Concurrent Evaluation of
The Adolescence Education Programme
(2010-11)

Executive Summary
We gratefully acknowledge the enthusiastic participation of the following students from Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS), Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNV) and private schools affiliated to Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in the National Poster Festival, 2010 and National Youth Festival, 2009

1. Dibbendu Paul, KVS, Range Hills Pune, Maharashtra
2. Krishna Swami, JNV, Pallu Hanuman Garh, Rajasthan
3. Abhipasa Priyadarsini Chinara, JNV, Sarang Dhenkanal, Orissa
4. Simile Mishra, KVS, Mhow Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
5. Unknown contribution
6. Shivani Sharma, KVS, ISP Nashik, Maharashtra
7. Harsh Agrawal, India International School, Jaipur, Rajasthan
8. Laxmi Narayan Mochi, JNV, Mandaphia, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan

We are proud to display their artwork
Concurrent Evaluation of
The Adolescence Education Programme
(2010-11)

Executive Summary
The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has always recognized the potential of young people and invested in initiatives and partnerships to create and strengthen opportunities for young people to realize better life options.

Adolescents (aged 10 to 19 years) constitute nearly 225 million and represent 22% of the Indian population as per Census of India, 2001. The experience of this cohort of young people will largely determine whether the country is able to harness its demographic dividend and achieve its development goals.

The Adolescence Education Programme (AEP) is one such important initiative that aims to empower young people with accurate, age appropriate and culturally relevant information, promote healthy attitudes and develop skills to enable them to respond to real life situations in positive and responsible ways. The programme is implemented at the national level in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and has evolved over the past three decades to respond to the changing realities of young people in India.

National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an autonomous body under the MHRD co-ordinates the program and works through both curricular and co-curricular formats to contribute towards holistic development of young people in pursuance of the National Curriculum Framework, 2005. The curricular interventions include support for integration of life skills in the secondary curriculum of National Institute of Open Schooling that enrolls approximately 4,00,000 learners each year. The co-curricular interventions include implementation of the Program through the three national school systems—Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (NVS), Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and private schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The programme emphasizes on a cascade training approach that has...
created a pool of master trainers who orient nodal teachers who are entrusted with the responsibility of transacting life skills based education to secondary school students (classes 9 and 11, ages 14 through 18) using interactive methodologies. The nodal teachers are provided the training curriculum and resource materials that recommend a minimum of 16 hours of transaction time around the themes of making healthy transitions to adulthood, understanding and challenging stereotypes and discrimination related to gender, recognizing and reporting abuse and violation, prevention of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. Advocacy sessions are organized with principals of participating schools and sensitization sessions are held with parents. By end 2010, at least 2 teachers from 3500 private schools affiliated to CBSE, all the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs, approximately 600) and all the KVs (approximately 1000) in India have received orientation on adolescence education issues.

The present concurrent evaluation of the program across 200 schools in different parts of the country provides a fair assessment of the knowledge, attitudes and abilities of adolescents to apply learnings related to their health and well-being when faced with real life situations. The evaluation also reviews the knowledge and attitudes of teachers towards adolescent health and well-being.

The findings of the concurrent evaluation provide a succinct assessment of the program achievements and gaps that will be a useful guide in formulating and strengthening youth friendly policies and programmes. The findings of the evaluation are also very timely as they will provide the much needed evidence to universalize the Adolescence Education Program in the XII five year plan as the MHRD proposes to implement the Adolescent Education Programme through its Flagship Schemes of Sarva Sikshaa Abhiyan (SSA), Rashtriys Madhyamik Siksha Abhiyaan (RMSA) and Saakshar Bharat.

Apurva Chandra,
Joint Secretary,
Department of School Education and Literacy,
November 2011.
Foreword

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) 1994 identified adolescents as a distinct population segment with special needs and called for urgent action to comprehensively respond to the concerns of young people specifically related to their reproductive and sexual health. The recommendations of the ICPD Program of Action have led to increased availability of youth-friendly services and sexuality/family life education in both in and out of school across different countries. The ICPD-at-15 recommendations and calls to action now focus on actively engaging young people in the national development processes.

In consonance with the ICPD agenda, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has positioned its adolescent reproductive and sexual health niche within the broader framework of the holistic development of young people. Empowerment of adolescents and youth with the knowledge and life skills necessary for maintaining better reproductive and sexual health is one of the outputs of India's country program. The country office has joined hands with the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) in achieving the joint output of empowering young people so that they become the drivers of change for a more developed, self-reliant and progressive India.

The National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005 that guides school curriculum across India recognizes Adolescence Education as an important area in school education. In tandem with the NCF recommendations that educational processes should engage learners in creating knowledge that is relevant to their experiences, the Adolescence Education Program (AEP) focuses on enhancing life skills to enable young people to tackle real life situations effectively. In 2010, the conceptual framework that guides the program design and implementation has been updated to recognize adolescents as a positive resource and the programme focus has been re-aligned to realize the transformative potential of education in a justice, equity and rights framework.
Against this backdrop, the concurrent evaluation of the co-curricular component of AEP was conducted across approximately 200 schools in 5 different states of the country in end 2010 and early 2011. Schools from Punjab, Maharashtra, Orissa, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh representing the North, West, East and South and Central regions respectively, participated. Both quantitative and qualitative tools were used to assess adolescents' knowledge, attitudes and abilities to apply life skills in the context of their health and well-being. The evaluation also assesses knowledge and attitudes of teachers towards adolescent health and well-being. The study also determines the influence of AEP on school environment and whether it is meeting the needs of different stakeholders. In the 14-18 age group, 19,666 adolescent students (11,488 boys and 8,178 girls) who were exposed to the program and 2301 adolescents: students (1,399 boys and 902 girls) who were not exposed to the program participated in the evaluation. Approximately, 1000 teachers and 200 school principals also participated.

The findings suggest that AEP has contributed towards enhancing knowledge of both students and teachers in a number of areas addressed in the program, for example, physical changes during adolescence, nutrition and anemia, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. It has also contributed towards improving students' attitudes on several fronts, including taboos associated with physical changes. It is heartening to note that adolescent girls are at the forefront of questioning some of the stereotypes related to gender and intend to challenge abuse and violation. Findings also suggest AEP's contribution in developing students' life skills. Responses suggest increased self-esteem, assertiveness that should lead to more responsible decision making. There are also areas that require improvement in their knowledge and attitudes particularly related to gender constructs, domestic violence and on Reproductive Tract Infections/Sexually Transmitted Infections.

The findings also suggest that the quality of teachers' training should be further improved in order to strengthen quality of AEP transaction in schools. It highlights the need
for policy decisions related to the age of initiation of the program, mechanisms for assessment and whether it should continue in the co-curricular realm or gradually be integrated in the curriculum.

The evaluation would not have been possible without the interest, efforts and cooperation of the three school systems, Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan, Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti, the private schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education and the enthusiastic participation from all the respondents especially the adolescents, teachers and principals. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Prof. Saroj Yadav in NCERT for her steadfast support throughout the evaluation. I am especially grateful to Prof. Kulkarni for his well thought out study design. Given the paucity of tools for assessing life skills, the contributions of the consortium of experts who developed the quantitative and qualitative data collection tools are noteworthy. The core group included Dr. Deepti Priya Mehrotra, Ms. Dipta Bhog and Ms. Sudipta Mukhopadhyaya. The tools were validated by experts including school teachers, principals, educationists, researchers and representatives from civil society. The agency Sambodhi's team's meticulous data collection made the evaluation a reality. Mr. Razcan and Mr. Kultar Singh from the team deserve special mention. I also want to acknowledge the oversight provided by the quality control team comprising of Prof. Jawahar Lal Pandey, Dr. Sudha Sood and Dr. Deepti Priya Mehrotra.

Ms. Frederika Meijer  
UNFPA Representative  
November 2011
GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION

Adolescence Education (AE) needs to be located in consonance with core principles of education. For this, the NCERT National Curriculum Framework-2005 forms a basic reference and resource.

- AE should recognize and respond to the reality that adolescents are heterogenous: there is diversity in terms of urban, rural, caste, class, religion, region, cultural beliefs, dis/ability, sexual orientation and so on.
- The educational programme should be participatory, process-oriented and non-judgmental, not prescriptive, stigmatizing or fear inducing.
- Adolescence is conceptualized as a positive stage of life: a phase full of possibilities and potential. It should not be labeled as problematic and traumatic, and adolescents (and the `peer group') should not be stereotyped in negative ways.
- AE should enable adolescents to understand and negotiate existing and constantly changing lived realities.
- Teachers need to unlearn and learn in order to facilitate this programme. This is relevant in respect of content, attitudes and pedagogical modes.
- The programme should enable adolescents to articulate their issues and know their rights, counter shame and fear, build up self-esteem and self-confidence, and develop ability to take on responsibility for self, relationships and (to an extent) society around them.
- Adolescence education principles should influence the entire school curriculum and ethos, rather than being an isolated, stand-alone programme.
- The Adolescence Education Programme should have inbuilt flexibility – in terms of content and process.
- It should enable and actively help learners to develop critical thinking, attitudes and knowledge, along with life skills.
- It should be strongly oriented towards the transformational potential of education, based on principles of equity and social justice, rather than having a status-quo orientation.
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONCURRENT EVALUATION OF ADOLESCENCE EDUCATION PROGRAMME

A. Background of the Study

In partnership with the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has supported the Adolescence Education Programme (AEP) since 2005. With National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) as the coordinating agency, the co-curricular approach works through the three national school systems – Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti (JNVs), Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan (KVS) and private schools affiliated to the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE). The major content areas include making healthy transitions to adulthood (being comfortable with changes during adolescence), enhancing self-esteem, establishing and maintaining positive and responsible relationships, understanding and challenging stereotypes and discrimination (including abuse and violation) related to gender and sexuality, prevention of HIV/AIDS and substance abuse.

AEP has adopted an educational approach of developing life skills to empower young people with accurate, age appropriate and culturally relevant information, promote healthy attitudes to enable them to respond to real life situations more effectively. The programme works on a cascade training approach that has created a pool of master trainers who orient selected teachers from participating schools. The teachers trained in the programme are known as Nodal teachers and are entrusted with the responsibility of transacting AEP with school students. The Nodal teachers are provided the necessary resource materials to facilitate AEP transaction across different thematic sessions. Interactive theme-based sessions totaling to 16 hours in an academic session are held with students of classes 9 and 11. Advocacy sessions are organized with the principals of participating schools and sensitization sessions are held with parents. By end 2010, all 919 KVs, 583 JNVs, and approximately 3500 private schools affiliated to CBSE, were covered under AEP. By end 2010, at least two Nodal teachers from each of these schools had received orientation on adolescence education issues.

B. Objectives

The aim of the current study is to evaluate AEP at the national level. It assesses adolescents’ knowledge, attitudes and abilities to apply learning in real life situations, with regard to issues related to their health and well-being. It also assesses knowledge and attitudes of teachers, including Nodal teachers, towards adolescent health and well being. The study determines the influence of AEP on school environment, to find out whether it is meeting the needs of different stakeholders including students, teachers and principals specifically with respect to improved health and well being of students. The concurrent evaluation also aims to identify achievements and gaps in programme design and implementation.

C. Methodology

C.1. Development of Data Collection Tools for Assessment of Life Skills

A core group of experts developed quantitative and qualitative assessment tools that were validated by a larger group of educationists and practitioners.
C.1.1. Quantitative data collection tools:

a. **Self-administered Questionnaire for Students** – An objective, multiple choice questionnaire to assess students’ knowledge, attitudes and skills in applying their learning to real life situations, through simulated situations/case studies related to experiences of young people. There were 70 questions, built around different themes covered under AEP.

b. **Self-administered Questionnaire for Teachers** – An objective, multiple choice questionnaire to assess teachers’ knowledge, attitude and learning from AEP. Teachers’ perceptions regarding the health and well being of their adolescent students were also explored.

c. **AEP School Monitoring format** – This proforma asked for details on particulars of the school in terms of enrolment, teacher training, infrastructure, other facilities and the status of AEP in the school.

C.1.2. Qualitative data collection tools:

a. **Focus Group Discussion (FGD)** - Guided discussions for class 11 students were initiated using two advertisement images that portrayed girls and boys in stereotypical ways to generate dialogue among students regarding traditional gender roles, changing gender roles in society today and their aspirations related to these roles. A second part of the FGDs encouraged participants to provide opinions and suggestions regarding AEP.

b. **In-Depth Interview Guide for Nodal (trained in AEP) Teachers** – The in-depth interview guide for nodal teachers explored their selection process, initial responses, and opinions and suggestions regarding training and resource material provided in AEP and its applicability to classroom settings.

c. **In-depth Interview Guide for Principals** – This guide for interviewing school principals included questions related to their initial response to the programme, criteria used for identifying nodal teachers and opinions and suggestions on programme implementation.

C.2. Sample Size

A case Vs. control design was planned in order to draw comparisons between the schools where AEP had been implemented (the case schools) and schools where the AEP had not been implemented (the control schools). By the end 2009, the programme had been implemented in all the senior secondary KVs (approximately 950 KVs), all JNVs (approximately 600 JNVs) and selected private schools affiliated to CBSE. Hence, the universe for the case schools included all senior secondary KVs, all JNVs and private schools affiliated to CBSE where the programme had been implemented. The universe for control schools included senior secondary private schools affiliated to CBSE where the programme had not been implemented. It was not possible to obtain control samples from KVs and JNVs, because AEP has been implemented in all the senior secondary schools in both these systems. To avoid geographical differences, the CBSE control schools in the sample were geographically closest to the CBSE senior secondary case schools.
The sample was drawn from the 5 states namely Punjab, Orissa, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh – representing North, East, South, West and Central regions of India. Using female literacy as the indicator, all the districts in a selected state were arranged in an ascending order and 12 districts were identified in each of the 5 selected states. It was planned that a total of 210 schools (42 from each of the 5 states) will be covered for quantitative data collection including 12 KVs (case), 12 JNVs (case), 12 CBSE private schools (case) and 6 CBSE private schools (control). Once the list of schools participating in the quantitative assessment was finalized, one school per system per state was randomly selected for qualitative assessment, i.e., qualitative data was collected in 3 schools per state, yielding a total of 15 schools.

C.2.1 Quantitative Data Collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per State</th>
<th>NVS</th>
<th>KVS</th>
<th>PRIVATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total of 42 schools per state x 5 states = 210 schools

The optimum sampling figure of 42 schools was not achieved in every state (except MP), and against the sample size of 210 schools, 189 schools actually participated in the study. State-wise, a total of 42 schools in MP, 41 in Punjab, 35 in Orissa, 39 in Maharashtra and 32 in Karnataka participated. The main reason for not achieving the desired sample size was that senior secondary schools from the 3 school systems were not always available in one district.

C.2.2 Qualitative Data Collection:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Per State</th>
<th>NVS</th>
<th>KVS</th>
<th>PRIVATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Case</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total of 3 schools per state x 5 states = 15 Schools

For quantitative data collection, one section per class, for classes 9 through 12, was randomly selected for students’ participation. The number of sections/per class/selected school was known before hand. One section per class was selected a priori and centrally by the quality assurance team. Self-administered questionnaires for students and teachers, and the school monitoring format for principals, were facilitated by the team of field investigators, and processed centrally.

Qualitative data collection (held in 15 schools) included FGD by field investigators, with a group of 4-6 students per school, from class 11 (2-3 girls and 2-3 boys), and in-depth interviews with 1 nodal teacher and 1 principal. Content analysis of responses was carried out based on transcripts of FGDs and in-depth interviews. A list of major themes and ideas to be coded in the transcripts was developed with the input of UNFPA and consultants.
D. Profile of Respondents

D.1. Students

A total of 21967 students participated in the concurrent evaluation. Of these, 6583 were KV students, 7722 were JNV students, 5361 private (case) school students, and 2301 private (control) school students. (It is to be noted that throughout the report case schools are referred to as ‘AEP schools’, whereas control schools are referred to as ‘non-AEP schools’.)

Cumulatively, the ratio of male to female among student respondents was approximately 59%: 41%. Since student respondents were in classes 9 to 12, the vast majority were in the age group of 14 to 18 years. Majority were Hindu (81%), 10% Sikh, 3% Muslim, 2% Christian, 1% each ‘no religion’ and animistic (figures are for AEP schools).

Caste-wise disaggregated data shows that 66% of students enrolled in JNVs belong to Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC). The corresponding figure for KVs is 32%, and for private AEP schools is 23%. The general caste category students have a higher representation in KVs and private schools in comparison with JNVs.

Cumulatively, the caste-wise distribution of respondents in AEP schools is 16% SC, 7% ST, 20% OBC, and 54% general. For JNVs, the corresponding figures are; 25% SC, 12% ST, 30% OBC, and 32% general.

Educational qualifications of mothers of JNV students were found to be consistently lower than the other two schooling systems for all levels of education. A similar pattern was found with the educational qualification of fathers, implying that in comparison to others, a larger proportion of JNV students are first generation learners. Thirty four percent female students in AEP schools have graduate or post-graduate mothers as against 24% male students. Likewise, in non-AEP schools, 40% female students have graduate or post-graduate mothers as against 33% male students. These findings underscore available evidence that an improved educational qualification of mothers is likely to improve the educational opportunities for their girl children.

Household work emerged as the most common occupation for mothers (75%-80%). For JNV students, the figure was 69%. Close to 9% JNV students reported that their mothers were farming their own land, a figure relatively higher than for other school categories. A higher percentage of fathers of KV students were in the service sector. A relatively high percentage of fathers of private school students were in business (29%). JNV students had the highest percentage of fathers working on their own field (26%). Very few students reported fathers’ occupation as household work.

JNVs reported better computer facilities than others. Seventy six percent JNV students have access to internet at school in comparison to 41% KV students, 12% private AEP schools and 4% private non-AEP schools. A larger proportion of students in KV (45%) and private schools (57% in AEP and 56% in non-AEP private schools) access internet at home in comparison to 21% JNV students. Remarkable gender differences were found regarding access to internet with 40% male students reporting access to internet from cyber café or shop against only 27% female students. In non-AEP schools, a
similar trend was observed wherein 37% male students accessed internet from cyber café or shop while only 24% female students did so.

Although all AEP schools should have implemented the programme, almost one-third (33%) students reported that they had no exposure to AEP. Non-exposure was reported by 27% KV students, 30% JNV students and 47% private AEP school students. This is a significant finding and the programme managers need to look into the reasons for less than optimum programme implementation.

D.2. Teachers

A total of 1070 teachers participated in the concurrent evaluation, including 514 male teachers, and 556 female teachers.

The total number of Nodal (N) teachers was 329, including 144 male and 185 female teachers. These included 122 Nodal teachers of KV, 116 of JNV and 91 from private-case schools. Thirty seven percent have been teaching for 1-2 years, 28% for 3-4 years, and 15% for 5 or more years.

The total number of Non-Nodal (NN) teachers from AEP schools participating in the study was 658, of which 344 were male and 314 were female. Total number of teachers from non-AEP schools was 83, of which 26 were male and 57 females.

Approximately 75% Nodal teachers were 31 to 50 years old. All school systems preferred experienced teachers to participate in AEP training. Most Nodal teachers teach science (40%), another 21% teach languages and 20% social science. A relatively high proportion of teachers from a science background were selected for AEP training suggesting that principals consider them better placed to comprehend and explain AEP themes. Teachers who had good communication skills and a good rapport with children were also preferred for AEP training.

From the School Monitoring format, it was found that in 43% schools there were three or more Nodal teachers. Close to half of the total JNVs had three or more Nodal teachers. Although official information from the headquarters of the participating school systems shows that the programme has been implemented in all 164 case schools, 10% schools reported not having any Nodal teacher. This could be due to the transfer of Nodal teachers in KVs and JNVs, or/and due to staff attrition.

Besides organizing sessions on AEP themes for students, Nodal teachers are expected to sensitize other teachers in school. At least 1-2 sensitization sessions were organized with teachers in 81% schools in previous academic session (April 09 – March 10). However, no sensitization session with other teachers was organized in approximately one-fifth (19%) schools in the same academic session. A majority of schools (57%) held 1 to 2 sensitization sessions with parents (during the same time-period). In more than a quarter (26%) of the total case schools, no such session was organized.
E. Key Findings

The key findings summarized below include the implications for different stakeholders. Findings are presented thematically, with a focus on comparisons between responses of students and teachers on the same domains, and corroboration or contrast of quantitative and qualitative findings.

E.1. Growing Up Healthy

E.1.1. Experiencing Adolescence

Students across all school systems reported far higher levels of positive rather than negative experiences during adolescence. In both AEP and non-AEP schools, the top three experiences picked by students were 'curiosity', 'joy' and 'maturity'. A significantly higher proportion of AEP students mentioned 'curiosity', 'self-expression' and 'major bodily changes' as experiences of adolescence, compared to non-AEP counterparts. On the other hand, a higher proportion of non-AEP students mentioned 'stress', 'too many do's and don'ts' and 'trouble with parents' as important experiences of adolescence. These figures indicate possible positive impact of AEP. Teachers most commonly perceive adolescence as a phase of curiosity followed by major changes in the body and a time period of seeking independence. It is noteworthy that students consider adolescence as a far more joyful experience than teachers.

Table 1: Students’ and Teachers’ Perceptions on Experiences of Adolescence (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP Schools¹</td>
<td>Non-AEP Schools²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joy</td>
<td>33.7</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>32.0</td>
<td>28.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-expression</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major bodily changes</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking independence</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>28.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stress</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mood swings</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many do’s and don’ts</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trouble with parents</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>19665</td>
<td>2291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Schools where AEP has been implemented
² Schools where AEP has not been implemented
³ N: Nodal Teachers refers to the teachers trained under AEP
⁴ NN: Non Nodal Teachers who have not been trained under AEP. Could be located within schools where AEP has been implemented (AEP Schools) or in non-AEP Schools
E.1.2. Physical Changes during Adolescence

A higher proportion of AEP students, as compared to non-AEP, had knowledge about physical changes that take place during adolescence, especially with regard to menstruation, broadening of hips and development of breasts in girls. A considerable knowledge gap exists between students’ and teachers’ knowledge. Among teachers, nodal teachers in AEP schools had highest knowledge levels on most counts.

Table 2: Students’ and Teachers’ Knowledge of Physical Changes during Adolescence (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Changes during Adolescence</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th></th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
<td>AEP schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menstruation (Girls)</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>95.7</td>
<td>95.4</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening of hips (Girls)</td>
<td>66.4</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>94.2</td>
<td>90.4</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of breasts (Girls)</td>
<td>88.8</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>97.6</td>
<td>97.1</td>
<td>95.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nocturnal emissions (wet dreams) (Boys)</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>70.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td>80.7</td>
<td>72.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in voice (Boys)</td>
<td>92.6</td>
<td>91.0</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>90.7</td>
<td>89.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>19665</td>
<td>2291</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.1.3. Knowledge and Attitudes Related to Menstruation

Approximately 60% students, cumulative across school systems, opted for the correct definition of menstruation. Boys scored higher than girls, a substantive proportion of girls selecting ‘dirty blood coming out of the body’ (based on experience and cultural misconception, rather than scientific understanding). Among teachers, the impact of AEP is visible because Nodal teachers displayed significantly better knowledge. A considerable knowledge gap is evident between teachers and students.

Table 3: Students’ Knowledge about Definition of Menstruation (percentage distribution by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of Menstruation</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic shedding of blood and tissue from uterus</td>
<td>61.8</td>
<td>57.2</td>
<td>59.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty blood coming out of the body</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>8786</td>
<td>6421</td>
<td>1037</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Teachers’ Knowledge about Definition of Menstruation (percentage distribution by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition of Menstruation</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodic shedding of blood and tissue from uterus</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>64.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dirty blood coming out of the body</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>7.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>269</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

AEP has registered some **positive impact on attitudes towards social taboos** related to menstruation. Girls’ attitudes are significantly better than boys’ attitudes. Teachers’ attitudes however are considerably advanced compared to students’ attitudes, indicating scope for better transaction on these issues.

Table 5: Students’ and Teachers’ Attitudes towards Social Taboos Related to Menstruation (percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Taboos related to Menstruation</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP Schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP Schools</td>
<td>AEP Schools, N</td>
<td>Non-AEP Schools, N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is a normal process for adolescent girls and women of childbearing age</td>
<td>63.3</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>91.8</td>
<td>87.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During menstrual periods a girl/woman can continue with sports activities</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>52.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During menstruation a girl/woman should be free to visit sacred places</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>20.7</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>37.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During menstruation a girl/woman should not touch pickles</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During menstruation a girl/woman should not be isolated</td>
<td>43.5</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>58.1</td>
<td>60.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>19665</td>
<td>2291</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E.1.4 Knowledge Regarding Pregnancy**

Nineteen percent adolescent boys in comparison to thirteen percent adolescent girls reported that first unprotected sexual intercourse cannot lead to pregnancy. It is worth noting that any negative consequences arising from this belief would be borne by females (unwanted pregnancy). **A considerable proportion of students (more females than males) acknowledged that they do not know if first unprotected sexual intercourse can lead to pregnancy.**
Table 6a: Students’ Knowledge Regarding Pregnancy (percentage distribution, by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A woman get pregnant the very first time she has sexual intercourse, if no birth control method is used</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>47.4</td>
<td>34.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few teachers opted for ‘don’t know’. But a *substantive minority* of teachers held the opinion that first intercourse cannot lead to pregnancy, which is erroneous and can indirectly encourage risky behaviour.

Table 6b: Teachers’ Knowledge Regarding Pregnancy (percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A woman get pregnant the very first time she has sexual intercourse, if no birth control method is used</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N</td>
<td>NN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>75.4</td>
<td>67.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>658</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E.1.5 Sources of Knowledge on Reproduction and Contraception**

**Teachers (in AEP and non-AEP schools) top the list** as source of knowledge for reproduction, and are second (after books/magazines) for contraception. The proportion of students selecting teachers as a source of information is higher in AEP as compared to non-AEP schools. Higher proportion of AEP school students marked AEP material as a source of information (on reproduction and contraception). Friends are important source of information, for AEP and non-AEP school students; while among family members, mother is the major source. Approximately **10-14% students stated they have no sources of information** on reproduction and/or contraception.

Table 7: Students’ Sources of information on Reproduction, Contraception (percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Information</th>
<th>Reproduction</th>
<th>Contraception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP Schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>66.9</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books/magazines</td>
<td>64.4</td>
<td>58.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>56.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEP materials</td>
<td>41.4</td>
<td>21.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>35.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nobody</td>
<td>9.9</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>19665</td>
<td>2291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E.1.6 Knowledge of Anemia and Nutrition

Students in AEP schools display better knowledge levels on anemia and nutrition, as compared to non-AEP schools. Girls’ knowledge is better than boys’ knowledge.

Table 8: Students’ Knowledge of Anemia and Nutrition (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facts about Anemia and Nutrition</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KV</td>
<td>JNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anemia patients have a low hemoglobin count in their blood</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>61.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is important to include green leafy vegetables and other iron-rich vegetable in the diet of anemia patients</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>75.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>6582</td>
<td>7722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.1.7 Academic Achievement

As compared to non-AEP schools, AEP school students (from all three school categories) show greater maturity regarding their course of action in case they fare badly in an exam. More AEP students would resolve to study harder, seek help from a friend, or ask parents/teacher for help. It is noteworthy that among the AEP schools, JNV students have more positive plans in comparison to the students of the other two school systems. JNV students also rely on their peers more than the others which may be due to their residential school situation.

Table 9: Students’ Responses regarding Academics (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students’ response upon not doing well in a school subject</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KV</td>
<td>JNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolve to study harder</td>
<td>66.6</td>
<td>70.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek help from a friend who is good at that subject</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>73.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask my parents or teacher for help next time</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>6582</td>
<td>7722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.2 Relationships with Peers, Parents and Teachers

E.2.1 Relationship with Classmates, Teachers, Friends

If a classmate makes a false complaint to a teacher, most students will prefer to take the positive option: explain their own actions or situation to the teacher. AEP students opt more for the positive option. The choice indicates self-esteem, ability to be assertive and manage difficult situations effectively, managing anger, ability to think critically and apply life skills in real life situations.
Table 10: Students’ Responses on Classmate Issue (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response: what would you do if a classmate lodges a false complaint against you with a strict class teacher?</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KV</td>
<td>JNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain your actions or the situation to the teacher</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>83.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fight with the classmate</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>6582</td>
<td>7722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If a friend is secretly smoking, **more AEP students as compared to non-AEP students opt for positive options**: talking to the friend; telling a senior/trustworthy friend to talk to him/her. Positive peer group influence can be observed here. Students’ ability to apply life skills is again indicated. JNV students score significantly better than students from the other school systems.

Table 11: Students’ Response to a Friend Secretly Smoking (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you would do if a friend is secretly smoking</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KV</td>
<td>JNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try and talk to him/her</td>
<td>64.0</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell a senior or a trustworthy friend to talk to him/her</td>
<td>40.7</td>
<td>53.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>6582</td>
<td>7722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.2.2 Friendship and Romance: Asserting Choice

Students have overwhelmingly selected positive options in the case study where Vishal wants Sarada to become his girl-friend while she wants to remain friends, as they are. **Students’ choices indicate ability to assert choice and maintain boundaries in friendships.** Majority have chosen one of the two positive options, while a considerable proportion has selected both positive options. JNV students gave the most mature responses among students: they might be learning positive lessons from their residential school situation, with greater peer-group interaction.

Table 12: Students’ Response regarding Friendship (percentage distribution by category of school)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What should Sarada do if Vishal wants her to be his girl-friend but she wants to continue as friends</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KV</td>
<td>JNV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to Vishal and explain to him that she is not interested in becoming his girlfriend</td>
<td>73.8</td>
<td>78.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suggest that they continue as friends</td>
<td>70.9</td>
<td>82.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both the above</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>61.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>6582</td>
<td>7722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
E.2.3 Relationship with Parents

Regarding relationship with their mothers, most students (61% in AEP schools and 56% in non-AEP schools) mentioned that they respect and listen to each other, followed by 53% and 45% students in AEP and non-AEP schools respectively who mentioned that they have a friendly relationship with their mother. Very few students (7% in AEP and 9% in non-AEP schools) responded that their mother is strict and does not listen to them. Findings suggest that students in AEP schools maintain better relationships with their mothers as compared to those in non-AEP schools. Girls are more friendly with mothers than boys (63% and 46% respectively, of AEP school students and 54% and 40% respectively for non-AEP schools).

A similar pattern emerges with regard to relationship with fathers. A higher proportion of AEP school students (66% and 47%, respectively) reported that they respect and listen to each other, and are more friendly, as compared to students in non-AEP schools (61% and 44%). Approximately 10% AEP and 11% non-AEP school students mentioned their father is strict and does not listen to them. Comparing relationships of adolescents with mother and father, it emerges that father is more strict and commands obedience, while mother is more of a friendly figure.

E.2.4 Taking Important Decisions: Marriage and Family

Majority of students said that in case parents want to get them married against their wish, they would try and convince the parents. Girls opted more for trying to convince parents than boys. More girls than boys however, would refuse to marry even if it means going against parents’ wishes.

Table 13: Students’ Decision-Making Regarding Marriage (percentage distribution by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you would do if parents want to marry you against your wishes</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP Schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
<td>AEP Schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try to convince them of my wishes</td>
<td>67.8</td>
<td>65.9</td>
<td>73.0</td>
<td>68.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Request help from other family members to convince my parent</td>
<td>44.0</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse to marry even if it means going against their wishes</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.3 Understanding Gender

E.3.1 Challenging Gender Stereotypes: Regarding Housework and Sports

Rajan’s case study (he enjoys doing housework but is confused how to behave with friends on this) brings out students’ positive response, for pro-actively challenging gender stereotypes related to boys and housework. AEP students are slightly better than non-AEP in choosing positive responses. Girl’s responses are better than boys’, although boys are picking up better views with AEP. Positive peer influence is substantiated by students’ responses.
Table 14: Students’ Responses Regarding Boys Doing Housework (percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Options Regarding Rajan Doing Housework</th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AEP schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
<td>AEP schools</td>
<td>Non-AEP schools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajan should feel proud that he does housework and not hide it</td>
<td>75.1</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>83.6</td>
<td>81.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If he tells his friends Rajan might be a good influence on them</td>
<td>44.5</td>
<td>38.2</td>
<td>49.2</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>901</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students responded in support of changing gender stereotypes related to girls and sports. Kavita is a sportsperson. In response to her discomfort in wearing sports clothes and participating in sports activities some positive AEP impact was seen. A larger proportion of girls in comparison to boys reported positive attitudes. These findings are heartening, but the challenge remains, to ensure that these progressive views are applied in real life.

Table 15: Students Responses Regarding Girls Participating in Sports (Percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Options Regarding Kavita’s Participation in Sports</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Non AEP Schools</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wear whatever she feels comfortable in and continue to play, run, cycle etc.</td>
<td>72.6</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>71.0</td>
<td>84.2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss with her teacher or anyone she trusts why she is feeling uncomfortable</td>
<td>54.4</td>
<td>60.8</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>48.4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both the above</td>
<td>31.9</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>901</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E.3.2 Gender as a Social Construct

An overwhelming proportion of students continue to identify emotions and care-giving with women, and not with men. Thus 46% AEP and 47% non-AEP school students considered the statement ‘women are more emotional than men’ to be based on biology, not social construction/people’s mindsets, and similarly 47% AEP, 48% non-AEP students placed ‘women are better care givers than men’ as being based on biology. AEP has yet to effectively challenge such deep-seated cultural beliefs.

On the other hand, students were better able to handle social constructs related to studies and career. Only 6% AEP and 7% non-AEP students imputed the statement ‘Girls find mathematics difficult and are better in home science’ to be based on biology rather than on social construction/ people’s mindsets, and similarly only 15% AEP and 16% non-AEP students placed the statement ‘All girls are interested in cooking and house management…’ as being based on biology. However, here too no impact of AEPs is visible.
E.3.3 Qualitative Research Findings on Gender Roles: Traditional, Changing and Future

Qualitative research findings on gender roles corroborated the quantitative findings, and provided some further nuances. Students observed that gendered patterns of education and career are changing today. Girls and most boys felt positive about girls studying and entering various careers. Girls were more sensitive than boys to continuing stereotypical expectations which make it difficult for many women to combine career and marriage. They think that a girl’s career is still supposed to be secondary to her husband’s. There are restrictions on girls’ mobility, and social evils like dowry and female feticide. Boys are not always sensitive enough to the dilemmas girls/women face. Some boys criticized girls who work outside rather than cook and raise children. Students noted that some parents educate girls so that they will get better marriage proposals.

About aspirations for the future, both girls and boys imagined giving freedom to their children to study as much as they want and take up any career. With regard to housework, some boys bypassed the issue by saying if husband and wife both work outside, they will hire help ‘a servant’ to do the housework. Several boys confidently said they can do housework, and ‘we will divide and share every work into half’. Girls said they want to have equal freedom and be treated well. Some felt that right at the beginning of marriage, the wife should explain that all work has to be shared, and both should cook together. One girl astutely said, ‘We both should do equal compromise’. Others noted that `boy too should take care of his wife’, understand her feelings, and that fathers can also look after children well. Girls and boys both want a partner who will understand them. Several students want to work to transform the existing reality where equal opportunities do not exist for both boys and girls.

It became very clear that girls and boys today are facing immense challenges, at personal and study/future career fronts. Young people are reflecting, thinking and discussing many issues relating to their changing selves, and changing society. They are aware that gender roles cannot remain fixed. Most are eager to be part of the change. However, there is fear on both sides, as borders are crossed into hitherto unfamiliar territory: mobility and careers for females, and emotional nurturance and housekeeping roles for males. AEP programming needs to appreciate the efforts, aspirations and dilemmas of young people. The qualitative research findings confirm that adolescents today are thoughtful, reflective, responsible and quite well-informed. As they move into new territory, young people require support, understanding and guidance from concerned adults.

E.4 Child Abuse, Sexual Harassment and Domestic Violence

E.4.1 Child Sexual Abuse

Responses to the Mohit case study indicate insufficient understanding of child sexual abuse. Only 22% non-AEP and 24% AEP students recognized Mohit’s uncle is trying to sexually abuse him. As high as 36% AEP and 37% non-AEP students thought Mohit misunderstands his uncle’s ‘affectionate’ behavior. On some counts, AEP students have better understanding of the issue than non-AEP: 65% AEP and 54% non-AEP students refuted that Mohit’s parents should try to understand why he has become quiet and withdrawn. Girls displayed better understanding than boys: more girls (74% in AEP, 63% non-AEP) realized Mohit’s parents should try to understand why he has become so quiet
and withdrawn, as compared to boys (58% AEP, 47% non-AEP). Teachers demonstrated better understanding of the issue with 54% Nodal teachers acknowledging that Mohit’s uncle is trying to sexually abuse him. Eighty one percent Nodal teachers reported that Mohit’s parents should try to understand why he has become so quiet and withdrawn. **These findings indicate the need for focused programmatic teaching-learning on the issue of child sexual abuse.**

**E.4.2 Challenging Sexual Harassment: In Public Places**

Most AEP students selected pro-active options in the case study on harassment in a cinema hall. The top choice is ‘complain to the cinema manager and insist he make the hall safe for women’; next in preference is ‘confront the man and warn him’; and ‘seek support from others around’. However, they have also supported the option ‘go with parents and brothers who can protect them’. Taken together, these indicate a bunch of strategies, which girls and women can use to challenge sexual harassment and ensure their own safety. AEP students as a whole marked all four options more than non-AEP students suggesting greater confidence in dealing with challenges of this kind.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monica and Sabina’s response to obscene remarks</th>
<th>Males AEP Schools</th>
<th>Males Non-AEP schools</th>
<th>Females AEP Schools</th>
<th>Females Non-AEP schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Complain to the cinema hall manager</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confront the man and warn him</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seek support from others around</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go with parents/brothers</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not see films in cinema halls</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
<td>1390</td>
<td>901</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considerably more girls (66% AEP, 60% non-AEP) than boys (49% AEP, 48% non-AEP) selected the option of confronting and warning the man, while more boys (42% AEP, 47% non-AEP) than girls (37%, 32%) selected the option that Sabina and Monica should go with parents or brothers for protection. Girls seem ready to act strategically to protect themselves and ensure safety in public places, while boys will support, but also try to be ‘protectors’. Such issues need attention and discussion, with inputs drawn from specialists wherever required.

**E.4.3 Challenging Sexual Harassment: In School**

In the case study involving school games teacher harassing female students, students as well as teachers hardly chose the negative options (‘keep quiet out of embarrassment’ and ‘ignore out of fear of the teacher’). Of the four positive options, girls chose ‘confront the teacher’, ‘discuss with other girls’, and ‘talk to a teacher or parent they trust’ more than boys, while boys chose the option ‘complain to school authorities’ a little more than girls.
Table 16: Students’ Responses regarding Sexual harassment in school (percentage distribution, by gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What should the girls do</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make a complaint to the school authorities</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>65.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk to a teacher or parent they trust</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>66.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss with other girls to find out if they have a similar experience</td>
<td>41.9</td>
<td>54.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confront the teacher themselves</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>11488</td>
<td>8177</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teachers overwhelmingly selected ‘talk to a teacher or parent they trust’ (72% N, 66% NN in AEP schools, 71% non-AEP) and ‘make a complaint to school authorities’ (81%N, 83% NN in AEP schools, 78% non-AEP). As can be observed from the table below, students chose these options considerably less as compared to teachers.

E.4.4 Domestic Violence

Overall, 57% students stated that wife-beating is not justified under any circumstances. This means that according to 43% students, wife-beating can be justified by certain circumstances. The proportion of boys who believe wife beating is not justified under any circumstances is extremely low at 48% for AEP, 53% non-AEP, which is much less as compared to girls – 68% AEP, 73% non-AEP.

Teachers displayed overall better attitude than students towards wife-beating, with 64% N, 68% NN in AEP schools and 69% in AEP schools stating wife-beating is not justified under any circumstances. The proportion of male teachers who believe this is 60-64%, while 70-73% female teachers have this belief.

It is worrisome that a considerable proportion of teachers justify wife-beating. These findings indicate a need for AEP to review and improve its material and training on the theme of domestic violence.

E.5 HIV/AIDS

E.5.1 Knowledge about HIV/AIDS

More students correctly distinguished between HIV and AIDS in AEP schools (66%), than in non-AEP schools (52%).

On modes of spread of HIV, knowledge levels of students from AEP schools were significantly higher than non-AEP schools. Approximately 31% students from AEP schools and 20% from non-AEP had comprehensive knowledge (i.e. they correctly marked all the 4 modes of transmission included in the options). Teachers showed much better knowledge of modes of HIV transmission, with comprehensive knowledge displayed by 73% N and 71% NN teachers in AEP schools, and 63% in non-AEP schools.
Knowledge on methods that can prevent both HIV and pregnancy (male and female condoms) is low among students. Twenty one percent AEP and 16% non-AEP students showed comprehensive knowledge (i.e., both correct options, male condoms and female condoms). Within this, more boys than girls have comprehensive knowledge (24% boys as compared to 16% girls in AEP schools, 19% and 13% in non-AEP). Some positive AEP impact seems to have taken place with regard to students.

Teachers’ knowledge level is significantly higher than students’, with 43% N and 44% NN teachers in AEP schools, and 39% in non-AEP schools, having comprehensive knowledge. Clearly there is scope for improving transaction of knowledge on these issues.

E.5.2 Attitudes towards HIV Positive Persons: Challenging Discrimination

The Roshan case study elicited students’ and teachers’ responses on issues regarding discrimination towards HIV positive persons. Responses of students were fairly dissatisfactory on the following issues: whether a person can be tested for HIV without consent (53% AEP and 53% non-AEP students agreed it can be done), and whether HIV positive status should be disclosed to colleagues (52% AEP, 54% non-AEP students felt it should be).

Responses seem to be better on the question whether it is appropriate for Roshan to continue working in the company: 56% AEP and 45% non-AEP students said it is his right to do so, while 47% AEP and 38% non-AEP students said he is not a threat to others’ health. However, when we find out the proportion of students who gave these two correct responses exclusively, the proportion is not so high, at 24% for AEP and 15% for non-AEP students.

Regarding what school authorities should do about education of Roshan’s children, 68% AEP and 57% non-AEP students said the school authorities should ensure that his children continue in the school. Alongside, 32% AEP and 24% non-AEP students said school authorities should hold sensitization programmes for teachers, students and parents.

There is scope for a lot of improvement in knowledge levels among the students on issues related to HIV transmission and prevention. Students seem to have benefited from AEP in developing non-discriminatory attitude to HIV positive persons. However they need to learn more, including the importance of consent driven voluntary HIV testing protocol, right to confidentiality and related issues.

E.6. Substance Abuse

AEP students displayed better knowledge than non-AEP students in identifying consequences of substance abuse. Approximately 74% AEP and 66% non-AEP students identified cancer of mouth, lung as a consequence; 58% AEP and 48% non-AEP students identified smoker’s cough; 55% AEP and 50% non-AEP students identified heart disease;

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5 Correct reporting on all 4 modes of HIV transmission, i.e., i) having sex with HIV infected person without using a condom, ii) sharing HIV infected needles and syringes, iii) transfusion of infected blood, iv) infected mother to her unborn baby.
while 50% AEP and 41% non-AEP students identified breathlessness. **There is scope for students to learn more about identifying different consequences of substance abuse.** Students mentioned friends as most important influence for taking intoxicants, followed by electronic media, print media, acquaintances and family. These findings indicate possible negative influence of peer group, electronic and print media, and to some extent, of acquaintances and family members.

Table 17: Students’ Views on Influences Encouraging Young People to Take Intoxicants (percentage distribution)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences Encouraging young people to Take Intoxicants</th>
<th>AEP Schools</th>
<th>Non-AEP Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td>72.9</td>
<td>68.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic media like TV, radio, internet etc.</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>44.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print media like magazines, billboards, newspapers etc.</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family members</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>19665</td>
<td>2291</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On reasons attracting young people to try different intoxicants, the top options were ‘pressure from friends’ (44% AEP, 33% non-AEP students), followed by ‘cool thing to do’ (36% AEP, 31% non-AEP), ‘helps to work better’ (20% AEP, 17% non-AEP), ‘someone in the family takes it’ (20% AEP, 15% non-AEP) and ‘better acceptance among friends’ (19% AEP, 17% non-AEP). AEP can certainly try to bring correct knowledge and messages to students to effectively clear misconceptions.

Between 3 to 5% students reported trying out (one of the) following common intoxicants once during previous six months: alcohol, bhang and gutka-pan masala. Between 1 to 2% students reported having tried out alcohol/bhang/gutka-pan masala 2-3 times during past 6 months, and another 1-2% reported trying out alcohol/bhang/gutka-pan masala more than 3 times during same time period. For cigarette-bidi, 1-3% students reported trying it out once, 2-3 or more than 3 times during past 3 months. For tobacco-khaini, 1-2% students reported trying it out once, 2-3 times or more than 3 times during same time period. Charas usage was reported as less than 1% for each category (once, 2-3 times and more than 3 times during last six months).

Comparing AEP with non-AEP schools, more from non-AEP seem to have tried/consumed alcohol, bhang and cigarette-bidi. However the **differences are too marginal to draw meaningful conclusions** Comparing boys with girls, there is a marked imbalance, with more boys than girls having tried/consumed each of these intoxicants, in all categories.

**E.7. Students’ Opinions on AEP**

**E.7.1 Appropriate Age and Benefits**

A high proportion of students (52% AEP, 38% non-AEP) responded in favor of introducing AEP to students below the age of 14 years, i.e. 9-13 years. More girls than boys favored lower age of initiation of AEP. These results indicate that **most students who have been**
exposed to AEP appreciate its benefits and feel it will be useful for children at lower ages as well. The results are similar across school types. At the same time, 25% AEP and 43% non-AEP students opted for introducing the programme to students aged 15-20.

Students who have been exposed to AEP reported benefits they have experienced: it has dispelled some of their fears (47%); they now try to look at things from other persons’ point of view (37%); have found ways to relax (30%); and have more questions (28%). However, for 13% there is no change; and 10% are more confused than before. Several students felt AEP helped them open up, learn how to deal with friends, and learn about issues they hadn’t even thought about earlier. One student noted, ‘Teenagers don’t understand what problem they are exactly facing. With this programme they get to know about their problems and themselves in a better way’.

Students’ responses indicate positive benefits of AEP on students. However findings also indicate that there is scope for improving programme effectiveness.

E.7.2 Themes/Sessions under AEP: What students liked and what they did not like

Majority of students (71-80%) found the following themes most interesting: ‘Life skills development’, ‘Self esteem’, ‘Good nutrition’, ‘Decision making skills’, ‘Growing up and adolescent health’ and ‘Positive relationships’ respectively. More girls than boys voted for ‘Self esteem’, and more boys than girls for ‘Growing up and adolescent health’.

Moderate proportion of students (61-70%) found the following themes/sessions most interesting: ‘HIV/AIDS’, ‘Sexual abuse’, ‘Anger management’, ‘Effective communication’, and ‘Emotions and stress’.

A comparatively less proportion of students (45-60%) found the following themes/sessions most interesting: ‘Gender sensitivity’, ‘RTIs/STIs’, ‘Substance abuse’ and ‘Peer pressure’. More boys than girls opted for ‘Gender Sensitivity’ session/theme – 64% boys compared to 53% girls.

During qualitative research, students noted additionally that they liked sessions taking up issues like ‘disagreements with parents, like which dress to wear’, ‘relationship with friends’, ‘attraction towards opposite sex’, ‘changes in feelings and emotions’ and ‘knowledge on bad habits’.

Students enjoyed participatory methods. They liked it when ‘our issues were raised, discussed and suggestions given’, ‘sharing our emotions and perceptions’, ‘discussion with psychologist’, and teacher ‘sharing about problems prevalent in society nowadays’. They found AEP different from other classes because teachers encouraged questions, were friendly and discussed things students face in life rather than bookish knowledge. Students understood the issues related to their health and well being better with roles plays, poster making, case studies, essay competition, drama, question box, special sessions and interaction with doctors, gynecologists and psychologists. A student appreciated, ‘Whatever was told was part of our life, we had experienced them... It was very interesting. They were told to us with the help of activities.’ Another noted, ‘We can share our issues as everybody goes through the same thing. It relieves stress.’
Students were divided about whether they prefer teachers holding AEP sessions, or external persons. Some felt more comfortable with their teachers, others with somebody from outside.

E.7.3 Suggestions for Improvement of AEP

Students made the following suggestions: there should be a regular counselor; some sessions should be conducted separately for boys and girls; and AEP sessions should be held more frequently, say weekly or monthly. Several students feel parents should be involved, because ‘parents also need guidance’, ‘parents will become aware of adolescent issues’, ‘parents will learn better life skills, it will help them be more understanding, less confused and not get so angry with children’.

Students felt AEP should continue as it helps them know themselves and problems they face in a better way. It provides knowledge for life ‘that will remain with us for a long time’.

E.8 Teachers’ Opinions on AEP

E.8.1 Experience of Selection and Training for AEP

Principals selected Nodal teachers based on various criteria, such as subjects taught (particularly science), being senior and experienced, or having good relationship with students. Most had no prior idea about AEP before being selected as Nodal teachers. Some felt confused, others were curious about AEP, or took it as a challenge and were keen to help students.

Most Nodal teachers found the training useful because they learnt new knowledge and skills, and misconceptions were removed. Training helped enhance their awareness levels and teaching methods, and improve relationship with students. It changed their attitudes for the better in many ways. Some teachers now listen carefully to children, instead of scolding, and try to go to the root of the problem to solve it.

Teachers appreciated participatory training with activity-based methods: discussions, role plays, question box, ice-breakers and energizers, poster making, quiz and brainstorming. Real life situations were dealt with. As one teacher put it, ‘I learnt how to translate theory into practice in real life’. Some teachers felt sessions helped them open up and discuss issues, such as issues related to sex education.

According to teachers, AEP training had some negative features, such as insufficient physical space, no prior agenda provided, lack of field trips, boring lecture mode for some sessions, insufficient time, and inadequate quality of some trainers. A few teachers did not like open discussion on private parts of human body, some felt trainers failed to teach them how to share such information with students.

E.8.2 Perceptions about own teaching, students’ preferences and impact of AEP

A majority of Nodal teachers reported using group discussion method in class. Other methods used included role plays, quiz, debates, awareness tests, project/presentations by students, brainstorming, question box, poster making, case studies and games. Some
teachers organized seminars and interactive sessions with experts, where students were encouraged to ask questions.

Teachers found that AEP sessions helped students develop life skills, including problem-solving in real life situations, communicating, managing stress, relationship building, understanding emotions, accepting criticism, being patient, anticipating problems, taking right decisions and resisting adverse peer influence. They felt all this gives students a foundation for negotiating every single sphere of life.

Some teachers help/counsel students beyond the classroom, for instance in connection with 'eve-teasing', bullying, group fights, physical problems, peer pressure, friendship or relationship issues. However, many teachers said students do not come to them with emotional, relationship or family problems. Male teachers usually find female students do not approach them with such issues.

Teachers observed that themes/sessions liked most by students were: 'Growing up and adolescent health', 'Life skills development', 'Self esteem', 'Positive relationships', 'Gender sensitivity', 'Sexual abuse', 'HIV/AIDS', 'Good nutrition' and 'Decision making skills' (in that order). Most of these were on students' own expressed priority list, though teachers overestimated the popularity of 'Gender sensitivity', 'Sexual abuse' and 'HIV/AIDS' sessions.

It is noteworthy that teachers identified 'RTIs/STIs', 'Sexual abuse' and 'Gender sensitivity' as the themes/sessions they felt least comfortable with. These are also sessions that students found less interesting. Clearly teachers' discomfort with any theme brings down quality of transaction. Teachers felt most comfortable with 'Good nutrition', 'Life skills development', 'Decision making skills' and 'Positive relationships' – all four of which are among students' self-reported top preferences. Data indicates a strong correlation between teachers' comfort levels in transacting particular themes/sessions, and students' liking of the same.

E.8.3 Suggestions for Improving AEP Material, Training and Implementation

Several Nodal teachers expressed the need for refresher courses, guidance to cover themes with which they are not comfortable, training of more teachers per school, and inviting relevant NGOs for awareness building. A regular AEP forum should be created for answering teachers' queries and providing ongoing support.

Some teachers suggested improving AEP manual with more case studies, activities, data/figures, CDs with films and power point presentations, illustrative charts, information on themes like menstruation and social taboos, personality development and interpersonal relationships. Some teachers suggested use of easy words, glossary of terms, and translation of manual into regional languages. Views and experiences of participants could be included in the manual.

Teachers have mixed views on integration of AEP in school curriculum. Nearly half said it should continue as a separate subject, while over a quarter said it should be integrated with social science and science subjects. A regular period should be allotted to AEP with lots of activities. It is important that AEP be kept outside the framework of examinations. Teachers expressed mixed views on age for introducing AEP, with 33% suggesting it start...
after class 9, while 28% wanted it to begin at class 8. Some would like it to begin in class 6 or 7; others advise that components of AEP be included at all stages from primary school. Teachers think that AEPs’ effectiveness could be enhanced by involving parents more. Several Nodal teachers shared contents of AEP with other teachers in school, formally or informally. Some teachers are curious and approach Nodal teachers with problems related to students. However, there is scope for more systematically involving other teachers in AEP and the same is true for parents.

In conclusion, further guidance is required for some identified issues. Some sessions should be held separately for girls and boys. Problems like abuse can be tackled by collective team effort between experts and school teachers. Perhaps all teachers from class 6, or even all teachers in school, should be trained on AEP, so that they can transact it at each class level, and an environment can be created in the whole school. There should be regular interaction between parents, students and teachers. Moreover, AEP should be implemented in more, perhaps all schools.

E.9 Principals’ Opinions on AEP

E.9.1 Feelings Expressed towards AEP

Some principals expressed feeling positive and happy when asked to take up AEP, while others felt anxious and hesitant. Some welcomed it and felt it was necessary. A JNV principal noted that residential schools are ‘a home away from home’ and teachers need to be trained to handle students’ emotional issues and have sufficient information. One principal felt AEP would be very useful, but cautioned, that sensitive issues like sexuality should be taken seriously and carefully otherwise they can get harmful.

E.9.2 Themes, Material, Teachers’ and Students’ responses and Parental involvement

A considerable proportion of principals appreciated content on life skills, growth and physical changes, stress management, self-esteem and confidence, child abuse, drug abuse, gender discrimination and so on. Some principals expressed doubt about providing knowledge on reproduction, contraception (whether class 9 is too early), sex and sexuality. Most commented that content is good, fairly relevant and effective, with useful case studies and information. Suggestions from principals included use of more visuals and case studies, and review of some chapters.

Most principals said they find their AEP teachers motivated, actively engaged, not uncomfortable with any sessions, sincerely involved with students. However, several principals commented on their teachers being average, casual, passive and poorly motivated. Some principals were not sure how students felt about AEP. Others said most students were interested and enthusiastic, but sometimes apprehensive ‘as if some vigilance department has been set up to monitor them’. In some schools there was a fear psychosis before implementation of the AEP, but now students and teachers are friendly. They feel comfortable in AEP especially because there are no exams, and it is different from routine subjects.

Nearly half the principals reported receiving positive support from parents. One principal said parents were called on various occasions, some helped in implementation. Some principals however had not informed or involved parents. One said parents are not
cooperative and have not responded to the programme being implemented in the concerned school. Another said that only 8-10% parents would understand, if informed about the programme. One school provides ‘indirect counseling’ to parents, for improving their interaction with children. It is noteworthy that teachers and students have generally expressed there is a need to involve parents much more.

E.9.3 Impact of AEP and Suggestions for improvement

Most principals said AEP has made positive impact on students – helped in character building, sense of responsibility, awareness, overcoming apprehensions, developed stress management skills, helped children face the future, and led to improvement in school atmosphere and relationships among students. However some principals felt AEP has not been effectively implemented and that there is no noticeable impact. One said, ‘It is a good programme but the school’s priority is students’ career.’

Constraints upon effective implementation of AEP include communication gap between teachers and students, lack of same-gender teachers, conservative social set-up and teachers’ discomfort with some issues. Some constraints articulated by the principals include, only two trained teachers are not sufficient to handle situations in a school. Moreover, teachers get frequently transferred, and each teacher already has a full workload. Training should be longer, and follow-up workshops should be held as well. There should be a forum or method by which teachers (and principals) can ask questions and get answers, for ongoing support.

Some other suggestions included separate sessions with female teachers for girls, and male teachers for boys. The need for a school counselor is in every school was expressed, or else each teacher has to be a counselor, providing individual counseling. There is a need to sensitize and involve parents, through advocacy programmes, strategic interventions like ‘indirect counseling’, and Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meetings.

It was put forward that training materials, both text and audio-visual, should be prepared and distributed to students. Restraint is needed while designing material for AEP. Local cultural conditions should be kept in mind, with some things excluded or included based on state culture.

Several principals thought AEP activities should be conducted in all schools. Some principals suggested it be initiated at an earlier class, perhaps 6th or 7th, and coordinated with the existing syllabi in a graded manner.

F. Overall Impact: Achievements and Gaps

F.1 Achievements

- The findings suggest modest programme effects in terms of improving students’ knowledge and attitudes on different thematic areas covered under the programme. There is evidence of improvement within the following thematic areas:
  - Physical changes during adolescence
  - Nutrition and anemia
  - HIV/AIDS, including definitions and modes of transmission
  - Substance abuse
• Taboos associated with physical changes such as menstruation
• Gender stereotypes and discrimination relating to studies and careers

• Modest programme effects are observed in developing students' life skills, for instance in the areas of
  o Self-esteem, decision-making and assertiveness
  o Trust, openness, handling emotions and friendship
  o Handling disagreements, including issues with parents and family
  o Trying out persuasive communication strategies to convince peers and parents of their viewpoint
  o Dealing with problems in school, including stress related with studies

• The modes of transacting AEP are participatory and activity-based. This has helped to generate a better atmosphere in class. Students ask more questions, teachers are more friendly and open. Student-teacher relations have been positively affected. There is a spill-over effect, with AEP teachers using such methods in other classes too.

• AEP is helping teachers to begin appreciating adolescents and the peer group as positive resources. The nodal teacher training has helped improve teachers’ knowledge, attitudes and ability to transact through participatory teaching methods.

• The programme is meeting gaps in the educational system by providing knowledge and encouraging attitudinal change in areas such as substance abuse, changes during adolescence and HIV-AIDS. The school has emerged as a critical site for providing information to students on culturally sensitive areas such as contraception and reproduction. The findings indicate that teachers and AEP material are important sources of information for students, more so than home and family.

F.2 Gaps and Challenges

• Findings suggest there is little or no improvement in knowledge levels or attitudes regarding some thematic areas. Thus more efforts are required in order to
  o Improve knowledge levels related to changes during adolescence in the other sex
  o Improve scientific understanding on menstruation among girls
  o Change deep-seated gender constructs such as ‘females are more emotional than males’ and ‘females are better care-givers than males’
  o Identify domestic violence against women and children and understand that it cannot be justified under any circumstance
  o Girls gave better responses than boys in most thematic areas relating to attitudes and life skills. Findings indicate that despite AEP, considerable differences remain between girls’ and boys’ attitude levels, for instance on domestic violence, taboos related to menstruation, substance abuse, gender discrimination and communication skills.
  o Boys had better knowledge than girls on themes such as contraception, indicating a need for the programme to make more focused efforts in this area.
More effort is required to develop non-discriminatory attitudes towards HIV positive persons and their children

Student’s liking particular themes/ sessions was found to be positively correlated with teachers’ comfort levels in transacting those themes/ sessions. More effort is needed in training teachers on the following themes: gender issues; STIs and RTIs; domestic violence and sexual abuse. So long as teachers are not comfortable with the theme, the sessions will not be effective.

G. Policy and Programmatic Recommendations: The Way Forward

Young people today are facing immense challenges. The study shows them to be reflective, thinking and discussing many issues relating to their changing selves, and changing society. They have a range of aspirations as well as diverse issues to deal with. They require knowledge on many fronts and understanding, support and guidance from adults. As a response to the realities and dilemmas of young people, AEP is fulfilling its basic mandate. Research findings provide evidence that the programme is relevant to the needs of young people.

G.1 Policy Recommendations

The findings suggest the following ways forward which need to be considered at the broader policy level:

- **Universalization of the Programme:** Students, teachers and principals have overwhelmingly found AEP to be relevant. Schools are being recognized as places where young people can be helped to understand and negotiate some of the difficult areas of life. Students have unmet needs for information and guidance, which parents are not able to provide, and schools should shoulder the responsibility. Clearly, it is advisable that AEP should continue within the school system, and in fact be expanded to more schools. Some respondents felt AEP should be implemented in more – perhaps all -- schools. This may also be considered.

- **Age of Initiation:** Findings indicate that AEP is proving beneficial to the students of classes 9 to 12, who have been exposed to the programme. It is noteworthy that many of the themes dealt with are relevant for students of lower classes as well. A high proportion of students (52% AEP, 38% non-AEP) responded in favor of introducing AEP to students below the age of 14 years, i.e., 9-13 years. More girls than boys favored lower age of initiation of AEP. These results indicate that most students who have been exposed to AEP appreciate its benefits and feel it will be useful for children at lower ages as well. Girls might recognize the benefits more than boys, especially since girls mature earlier and require information and guidance on issues such as menstruation. It should therefore be seriously considered whether AEP should begin at a younger age. Knowledge, attitudes and life skills related to self-esteem, ‘growing up’ issues such as menstruation, issues in friendship and disagreements with parents, gender discrimination, handling stress, assertiveness and so on can well be inculcated from an earlier age, for instance class 6 onwards. AEP curriculum and syllabus should be graded for different stages, with age-appropriate material, leading to a well-rounded and comprehensive development of the students.
• **Curricular or co-curricular:** Study findings suggest that AEP has a strong innovative thrust within the school system. The mode of implementation as a co-curricular subject allows for special training of nodal teachers, who have imbibed innovative pedagogic modes of transacting the programme. The participatory methods used for AEP sessions have proved beneficial for learning levels, teacher-student relationships and classroom atmosphere. Thus at present the programme needs to continue as a co-curricular programme. In a sense, it provides ways forward for the whole school curriculum and modes of teaching. However, over time (the exact time frame needs to be considered) the programme should be merged within the curriculum, through integration with the various subjects including social sciences, language and natural sciences. The pedagogic and content innovations introduced by AEP are in consonance with the changes recommended by NCF-2005 for the whole school system. Finally therefore AEP could merge with the curricular mode but within a vastly improved school teaching-learning system. In a way, the programme is a leader in demonstrating innovative ways of transacting, and expanding the scope of education to the inculcation of life skills, to meet the real life needs of students. This is the direction NCF-2005 has chosen for the education system as a whole.

• **As regards assessment of students,** it is advisable that AEP be kept outside the framework of examinations. Yet, some method of assessing students’ understanding needs to be worked out, as the programme becomes a regular part of the school system. The methods of assessment may be similar to those used for CCE. Here again, the programme may be a forerunner in coming up with innovative modes of assessment.

### G.2 Programmatic Recommendations

The programme requires strengthening so as to provide a comprehensive response to students’ needs. For this, more attention is required in the following programmatic areas:

• **Strengthen curriculum** so as to ensure adequate scope for improving knowledge levels and attitudinal change in all the thematic areas. Gender, STIs-RTIs, domestic violence and sexual abuse issues need particular attention.

• **AEP materials** may be improved with more data, activities and case studies, CDs and power point presentations, and addition of context-specific material may be considered. Some teachers suggested glossary of terms, and translation of manual into regional languages. Views and experiences of participants could be included in the manual.

• **Strengthen quality of AEP transaction:** Teachers’ knowledge levels were significantly higher than students’ on most thematic areas. Teachers’ attitude levels were also significantly better than students’ in most areas. This indicates the scope and need for better transaction of AEP. Transaction of AEP is affected by teachers’ motivation and comfort levels, teaching methods as well as the enabling atmosphere provided in terms of principals’ support, teachers’ workload and time/classes allotted for AEP sessions.
• **Strengthen AEP teacher training**, by ensuring quality of nodal teacher trainings, and holding refresher trainings. Different nodal teachers may require different levels of individual attention to answer their doubts, and also for learning (both content and innovative pedagogical methods). This may require longer training time. The trainings should help teachers become comfortable with difficult subject areas such as Gender issues and Sexual Abuse. Support from experts should be drawn in whenever needed, to supplement the in-school teachers, and strengthen teaching-learning on these issues. Regional seminars may also be held. Training/sensitization sessions for more than 2 nodal teachers per school may be considered.

• **Online support and guidance** should be provided to teachers who are transacting AEP, since they often require more information than is provided in the AEP material. There could be an interactive online forum which can answer teachers’ queries. Electronic discussion forum like the ‘Solution exchange’ may be adopted by NCERT and placed on a firm and sustained footing. Other methods of providing ongoing support and information supplementation to teachers may also be explored. The online forum could also be a space for sharing experiences, and providing feedback.

• Certain AEP **sessions** may be held separately for girls and boys. This includes some sessions on physical changes. Separate sessions would help students to ask questions more openly, with less of inhibitions. The knowledge components should be the same for all students, while the transaction may be sex-segregated.

• **Innovative campaigns** should be launched to prevent substance abuse, and challenge gender stereotypes and discrimination.

• **Orientation/training of principals** should receive much more attention. This aspect needs to be strengthened, so that all principals are aware of what AEP is about and develop the required motivation.

• **Strengthen enabling atmosphere in the whole school** by various means, including sensitization sessions for other teachers, and various activities organized for the school, for instance role plays during assembly, posters and issue-based seminars. An atmosphere conducive to optimum implementation of AEP needs to be built up in the whole school.

• **Orientation/sensitization sessions for parents** in the school, and orientation sessions for parents, need to be held systematically.

• Adequate focus on **advocacy efforts**, especially with those not completely convinced of the need for programmes like AEP.

• **Planning and monitoring** of AEP needs to be formalized and tightened.