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HEALTH PROMOTION IN SCHOOLS: EXPERIENCES FROM LOW AND MIDDLE INCOME COUNTRIES (INDIA)

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What is a Health Promotion in School?

- **A health promoting school is one that constantly promotes health and strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living and learning.**

Why Health Promotion in Schools?

- **Promoting health through schools is a ‘life-course’ approach to promote healthy behavior among children.**
- **Many leading causes of death, disease and disability can be significantly reduced by preventing behavior that is initiated during youth, through health education, understanding and motivation and fostered by social and political policies and conditions.**
- **Potential of teachers and peer leaders as potential role models**

Schools in LMICs/India - I

- **Complex school structure: multiple boards and affiliations**
- **SES divide: Government (Public) vs Private schools**
 - **Ownership**
 - **SES**
 - **Infrastructure**
 - **Quality of education**
 - **Emphasis on “health”**
 - **Sesitization of school management/authorities/teachers/parents/students**
- **Largely focused in education/curriculum/textbooks**

Schools in LMICs/India - II

- **Lack of sensitization among policy makers**
- **Capacity building of teachers/student peer leaders is lacking**
- **Low priority accorded to physical activity as a part of the school timetable**
- **School cafeteria menu not monitored or regulated adequately**
- **Rampant kiosks selling food outside school**

Stakeholders

- **Government: Ministries of Health, Human Resource Development (Education), Youth and Sports Affairs**
- **Boards: central and state level**
- **School administration/management**
- **Parents**
- **Students**
- **Community**
- **NGOs/civil society**

Multiple Guidelines for Health Promoting Schools since 2007

- **Central Board of Secondary Education**
- **World Health Organization**
- **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI)**
- **Directorate of School Education: YUVA program**
- **National Council for Education Research and Training**
- **Framework Criteria for Healthy School Seal of Approval (HRIDAY, PHFI and Arogya World)**

Who?

- **Implements**
- **Conducts trainings**
- **Monitors**
- **Evaluates**
- **Reports**

Issues

- **Lack of collaboration and coordination between the Health and Education departments**
- ***Youth empowerment and advocacy: critical***
- ***Inadequately trained teachers and lack of time to devote to health issues.***
- **Multiple guidelines: poor implementation and monitoring**
- **Ownership and involvement**

Role of Civil Society and the Judiciary

Public Interest Litigation filed in the High Court of Delhi to ban junk food and carbonated beverages in schools and also its sale within a radius of 100 yards (February 2011)

Race for junk food few in schools

Continued from page 1

While the petition did not define what junk food is, it quoted senior doctors explaining the ill effects of consuming junk food. "When you have a scrumptious junk meal rich in oil, you feel drowsy and fail to concentrate," the petition said. "Over sustained periods of junk food eating, blood circulation drops because of fat accumulation. Lack of vital oxygen, nutrients and proteins particularly can state your grey cells (brain) weak temporarily."

A bench comprising Chief Justice Dipak Mishra and Justice Manojan also appointed senior advocate N.K. Rai to assist the court as amicus curiae in deciding the issue. "It is the right time we change the way kids eat in schools. Banning junk food and carbonated drinks in schools will set new standards for healthy meals that will make our kids food better, grow better and learn better," Prabhakar said.

The petition cites data from the latest National Sample Survey Organisation report released by Delhi government, which says Delhiites spend an average of ₹371 per month on processed food and beverages. However, when it comes to vegetables and fruits, they spend far less — ₹100 on vegetables and one-third of it on fruits.

The petition further says that per capita consumption of fruits and vegetables in India remains as low as 130 gms per day. China consumes 300 gms of fruits and vegetables per day. "The earlier you start a regular diet of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, the better it is for your health. It has been proved that these things protect against multiple diseases, such as cancer, heart attack and blood pressure," said the petition.

NGO filed petition seeking ban on junk food in & around schools

Prabhakar said he thought of moving the court in November this year when he visited his two minor children at school. "I was surprised to see how responsibly junk food is being sold to young people by the school authorities," he said.

The petition quotes senior medical professionals such as Dr Anoop Mishra, director and head of the diabetes and metabolism department at Fortis. He says that 80 per cent of diabetes in Indians suffer from Type 2 diabetes, a lifestyle disease, while only five per cent suffer from Type 1 diabetes. "Junk food is one of the biggest reasons behind this," said Dr Mishra.

The NGO's petition claims that in India, a large number of schools run the canteen with fast food chains. It says that junk food and carbonated drinks in their canteens "at least consist of today's children consume junk food more than three a week," the petition says. In 2006, the then Union health minister Anbumani Ramadoss had suggested the banning of junk food and sodas in school canteens and nearby school premises across the country. That, however, was never implemented as a law continued.

It adds that in the US, various states have banned the sale of



HC ISSUED NOTICES TO

- Delhi government
- Union ministry of human resources and development
- Union ministry of health and family welfare
- National Commission For Protection of Child Rights
- Directorate of Education, Delhi govt.

PETITION SEEKS

- To immediately ban junk food and carbonated drinks in schools
- To initiate measures to discourage availability of fast food, unhygienic food and foods with unhealthy ingredients within 500 yards of the school
- To direct respondents to develop a school canteen policy, which ensures healthy nutrition among schoolkids
- Ban junk food and carbonated drinks ads in media through any means

KNOW YOUR JUNK FOOD

- Fried food like samosa and French fries, food with refined carbs like burger and pizza, candy, chips and carbonated beverages are junk food
- In last three years, the prevalence of obesity among Delhi schoolchildren has increased from 9.8 per cent to 11.7 per cent, says a recent study conducted by the Diabetes Foundation of India and National Diabetes, Obesity and Cholesterol Foundation. The food intake of these children was almost four times the recommended quantity
- Regular intake of junk food can cause severe deficiency of vitamins and minerals, resulting in weak bones, stunted growth and lack of memory skills. Junk food also leads to weight gain, which can result in increased risk of diabetes, heart diseases etc.

'THIS IS A RIGHT STEP'

More than 6 per cent of our patients are children with Type 2 diabetes. Restriction in school area can go a long way in ensuring healthy students

— DR ANOOP MISHRA
Head of department, diabetes and metabolic diseases, Fortis

Schools have to go beyond restricting sale of junk food. They need to educate kids and parents on why consumption of junk food is harmful

— DR MONIKA ARORA
Faculty, Public Health Foundation of India

Ban on junk food isn't the best way to inculcate good food habits. But since schools and parents aren't cautious about kids' health, such measures are needed

— DR SHIKHA SHARMA
Nutritionist

The trend is the same in the United Kingdom where, obesity is a leading cause in London High Courts. The judge declared fast food takeaways near schools as

crips and savoury snacks (except fish, soups, nuts and vegetables) and low grade meat products such as burgers, pizzas and sausages. Schools are also nam-

'Ban junk food, strip in service'

HIGH COURT TO CENTRE Make unhealthy eatables out of reach in school, college canteens

Harish V Nair
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NEW DELHI: The Delhi High Court on Wednesday directed the Centre to immediately implement its plan to completely ban junk food and carbonated beverages from school and college canteens across the country.

"We do not need lip service. We want the government to take effective steps to ensure that the sale and supply of junk food is completely banned near educational institutions and an action taken report filed by November 2" justice AK Sikri and justice Siddharth Mridal said.

They were reacting to an affidavit filed by Centre, which merely said that the health ministry "has written" to health ministers

THE COURT SAID IT WAS NOT SATISFIED WITH THE CENTRE'S AFFIDAVIT IN THE CASE. IT ADDED "SOMETHING POSITIVE (SHOULD) BE DONE"

of all states to "consider" withdrawal of carbonated beverages and junk food from school and college canteens.

The Centre also said it "has invited" proposals from experienced agencies, organisations and institutions for framing guidelines to provide safe food in educational institutions.

"We are not satisfied with the affidavit. It cannot solve the prob-

lem. Let something positive be done," the court said.

The court was hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) seeking a ban on sale of junk food within 1,500 feet radius of schools.

Petitioners Rahul Verma and lawyer Rakesh Prabhakar of NGO Uday Foundation told the court. "It is time we change the way kids eat in schools. Such a ban will set new standards for healthy food. On one hand, children are taught in classrooms about good nutrition... on the other hand, we continue to make junk food available to them."

They said their nation-wide November 2010 survey revealed most schools allowed easy access to junk foods and carbonated drinks for students in canteens and nearby shops.

Fast food may be out of bounds in schools, colleges

Harish V Nair
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NEW DELHI: If the Health Ministry bans its way, pizzas, burgers, pakoras and soft drinks will soon be out of bounds for school and college students across the country.

"(The) Health Minister has written to health ministers of all states and union territories to consider withdrawal of carbonated beverages and junk foods from school and college canteens," said an affidavit filed in the Delhi High Court by Food and Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), which is under the health ministry.

Junk food can cause obesity, dental cavities, diabetes and heart disease, it says. The Ministry said it is in the process of issuing guidelines for improvement of safety and quality of food in all educational institutions. The court is hearing a public interest litigation (PIL) filed by an NGO, seeking a ban on sale of junk food and carbonated drinks within a 1,500-foot-radius of schools. It had sought the view of the Health Ministry on April 19.

While submitting the PIL in February, the court had asked the Centre about the steps it took to create awareness among the young generation about the health effects of increased consumption of junk food.

The Bench of chief justice Dipak Mishra and Justice Sanjay Khanna is set to take a stand on the Centre's affidavit on Monday.

The term 'junk food' is not defined under Prevention of

MINISTRY ON JUNK FOOD

- Could cause obesity, dental problems, diabetes and heart disease
 - High in calories, fat, sodium and sugar
 - Contains harmful additives and colour to enhance flavour
 - Of no use as lacks vitamins, minerals and fibre
- Food Adulteration Act, 1954. But it is understood that any food that has poor nutritional value (and) is considered unhealthy may be called junk food," Dhir Singh, assistant director with the FSSAI says in the affidavit.
- To bolster its case for a nationwide ban, the Health Ministry quoted medical researchers to say "junk food is high in calories, fat, sodium and sugar, contains harmful additives and colour to enhance flavour and is of no use as (it) lacks vitamins, minerals and fibre. PIL petitioners Rahul Verma and lawyer Rakesh Prabhakar of NGO Uday Foundation told the court: "It is... time we change the way kids eat in schools. Such a ban will set new standards for healthy foods. On one hand, children are taught in classrooms about good nutrition... on the other hand, we continue to make junk food available to them."
- They said their nationwide survey showed most schools allowed easy access to junk foods and carbonated drinks to students in school canteens and nearby shops.

good

By MANU MOUDGIL

GIVEN an option, children would prefer to go for fast food and flavoured milk than to drink plain water, says a recent survey conducted by the ICMR. The study, which was part of a larger survey on the health of school children, found that 70 per cent of children would prefer to drink flavoured milk than plain water. The study also found that 60 per cent of children would prefer to eat fast food than a regular meal. The study was conducted in 10 schools across the country. The study found that children who ate fast food and drank flavoured milk were more likely to be overweight than those who ate a regular meal and drank plain water. The study also found that children who ate fast food and drank flavoured milk were more likely to have poor academic performance than those who ate a regular meal and drank plain water.



POPEYE MAKES AN IMPACT
The cartoon character Popeye has become a household name in the form of the mascot for the National Health Authority. The cartoon character is used to promote healthy eating and physical activity among children.

HEALTH PROBLEMS ABOUND
The study found that children who ate fast food and drank flavoured milk were more likely to have health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and heart disease. The study also found that children who ate fast food and drank flavoured milk were more likely to have poor academic performance than those who ate a regular meal and drank plain water. The study also found that children who ate fast food and drank flavoured milk were more likely to have poor social skills than those who ate a regular meal and drank plain water.

DID YOU KNOW
Indian babies are fatter than they were a decade ago. The study found that the average weight of Indian babies has increased by 10 per cent in the last decade. This is due to the increase in the consumption of fast food and sugary drinks among Indian children.

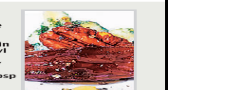
Finding a way out of the fat trap

Obesity among Indian kids is at an all time high. We tell you about the moves made by some parents, schools and NGOs to halt this trend

UNIQUE SOLUTIONS
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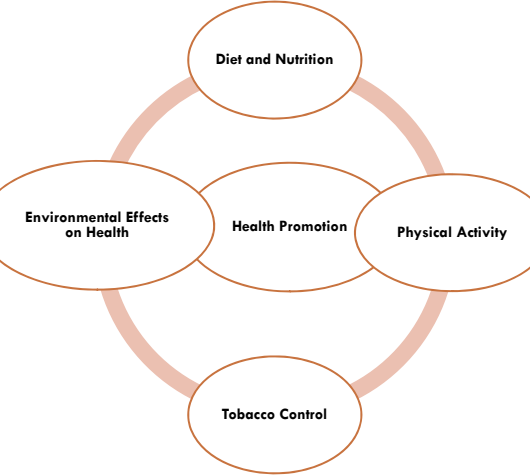
PROACTIVE SCHOOLS
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STUFFED DATES
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HRIDAY: Health Related Information Dissemination Amongst Youth

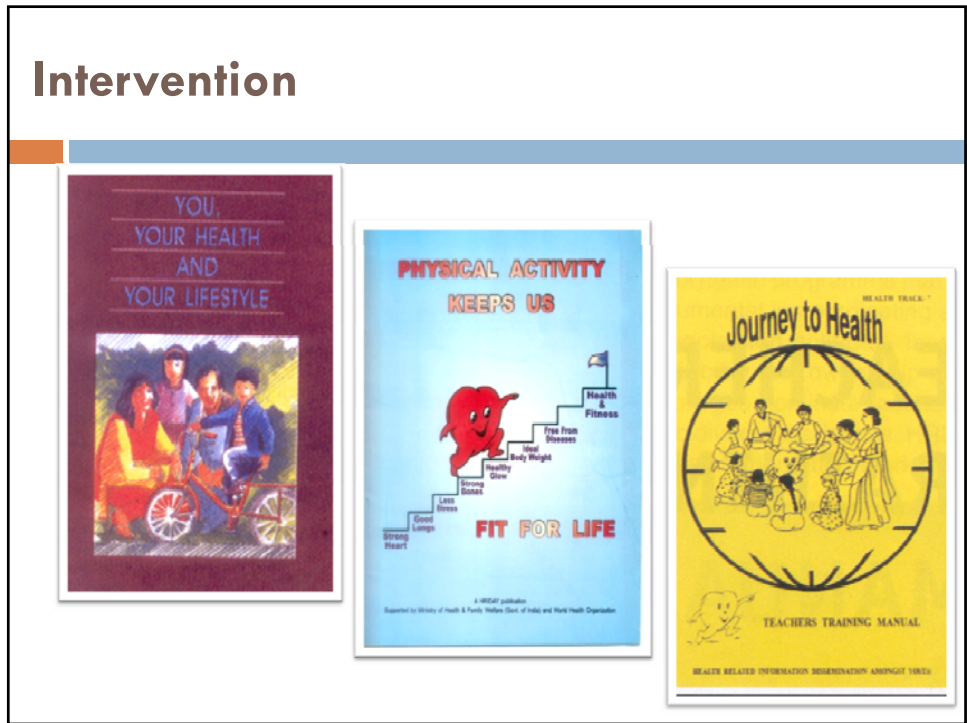
- To enhance the knowledge related to the content areas of HRIDAY educational program
- To positively influence attitudes towards health promoting behaviors
- To alter practices of students and of their parents towards healthy practices



Intervention



Intervention



HRIDAY-CATCH

Child and Adolescent Trial for Cardiovascular Health (1996 – 98)

- Conducted with 30 schools in Delhi; implemented and evaluated the efficacy of a school-based intervention;
- Intervention successfully lowered offers of tobacco, fewer students tried tobacco, or had intentions to use tobacco in the future
- No impact on diet and physical activity behavior
- Demonstrated that a systematic and coordinated health promotion program can bring about a desired outcome within the high-risk population i.e. dietary modifications, delayed initiation or intention of tobacco use etc.


**Am J Health Behav, 2002; 26(3): 173-181*




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THANK YOU!!

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