

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF SCHOOL EDUCATION AND LITERACY
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1949
ANSWERED ON- 17/12/2025

Incidents of harassment in schools

1949 Dr. Fauzia Khan:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is verified data on harassment and bullying, including physical, verbal, sexual and cyberbullying in Government and private schools nationwide;
- (b) if so, the reasons for lack of regulatory oversight despite existence of child protection laws;
- (c) whether Government is aware of the need of mental health counsellors in schools; and
- (d) if so, the details on any initiative or assistance being provided to State Governments to increase the number of mental health counsellors in schools?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) to (d): The National Crime Record Bureau (NCRB) under the Ministry of Home Affairs publishes the annual 'Crime In India' report which serves as the principal reference document for crime statistics at the national level. The latest 'Crime in India 2023' report available at the link (<https://www.ncrb.gov.in/uploads/files/9ACII2023Snapshots-StateandUTs4.pdf>) provides comprehensive data on crime against children under major crime heads including Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO), cyber crime and grievous hurt. The Government of India through its Ministries/Departments administers various child protection laws. Out of such child protection laws, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) administers the POCSO Act, 2012, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 and the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 whereas the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL&E) administers the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (Amended in 2016). The concerned Ministries/Departments are responsible for overseeing implementation, monitoring compliance and coordinating with the State Governments/Union Territories (UTs) and relevant agencies to ensure effective enforcement of the respective laws administered by them. Additionally, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) has been constituted by the Government of India, under the Commission for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005 to promote and protect child rights by examining and strengthening existing safe-guards in law and inquiring into violation of child rights, among other functions. The Ministry of Education, on its part, administers the Right of Children

to Free and Compulsory Education Act, 2009 which envisages free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years.

Education is a subject in the concurrent list of the Constitution and majority of schools, whether government or private, fall under the administrative control and supervision of the respective State Government/UT administration. However, recognising the importance of education, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has come into existence, which emphasises the need to create awareness about mental health issues, reducing stress, promoting joyful learning and increasing community engagement for optimal learning outcomes. States and UTs are supported under Samagra Shiksha based on their proposals towards strengthening of existing Government schools through creation & augmentation of infrastructure facilities and also other activities such as career guidance, mental health, self-defence etc. Further, this Ministry has advised and encouraged States/UTs to constitute a dedicated state and district-level committee to monitor and address the issues pertaining to mental health and overall well-being of students and to formulate their own guidelines for recruitments to facilitate engagement of trained counsellors in schools.

For mental health and wellbeing, the Government has launched an initiative, Manodarpan, under 'Aatma Nirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan' on 21st July, 2020, with the aim to provide psychosocial support to students, their families and teachers across the country, ensuring their mental health and well-being. A National toll-free tele-helpline No. 844-844-0632 is available for reaching out to students from schools, colleges and universities across the country seeking support on mental health concerns and other psychosocial issues. The services offered on the helpline are free of cost. Till 28.11.2025, guidance through trained counsellors have been extended to approximately 2,99,617 calls received from various callers. Manodarpan also provides Directory of more than 350 counsellors working at both school and college/university level on (<https://manodarpan.education.gov.in>) as a resource for students.

Also, live interactive sessions called as 'Sahyog' are organised for students on PM eVidya channels, with practicing counsellors are held from Monday to Friday (from 05:00 pm - 05:30 pm) across different regions. These sessions can be viewed on PM eVidya Channels and 'NCERT Official' YouTube Channels (<https://www.youtube.com/@NCERTOFFICIAL/streams>). Total 1,433 'Sahyog' sessions have been held till 15.12.2025. Live interactive webinars named 'Paricharcha' are organised every Friday (from 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm). These sessions address various mental health and emotional well-being concerns of students, parents and teachers. Total 245 webinars 'Paricharcha' sessions have been held till 15.12.2025. Several conferences, orientations and sessions have been held for school administrators and teachers to sensitise and orient them on factors causing stress and anxiety among students including critical aspects such as examinations, academics, results and other emotionally challenging situations and build their understanding and enabling them towards managing these situations.

Manodarpan has developed and disseminated various materials to raise awareness and advocacy for mental health in schools through flyers and a desk calendar on diverse topics such as bullying, self-awareness, coping skills and positive emotions etc. every year. Awareness programs and capacity building of stakeholders in schools are some of the regular activities under the initiative. Manodarpan facilitates celebration of Mental Health Day and Mental Health Week every year across the country in schools since 2020. This celebration includes various activities, such as group discussion,

storytelling, outdoor activities, relaxation activities, creation of an individual well-being plan, sharing of gratitude note, creation of a positivity board, interactive awareness session, assembly on mental health etc. in schools.

Moreover, the Manodarpan Cell in NCERT, under the aegis of this Ministry, has developed several resources such as handbooks, guides, activity books and advocacy material to augment capacity of teachers and school administrators for early identification and intervention and to foster a holistic approach towards student's mental well-being. This includes a handbook titled "Early Identification and Intervention for Mental Health Concerns in School Going Children and Adolescents (2024)" to equip teachers and allied stakeholders with the skills required to identify early warning signs of mental distress among students and to build sensitivity among all stakeholders for early intervention.

Various national summits and capacity building programmes have also been organized by the Manodarpan Cell, NCERT for training teachers as guidance functionary and to equip counsellors and practitioners for implementing the 'Whole School Approach' to facilitate mental and emotional well-being of students. With a view to augment the availability of trained counsellors, 250 in-service school teachers, teacher educators, school administrators as well as untrained guidance personnel are trained annually through a Diploma Course in Guidance and Counselling offered by the Department of Education Psychology and Foundations of Education (DEPFE), NCERT. The course prepares the personnel to provide guidance and psychosocial support to students in schools, including those situated in marginalised areas.

This Ministry has also organized five editions of Pariksha Pe Charcha (PPC)- a unique interactive programme conceptualized by the Hon'ble Prime Minister (PM) - wherein students, parents, teachers across the nation and also from overseas interact with him to discuss and overcome the stress, emerging out of examinations in order to celebrate life as an Utsav. In the PPC programme 2025, maximum participation was ensured from students across diverse socio-economic backgrounds, especially those from rural and remote areas through a combination of outreach efforts by coordinating at all levels with the State and Centre Government. Extensive activities related to the PPC, such as reduction in exam stress through activities encouraging physical and emotional well-being, were carried out throughout Bharat, over a period of 10 days from 13th January - 23rd January, 2025. All of these activities resulted in the total participation of over 5 crore in the 8th edition of the PPC, 2025. Mental health and its related issues including emotional well-being was one of the major topics covered by the Hon'ble PM during the recently held PPC, which was disseminated on electronic and digital platforms across the country. Besides the session of the Hon'ble PM, two separate sessions were held on mental health and overcoming them from experts in two of the 7 other episodes that followed in the PPC.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), under the aegis of the Ministry of Education, has introduced comprehensive regulatory framework and architecture to ensure that schools affiliated to the Board remain a safe and welcoming space for children, as envisaged under the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. Key features of the framework are as follows:

- I. Affiliation Bye Laws-2018 of the Board stipulate that "Every Secondary and Senior Secondary school shall appoint a person on full time basis for performing the duties of Counsellor & Wellness Teacher".
- II. The Board vide Circular No. Acad.-17/2015 dated 09.03.2015 has issued detailed guidelines for prevention of Bullying and Ragging in Board's affiliated schools.

[\[https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Circulars/2015/17_Prevention%20of%20Bullying%20&%20Ragging%20in%20Schools.pdf\]](https://cbseacademic.nic.in/web_material/Circulars/2015/17_Prevention%20of%20Bullying%20&%20Ragging%20in%20Schools.pdf)

- III. The Board, vide Circular No. CBSE/AFF/SCHOOL SAFETY/19 dated 12.09.2017 has also issued detailed guidelines to its affiliated school for ensuring physical safety, mental & emotional health of children in the schools. [\[https://www.cbse.gov.in/cbsenew/Examination_Circular/2017/16_CIRCULAR.pdf\]](https://www.cbse.gov.in/cbsenew/Examination_Circular/2017/16_CIRCULAR.pdf)
- IV. The Board, vide Circular No. Aff.-24/2023 dated 01.09.2023, has further issued guidelines to augment safety arrangements for mental and emotional well-being of students in affiliated schools. [\[https://saras.cbse.gov.in/saras/Circulars/Circular24_2023638291895542842523.pdf\]](https://saras.cbse.gov.in/saras/Circulars/Circular24_2023638291895542842523.pdf)

Keeping in mind the increasing importance of creating enablers for mental health and well-being of school students, CBSE has taken the following specific steps in its affiliated schools:

1. Training of counsellors and wellness teachers through online and offline orientation/capacity building programs.
2. Implemented the Counseling Hub-and-Spoke School Model and Career Guidance Dashboard
3. Provided toll-free helpline with IVRS facilities for Classes X and XII during exams and results
4. Developed handbooks/manuals such as Mental Health Manual, Positive Parenting, and Compendium of Courses after +2.
5. Introduced Parenting Calendar to strengthen parent-school collaboration.
6. Disseminated podcasts on wellness, exam stress, career awareness, parenting, and skill education etc.
7. Partnered with institutions such as NCB and AIIMS for wellness programs, drug abuse prevention, and resilience training.
8. Directed schools to integrate the National Tele Mental Health Programme Tele-MANAS (helpline 14416 /1800-891-4416) and publicize the National Narcotics Helpline MANAS-1933.

Separately, NCPCR has also developed and circulated Guidelines for Schools on Preventing Bullying and Cyber Bullying and Manual on Safety and Security of Children in Schools which are available at NCPCR website. These resources provide detailed information on cyber bullying, their reporting and strategies for prevention in schools, at home and at cyberspaces. It also includes Do's and Don'ts for school teachers and management as well as recommendations for teachers and caregivers.

Regulatory oversight of affiliated schools is maintained by School Education Boards most of which fall under the purview of respective States and UTs. This Ministry through national level conferences and review meetings regularly encourages States and UTs to introduce effective regulatory framework, guidelines and protocols to address the critical issue of harassment and bullying and mental distress among students.
