

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 193

ANSWERED ON 24/07/2024

Educating minors about Virtual touch

193 Dr. Ashok Kumar Mittal:

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

- (a) whether Government has taken note of the need to educate minors about virtual touch in addition to good and bad touch;
- (b) the data on incidents involving online exploitation of minors reported in the past five years, and the measures taken to address these incidents;
- (c) budget allocation for programmes aimed at educating minors on physical and virtual safety;
- (d) current curriculum and data on the inclusion of education about good and bad touch in schools, including the number of schools and students covered; and
- (e) the specific measures planned or implemented to incorporate education on virtual touch and online safety into the school curriculum?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SH. JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (e): Government of India has taken note of the need to educate minors about online safety, including virtual interactions. As such no complaint has been received involving online exploitation of minors in this Ministry. However, CBSE, an autonomous body of Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education has implemented several initiatives to address this:

1. Advised schools to form Cyber Clubs and promote cyber hygiene through various activities.
2. Launched a 'Stay Safe Online' cyber awareness campaign.
3. Organised online training program on Safety and Security in the Digital Space by CIET-NCERT.
4. Issued Cyber Safety Booklets and Handbooks for students.
5. Observes monthly Cyber Jaagrookta (Awareness) Diwas.
6. CBSE imparts training to teachers on “Adolescent Education” to equip teachers to deal effectively with various issues concerning adolescents.
7. Issued guidelines for safe use of internet and digital technologies in schools.

8. CBSE continues to take proactive measures to support student wellbeing and online safety through various circulars and programs.
9. The Ministry of Education under Centrally Sponsored scheme of Samagra Shiksha is implementing self-defense training for girls. This program aims to empower girls in government schools, including Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas, by teaching them self-defense techniques. The Budget allocation for this program for the last three years is as under:
 - F.Y. 2021-22: Rs. 11,657.76 lakhs.
 - F.Y. 2022-23: Rs. 32,189.48 lakhs.
 - F.Y. 2023-24: Rs. 33,106.73 lakhs.
10. NCERT has come out with cyber safety guidelines and brochures, and continuously organizes training, sensitization and awareness programs for teachers, students and parents about cyber safety and security. Also, NCERT has developed National Curriculum Frameworks for Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) and School Education (NCF-SE) as per NEP 2020. These frameworks integrate student mental wellbeing into various aspects of education and emphasize the role of all stakeholders in providing emotional support.
11. CBSE follows the curriculum provided by NCERT. Schools are mandated to constitute committees for addressing grievances, sexual harassment, and child protection under POCSO Act. Also, CBSE has provided on its website www.cbse.gov.in the "Komal" animated film (developed by Ministry of Women and Child Development) to raise awareness about inappropriate touch.
12. The Ministry of Education launched Manodarpan on July 21, 2020, under 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan' to offer psychosocial support to students, families, and teachers. It includes a free national toll-free helpline (844-844-0632) for mental health concerns. Manodarpan's website (<https://manodarpan.education.gov.in/>) also provides a directory of school and college/university counselors as a resource for students.
