

Abstract

Title: Reaching the Out of School Adolescents with Reproductive & Sexual Health Program: Impact of Pilot Initiative in Madhya Pradesh

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Background: It is a known fact that many girls and boys in rural areas either do not go to school or dropped out from school at an early age due to many factors. The parents and service providers feel uncomfortable or unable to provide RH information and services to adolescents. Reproductive health is still a taboo. Pilot program on Adolescent Reproductive and sexual health has been implemented in selected districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Purpose: Study examines to assess the impact of the pilot program on the exposure of ARSH among the out of school adolescents in two districts on knowledge and behavior and to seek the opinion of parents and animators on ARSH related interventions.

Methodology: Methodology adopted for the Present study is through the collection of information through the pre-designed designed questionnaire administered to 287 adolescent girls and boys, 25 parents and 15 village animators from two districts of Madhya Pradesh.

Results: Significant results witnessed, for the first time the adolescent girls and young women got an opportunity to step out from their homes to organize themselves into Mandals. There has been an improvement in their basic life skills like approaching Family Counseling Centers, Police Station etc. knowledge of adolescent reproductive health increased. They have been able to acquire thinking and analytical skills. Parents were very receptive to information and dialogue about adolescent reproductive health

Conclusion: ARSH program for school dropouts appears effective in communicating key information and helping adolescents in developing their knowledge relevant to reducing Reproductive health. However, lot more is needed in order to reach more number of out of school adolescents. Also need to enhance knowledge and capacity of services providers to deliver the quality of adolescent health services. ARSH programs should not be remained as pilot programs, there is a need upscale such initiatives.narendra@fpaindia.org