schools of the ST and SC Development department. UNFPA is partnering with the Scheduled Caste Scheduled Tribe Research and Training Institute (SCSTRTI), Government of Odisha since April 2015 for the programme. The focus of the programme is to empower adolescents with knowledge and life skills and to create an enabling environment for their safer and informed growing up process. Numerous activities were organized under Life Skills Education programme such as training to teachers, ANMs, matrons and supervisory cadre officials of the ST and SC Development department under this programme. As part of its advocacy programme it has also reached different stakeholders such as district and block level officials of the ST and SC Development department as well as officials of other line departments and NGOs, with a specific focus on safety, security and wellbeing of students in residential schools. It has facilitated ST and SC Development Department devising Standard Operating Procedures (SOP), Code of Conducts and different monitoring tools towards ensuring accountability and transparency.

B. RATIONALE OF TRAINING

The ST & SC Development Department, GoO accords high priority for safety, security and wellbeing of students of residential school. It has also realized that school can be used as a model platform where the students can be provided with better care, treatment and education and can be nurtured along with other additional skills which will imbibe them to act as change agent for other adolescents in their respective communities.

The longstanding programmatic interventions in residential schools under LSE programme has guided to strategize Peer Educators training programme. Meanwhile several challenging issues such as; increased reporting of cases like sexual abuse, teenage pregnancy, detection of anemia among adolescent, drug misuse and interpersonal conflict were the push factors to organize peer educators training as priority. The moto was broadly focused on enhancing self-learning & awareness building of those peers and at the same time building Peer Cadre towards spreading the learned skills to maximum numbers of other adolescents. The training programme is also designed to be linked with further activities resolving the issues on macro level.

C. OBJECTIVES

- a. To enhance the knowledge of students on growing up, changes during adolescence, nutrition, SRH, substance abuse, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, gender and gender-based discrimination and rights
- b. To build the capacity of the peer educators and enable them to take right decision to lead a healthy safe life
- c. To empower the peer educators to meet the challenges, handle the situation and manage the pressure in proper manner
- d. To assist the nodal teachers and transact life skills education session on themes of LSE in schools and hostels
- e. To facilitate the Peer Educators to discuss openly on various sensitive topic.

D. SELECTION OF PEER EDUCATORS

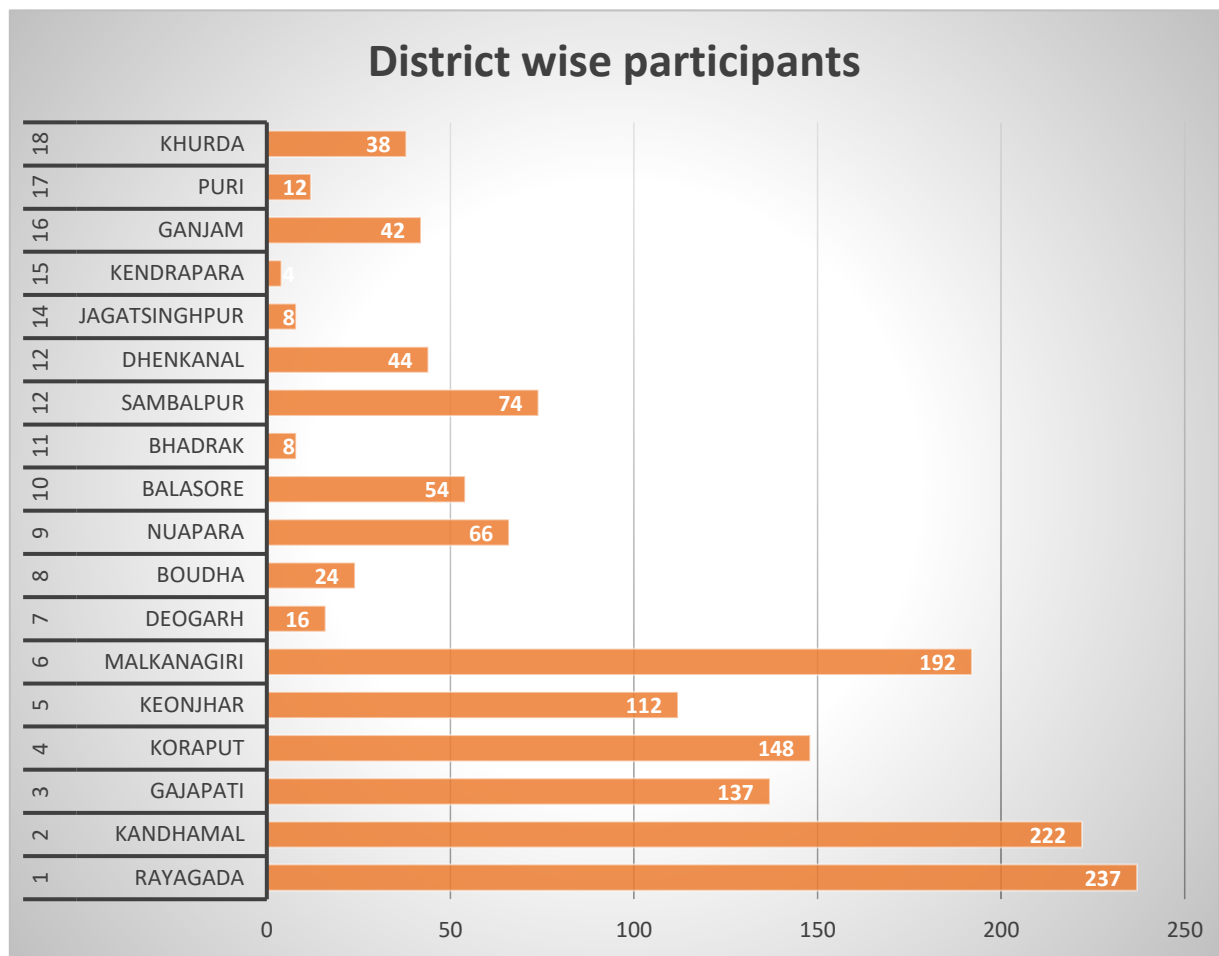
Selection of Peer Educators was remained as an important task because these peer educators will be acting as change agent taking the activity further. So, to enhance the efficacy of the programme following guidelines have been considered while selecting peer educators.

- All Ashram School, High Schools, EMRS, Educational Complex and Secondary grade schools under ST and SC Development Department was covered under the intervention.

- 04 peer educators to be selected from each secondary grade schools and 02 from Upper primary schools (Ashram Schools).
- The peer educators to be selected from among the 7th, 8th, 9th and 11th Grade students.
- In case of co-education schools 50% boys and girls shall be selected.
- Democratic and Participatory process need to follow while selecting suitable peer educator. The existing student's association like school monitor, health coordinators and school assembly platform may be explored for selection.
- The qualities like sociable students having good communication skills to be considered for selection of peer educators.

Following the above stated guideline in the first phase **1438** number of students from **211** high schools, **6** EMRS, **8** Educational Complex and **278** Ashram school of **18** districts in 28 batches (14 slots) were selected and attended the training as Peer Educators (PE).

Sl. No	Name of the District	Total no. of participation	Girls	Boys
1	Rayagada	237	140	97
2	Kandhamal	222	183	39
3	Gajapati	137	105	32
4	Koraput	148	106	42
5	Keonjhar	112	86	26
6	Malkanagiri	192	115	77
7	Deogarh	16	12	4
8	Boudha	24	19	5
9	Nuapara	66	15	51
10	Balasore	54	38	16
11	Bhadrak	08	5	3
12	Sambalpur	74	55	19
12	Dhenkanal	44	35	9
14	Jagatsinghpur	08	6	2
15	Kendrapara	04	2	2
16	Ganjam	42	33	9
17	Puri	12	9	3
18	Khurda	38	32	6
TOTAL		1438	997	441



E. INTERACTION SESSION

Prof.Dr. A.B Ota, Director cum Spl. Secretary, SCSTRTI : His presence has encouraged the children. He has appreciated the participants for their interest and guided them to become a responsible peer speeding the message to others.

Dr. Deepa Prasad, State Program Coordinator, UNFPA : She interacted with children specifically on their interest and experience as peer educators. She guided the participants for positive participations and learning from the training. Since the peer educators will be catalysts to others they should understand how and what message to be communicated to others. She facilitated the participants to understand this technique of communication affirming the confirmation of utilization of knowledge acquired from the training.

F. TRAINING SESSION

A series of three days state level residential “Peer Educator Training on Health, Nutrition and Wellbeing of Students in Residential Schools” program was organized by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) with the collaboration of SCSTRTI, Govt. of Odisha and APPI from date 18.09.2018 to date 08.12.2018 at Ankakshy Urban Hostel, Pokhariput, Bhubaneswar.

Broadly, in three days of training session the Resource Persons were used different method such as lecture, group discussion with presentation, role play, game, video show, using different tools such as comics on different themes, FAQ(Mo manarakichhiprasna), work book, margadarshika on different theme such as; nutrition, health & hygiene, growing up, changes during adolescent, menstrual cycle, night fall, reproductive sexual health, STI/RTI, HIV & AIDS, early marriage, teenage pregnancy, ten core skills of life skills, substance misuse, peer pressure, gender discrimination.12 Master Trainers were facilitated the entire training series. (List attached in the Annexure)

Peer Educator were given take home kit of (workbook, FAQs, Margadarshika, Note pad, pen, T-shirt, cap, bag etc). Certificate of recognition was given to every peer educator.

Session-I: Introduction to Life Skills for positive attitude

Peer educators were introduced with the basic components of life skill education towards imbibing positive attitude in them. Since they are going to be the guide to other children their articulation must be driven by positive messages. And positive message can only be comprehended when he/she is aware about the fact profoundly. Basing on this principle of knowledge building the Resource persons were using Power Point Presentations demonsrating different components of life skills such as;

- Common skill and life skills
- Definition of life skills: “Abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life (WHO)”
- Core of life skills: Self Awareness, Critical thinking, Decision making, effective communication, decision making, empathy, creative thinking, problem solving, interpersonal relationship and coping.
- Social skills and emotional skills.

Session-II :Role and responsibilities of a Peer Educators

During feedback session of the training, an overwhelmed peer educator shared that “I was not aware about the fact that what I should do and how I should do before attending this programme. But now I am aware of all those and this training programme has gave me those insights”. The motto of stating this point is to reaffirm

that the need and demand was properly assessed while devising the training module. Roles and responsibilities of peer educators is a key important point added in the module to educate the peer educators basing on 04 broad issues that are;

- Awareness building on SRH issues, Prevention of Substance misuse and Gender based discrimination,
- Promoting safety environment in schools,
Since there were children from residential schools or even non-residential schools the school safety guidelines were discussed with them during the session.
- Hotline Phone and Toll free number "1800-345-3040" is functioning in state office to register complaints and action measures. This was also discussed to the children. Basically they were discussed to use this without any fear to report the matter and also not to misuse this number.

Session-III: Nutrition & WIFS

This session was broadly focused on below stated segments. A comic was used as tool to make those peer educators a better understanding on

- Important of balanced diet and availability of such nutrients in localized food.
- Basics of Anaemia. Its cause and effect on both physical and mental growth of adolescent child.
- Prevention of anaemia through behavioral change and adoption of health food practices.
- Food pyramid Index was presented to make them a better and easy understanding on balanced food. This had showed them by using tool.
- Adolescent Health Day (AHD), which was used as a platform for regular health check-ups, counselling and referral of the school children was also informed to the children.
- Weekly Iron Folic Supplementation (WIFS) as one of the important prevention initiatives.

Session-IV: Personal Hygiene

- Maintaining personal hygiene including menstrual hygiene
Environmental sanitation
- Demonstration session on hand washing

Session-V: Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health

- Growing up and changes during adolescence
- Myths & misconceptions around ARSH

Session-VI: Reorientation on safety and security guidelines, POCSO Act

As per the UNCRC safety is the rights of every children. It may be of home, school or any set-up the child should get optimum safety environment to growth. So, the component of safety and security in the residential school is being introduced

through a guideline. The said guideline was discussed with the children and they have understood some important points of the guideline such as;

- Safety dimensions.
- Grievance place and process.
- Their role and responsibility.
- Role of teachers and parents etc.

This session also covered Provision of Prevention of Children's from Sexual Offense Act. The resource person has carefully presented both the session in simple and understandable form to the peer educators.

A short movie Komol was showed to the children to bring them better insight on child Abuse.

Session-VII : Early Marriage & Teenage Pregnancy, RTI/STI & HIV & AIDS

Adolescent period is dealing with numerous sexual myths and misconceptions on sexual behaviors. Social challenges like early marriages and teenage pregnancy are threat to independent decision making of girl child. So, the peer educators were educated on issues on early marriage & teenage pregnancy, RTI/STI and HIV/AIDS. So that they will pass-on this information to their peers.

Session-VIII : General ailments, communicable diseases and its Prevention

Common illness like Diarrhoea, Fever, Dental Caries, Measles and Chickenpox, Skin Infections, Anemia and Malnutrition hits the children and significantly they just treat it locally which affects their health and some occasion fatal too. So technically the Peer educators were informed about those common illness and its treatment mechanism.

Session-IX : Substance misuse, Responsible adolescent & Gender discrimination

This session was broadly covered three major issues that are substance misuse, gender discrimination and responsible adolescent. Though substance misuse relates to responsible adolescent it has grate role on other aspects of adolescent life too. So, to bring conscious behavioral change the session addressed very realistic issues of dealing with substances misuse and its impact on physical and psychological growths of children.

Gender discrimination is directly impacting the rights of the children. So, girl children have to be empowered to deal with gender discrimination issues. Since the issue needs localized and issue specific approaches the children need to be enabled in peer.

G. EXPOSURE VISIT

Exposure visit was organized for each batch. Since maximum of the children were from far of the districts and this was the first time, they have visited to Bhubaneswar

the state capital, they have given a chance to visit tribal museum. This was the boost to their confidence and provided a space for recreation.



H. PRE-POST ASSESSMENT ANALYSIS

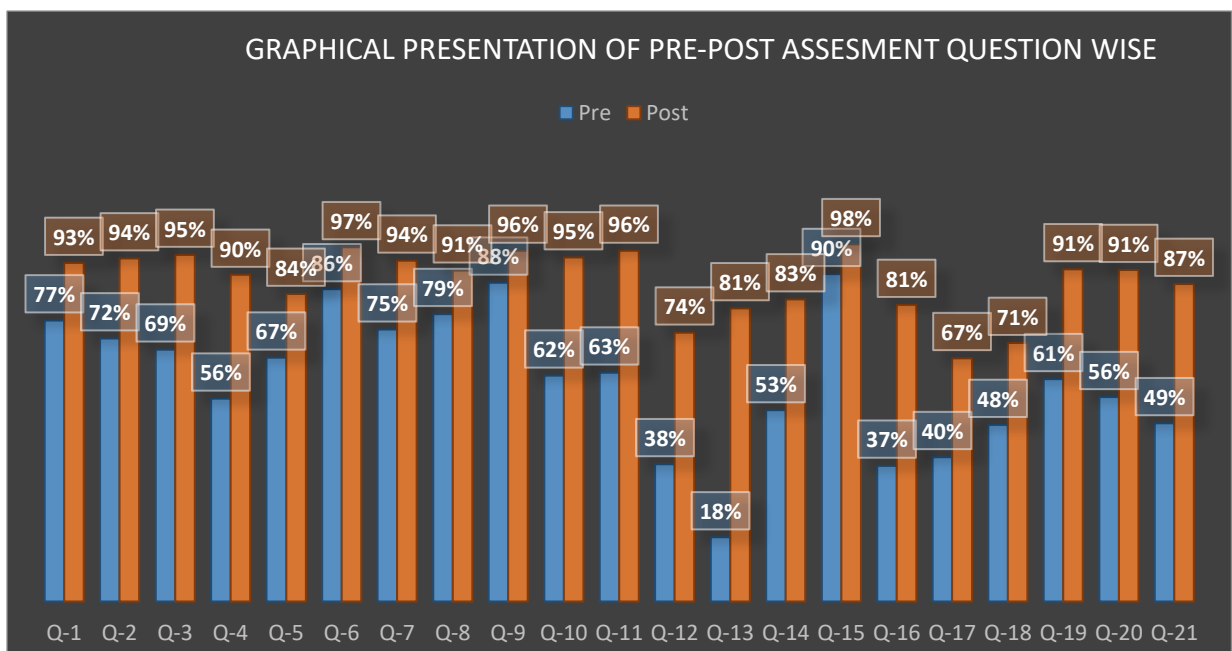
There are 1438 peer educators attended the meeting. As the standard procedure of training a questionnaire was set for pre-knowledge assessment and the same set off question also used for post-knowledge assessment.

The question was broadly covering below stated theme.

- 1- Life skill
- 2- Growing up and changes during adolescent.
- 3- Nutrition, WIFS
- 4- Sexual Abuse, Safety Security, POCSO Act.
- 5- Early marriage.
- 6- RTI/STI & HIV.
- 7- Roles and responsibility of Peer Educators

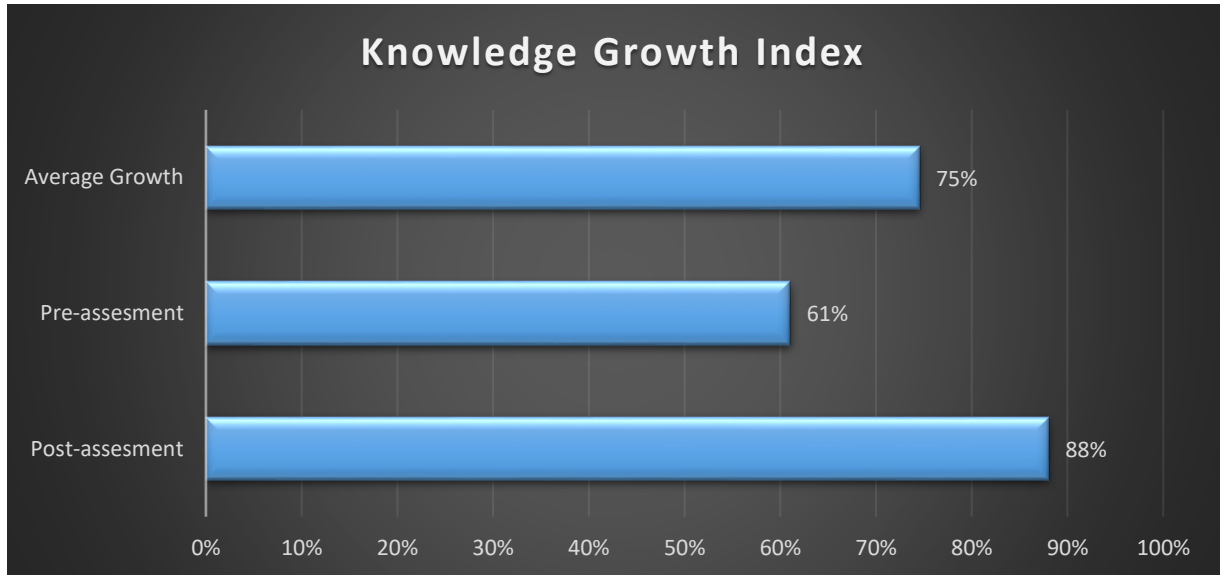
There were 21 questions and each question were carried 01 marks each. The entire 21 questions were based on above 7 themes.

Graph-1



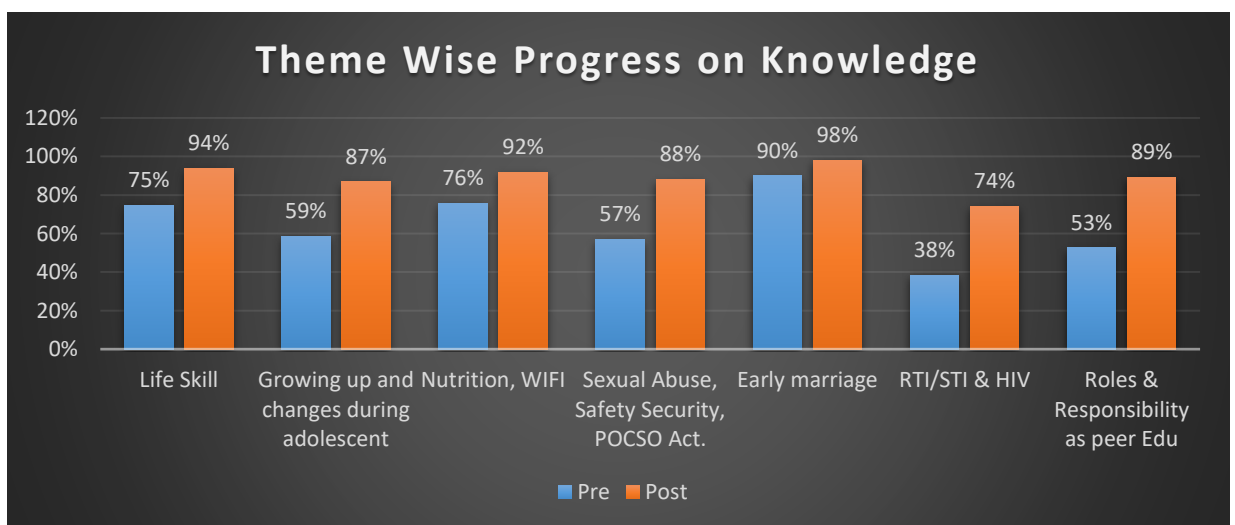
The Graph-1 shows a remarkable growth on the knowledge level of peer educators after the training session. By and large the bars are reflecting the percentage of peer educators given correct answer out of 1438.

Graph-2



The average marks secured during pre-assessment is of 61% out of 1438 peer educators attended 21 and 88% in post-assessment shows a subsequent hike as 27% and overall growth of 75 %. This shows a clear out-put of knowledge building in training.

Graph-3



The Graph-3 shows the knowledge level and growth on thematic wise.

I. KEY OBSERVATIONS/FINDINGS

- The peer educators were from 18 districts. Some children were attending this type of training session on Life Skill Education for first time.
- During interaction it is observed that there was serious confusion about the forms of Sexual Abuse.
- The training has enabled 1438 children providing knowledge on various theme and this become a ready platform for further linkages and impact of LSE Programme.
- Legal provisions (safety, security guideline/measures and specially the POCSO Act) was presented on simple and understandable forms to Peer Educators. This has enabled them to address their problems promptly and effectively.
- Role clarity is a very important aspect of service deliver process. This training programme had brought synergy of understanding on the role and responsibility of Peer educators.

J. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Peer Educators will translate the LSE session in their concern schools and hostels.
- Increased self alert to preventive sexual abuse and can facilitate reporting of sexual abuse in case of happenings.
- Self aware and skilled adolescent to cope with problematic situations by themselves.
- Peer educators can provide counseling to other students and it will have increased impact.
- Peer educators will build the self-esteem of other children of their concern school and will contribute to prepare them in overall problem-solving process.

PHOTO GALLERY



United Nations Population Fund



ST & SC Development Department
Government of Odisha



Azim Premji
Philanthropic
Initiatives