

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

RAJYA SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1005
ANSWERED ON 04.12.2024

Deteriorating Mental Health of School Students

1005. Shri Narain Dass Gupta:

Will the Minister of Education be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that nowadays many school going children are suffering from mental health related issues like anxiety, low self-confidence, bullying etc.; and
- (b) whether Government is contemplating any measures/ campaign or formulating any policy in this regard across all schools of the country to redress mental health related problem, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(SHRI JAYANT CHAUDHARY)

(a) and (b): Education is a subject in the concurrent list of the Constitution and a majority of schools are under the administrative control of the respective State Government/UT administration. However, given the importance to Education, National Education Policy, 2020 has been implemented, which emphasizes the importance of creating awareness on mental health issues and reducing stress and promoting joyful learning. Schools play a significant role in nurturing holistic development of students, including their mental health and well-being. The National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 recognises that mental health is integral to the broader vision of education, which is reflected in the focus on socio-emotional aspects of development as an important prerequisite for optimal learning across stages of education.

National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 takes a holistic view about the nourishment of children and their mental wellbeing which is required for optimal learning. NEP suggests multifarious ways to achieve the same. For the nourishment of the children, PM POSHAN Scheme is being implemented under which hot cooked meals are provided to the students studying in Balvatika and classes I to VIII in the Government and Government-aided Schools. About 11.70 crore students studying in 10.24 lakh schools have been benefitted under the scheme. During 2023-24, health check-up of about 8.64 crore students has been carried out by States and UTs under the Rashtriya Bal Swasthya Karyakram (RBSK). About 9.71 crore students received Iron & Folic Acid Supplementation (IFA) under Anaemia Mukta

Bharat and about 8.50 crore students received deworming medicines under National Deworming Day (NDD) during 2023-24. IFA and de-worming tables helps for better health and good learning outcomes.

As per the perspective of NEP 2020, NCERT has developed and launched National Curriculum Framework for the Foundational Stage (NCF-FS) and National Curriculum Framework for School Education (NCF-SE). Both the NCFs integrate the mental well-being of students in different aspects such as syllabi development, development of content in learning and teaching material, pedagogical practices etc. The framework also lays emphasis on the role of all stakeholders, teachers, school functionaries, parents and community members to ensure that every student is provided with mental and emotional support.

For mental health and wellbeing, the Government has launched an initiative called “**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, for mental health and well-being. A National toll-free tele-helpline (844-844-0632) 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. Manodarpan also provides Directory of Counsellors working at both School and College/University level on (<https://manodarpan.education.gov.in>) as a resource for students. Live interactive sessions called ‘**Sahyog**’ are organized for students on PM eVidya Channels, with practicing counsellors and 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 Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@NCERTOFFICIAL/streams>). 946 ‘Sahyog’ sessions are held and more than 11 lakh viewers have been benefitted as on 26.11.2024.

Besides the above, the Government (M/o Health & Family Welfare) has launched a "National Tele Mental Health Programme" (NTMHP) on 10th October 2022, to improve access to quality mental health counselling and care services in the country. As on 22.11.2024, 36 States/ UTs have set up 53 Tele MANAS Cells and have started tele mental health services. More than 15,95,000 calls have been handled on the helpline number.

Ministry of Education has taken several initiatives viz., Pariksha Pe Charcha a program in which Hon’ble Prime Minister interacts with students to help them to overcome examination stress and celebrate exams as Utsav. Other initiatives like Kala Utsav to show case student talent in performing arts, Bagless days to reduce pressure and promote joyful learning.

Mental Health Week and International Mental Health Day celebrations are facilitated in schools across the country every year since 2020. The aim is to build awareness and enhance sensitivity towards mental health and well-being among students through participation in experiential activities.
