

Family life education in schools - An outlook

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Reproductive health needs of adolescents are, by necessity, becoming a priority concern in Indian's population policy. Family life education helps to prepare young people for the transition to adulthood. In Indian society and even in contemporary people, family has always providing the foundation for family life education. Breakdown of traditional support systems, such as family because of urbanization and modernization expose young people to entirely new pattern of living and new set of mores, values and standards that are being widely accepted but which stand in contrast to those which are promoted by their parents and grandparents regard to the knowledge, attitude and skills required for a successful family living. In such a situation questions may arise who will provide the family life education in a successful way? Is the parents, peer group, faith beyond settings and programs out of schools? Therefore in the present study an attempt was made to examine the attitude towards family life education in schools among the men and women in Tamil Nadu.

Data for the present study is drawn from the National Family Health Survey (2005-2006). 5919 ever-married women 15-49 years and 5696 men 15-49 years were interviewed for the present study.

Eighty-eight percent of the women and ninety-two percent of the men agreed to teach family life education in schools for boys. Ninety percent of the women and all the men (100 percent) agreed to teach family life education for girls in schools.

Eighty-three percent of the women and 72 percent of the men agree that girls should be taught in school about their physical changes that occur during their puberty. At the same time women and men differ with teaching about the physical changes of boys to the girls (43 percent each). Both men and women are slightly less likely to think about teaching about contraception, condom use and sex in schools. Forty-four percent of the women and 58 percent of the men agreed to teach about sex in schools for girls. Sixty-one percent of the men and 51 percent of the women accepts education about contraception to girls. Education on condom use was accepted by 31 percent of women and 64 percent of the men. Majority of the men (77 percent) and women (86 percent) agreed to teach about HIV/AIDs to girls in school.

Seventy percent of the men and 64 percent of the women agreed to teach about changes in boys bodies to boys, but the percentage of women (34 percent) and men (42 percent) accept to teach about changes in girls bodies to boys is less. Fifty-one percent of the men and 41 percent of the women accepts to teach about sex to boys. The percentage of men and women accepting to teach about contraception (women, 38 percent; men 63 percent) and condom use (women, 33 percent; men, 69 percent) is less. Teaching about HIV/AIDs to boys is accepted by 77 percent of the women and 87 percent of the women.

Approval of teaching sex and sexual behavior in school, condom use to prevent sexually transmitted diseases are low among women. Approval of teaching changes in boy's bodies out puberty to girls and changes at girls bodies at puberty including menstruation to schools to boys is low among both men and women. Men are forwarded in teaching about sex and sexual behaviour and contraception to boys as well as to girls.

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