

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION & LITERACY

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UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1478
ANSWERED ON 02.08.2023

Anxiety among students for studies

1478 **Shri K.R. Suresh Reddy:**

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that anxiety among students with regard to studies, examination and results and frequent mood swings, are a concerning trend observed among students across stages, gender and types of school;
- (b) if so, what are the measures being taken to alleviate the said concerns;
- (c) whether emotional literacy will be integrated in all aspects of school's functioning (formal and informal activities, curriculum, teaching-learning, interactions and evaluations, etc.) to improve the wellbeing of school students; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SMT. ANNPURNA DEVI)

(a) & (b) The Ministry of Education with the help of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) had conducted the Mental Health Survey keeping in view of the perspectives of National Education Policy, 2020 which emphasizes students' mental health and well-being in order to provide holistic development. The survey was undertaken to explore the perception of students with regard to their mental health. The items of the survey gave an opportunity to the students to reflect and introspect their feelings and emotions on aspects that positively or negatively influence their perceptions of well-being. A total of 3,79,842 students of classes 6 to 12 from different schools across the country participated in the survey. The Survey Report was released by the Ministry of Education on 06th September, 2022. The overall findings of the survey indicate that: majority of students expressed feeling responsible for doing well in their life, are satisfied with school life, are trustworthy, do not hesitate in seeking social support. However a decline is observed in student's responses about their physical appearance, satisfaction with personal and school life, and availability of people to share their feelings and experience of happiness, as they move from middle to secondary stage. Happiness was the most common emotion/feeling reported by both boys and girls. Students also reported frequent mood swings, feeling anxious

about studies, examinations, and results which increased from middle to secondary stage and were reported more by girls in comparison to boys. Coping strategies adopted by students reveal their preference for yoga and meditation, changing the way they think, writing journals, and self-reflection.

The Ministry of Education has undertaken an initiative, named, 'Manodarpan', covering a wide range of activities to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing during the COVID outbreak and beyond. A Working Group, having experts from the fields of education, mental health and psychosocial issues as its members, has been set up to monitor and promote the mental health issues and concerns of students and to facilitate providing of support to address the mental health and psychosocial aspects during and after COVID-19 lockdown, through counselling services, online resources and helpline. Under the Manodarpan initiative a Web page (URL: <http://manodarpan.education.gov.in>) has been created on the Ministry of Education website carrying advisory guidelines, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), Practical tips, posters, videos, do's and don'ts for students, teachers/faculty and families for psychosocial support have been uploaded on the Web-page. A National Toll-free Helpline (8448440632) for a country-wide outreach to students from schools, colleges and universities to provide them tele-counselling to address their mental health and psychosocial issues during and after the COVID-19 situation has been set up, which has been functional since 21st July, 2020. All the State and Union Territory Governments were advised to give wide publicity to the Manodarpan initiative of this Ministry so that the interested students/teachers/parent could make full use of these services. Series of Webinars and discussion sessions 'Paricharcha' are held under the Manodarpan initiative to reach out to students and all stakeholders with the aim to create awareness about mental health and well-being concerns and ways of dealing/coping with them. It provides a platform for all to seek psychosocial support from experts in the field of mental health, counsellors, psychologists and educationists. 'Sahyog' live interactive sessions are held every day for students (classes VI-XII) from 5-5:30 pm on PM e-vidya channel with the focus on providing guidance for promoting mental well-being among students. Advocacy materials on various mental health issues (self-awareness, bullying, coping mechanisms, positive emotions, and psychological assistance for students during exam times) have been developed.

NCERT has been engaged in strengthening the capacity of teachers and counsellors to extend the support to the students for their emotional and mental well-being, help to deal with fear and find ways of dealing with these. NCERT offers the Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling (DCGC) with teacher counsellor model so that such teacher apart from teaching can also extend help to students in dealing with academic, personal and career-related issues.

NCERT has developed textbooks in Psychology for Classes XI and XII that cover the aspects of stress, anxiety and other related problems in schools. The chapter 3 on 'Meeting life Challenges' of the class XII textbook in Psychology tries to equip the students with aspects and causes of stress and the development of positive health.

Besides, the Hon'ble Prime Minister initiated the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' talks with students to create stress free environment for youngsters facing the exam years. The much-acclaimed book 'Exam Warriors' (2018) by the Hon'ble Prime Minister also tackles the pertinent concern of examinations in terms of students' mental health in our country's context.

Modular Handbook on Early Identification and Intervention for Mental Health Problems in School Going Children has been developed in collaboration with Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) which contains guidelines for early identification, detection and intervention of mental health problems (stress/illness) in school- going children, for hands-on training of teachers, counsellors and other stakeholders. The Handbook was launched by Ministry of Education on 06th September, 2022.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) provides pre and post examination tele-counselling facilities through centralized toll-free helpline. Due to the corona pandemic, CBSE started an additional Toll-Free Tele Helpline on CORONA VIRUS safeguards for students. The Board has published material on how to be stress free. Audio-visual presentations on issues affecting mental health during this crisis were made available on official YouTube and Facebook handles of CBSE. CBSE has also brought out a manual on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing during Covid. CBSE has launched mental well-being app 'Dost for Life', to provide free counselling sessions by principals and counsellors.

(c) & (d) Emotional literacy is the first step towards emotional well-being as it requires being able to identify and manage emotions effectively both of oneself and others. The Ministry of Education has launched NEP, 2020 which recommended multiple strategies to improve the wellbeing including emotional literacy of school students. This policy envisages that the extant 10+2 structure in school education will be modified with a new pedagogical and curricular restructuring of 5+3+3+4 covering ages 3-18. NEP, 2020 has envisioned that for holistic development of students, education should also include enhancing students' emotional capacities and dispositions along with other capacities. The policy recommends achieving this through integration of socio-emotional aspects in school curriculum, teaching-learning, and interactions. NEP, 2020 also brings in Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development (PARAKH), which focuses on assessment of students' holistic development including socio-emotional concerns. The Early childhood care and education Curriculum Framework has already included in its curricular goals, core competencies and learning outcomes age appropriate aspects of socio-emotional development.

Under the Ayushman Bharat School Health and Wellness Programme, Training and Resource Material for Health and Wellness of School-Going Children includes a full module on "Emotional Well-being and Mental Health" to develop awareness about mental health skills, developing emotional well-being in self, and fostering and supporting one another in developing positive attitudes and accessing help when required. The emphasis is also on building awareness around various emotions and expressions, identifying their own and their peers' personal strengths and skills to reach out for help, if and when required. The knowledge about mental health helps in identifying and using their strengths to cope with stressful situations and seek help when required. In this module, some activities have been discussed to develop emotional well-being and mental health such as "Knowing my Emotions", "Managing Challenging Emotions" etc.
