

## SEX EDUCATION IN SECONDAERY SCHOOLS

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### Introduction :

Sex Education (SEd) in schools is about enabling students to understand the physiological, social and emotional changes they experience as they mature, develop healthy and rewarding relationships including those with members of the opposite sex, and make wise, informed and responsible decisions on sexuality matters. SEd is premised on the importance of the family as the basic unit of society. This means encouraging healthy, heterosexual marriages and stable nuclear family units with extended family support. There are various aspects to this education regarding its need and some social issues.

### Need of Sex Education :

The emotional or physical aspect of sexuality refers to the bond that arises between individuals, and is manifested physically or through emotions such as love, trust and caring. There is also a spiritual aspect of sexuality of an individual or as a connection with others.

Traditionally, adolescents were not given any information on sexual matters, with discussion of these issues being considered taboo. Such instruction as was given was traditionally left to a child's parents, and often this was put off until just before a child's marriage. Most of the information on sexual matters was obtained informally from friends and the media, and much of this information was of doubtful value. Much of such information was usually known to be deficient, especially during the period following puberty when curiosity of sexual matters was the most acute. This deficiency became increasingly evident by the increasing incidence of teenage pregnancies, especially in Western countries after the 1960s. As part of each country's efforts to reduce such pregnancies, programs of sex education were instituted, initially over strong opposition from parent and religious groups.

The outbreak of AIDS has given a new sense of urgency to sex education. In many African countries, where AIDS is at epidemic levels (see HIV/AIDS in Africa), sex education is seen by most scientists as a vital public health strategy. Some international organizations such as Planned Parenthood consider that broad sex education programs have

global benefits, such as controlling the risk of overpopulation and the advancement of women's. The use of mass media campaigns, however, has sometimes resulted in high levels of "awareness" coupled with essentially superficial knowledge of HIV transmission.

According to SIECUS, the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, 93% of adults they surveyed support sexuality education in high school and 84% support it in junior high school. In fact, 88% of parents of junior high school students and 80% of parents of high school students believe that sex education in school makes it easier for them to talk to their adolescents about sex. Also, 92% of adolescents report that they want both to talk to their parents about sex and to have comprehensive in-school sex education. Furthermore, a "...study, conducted by Mathematica Policy Research Inc. on behalf of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, found that abstinence-only-until-marriage programs are ineffective."

#### **Sources to impart Sex Education :**

Sex education can be delivered through sex self-help authors, magazine advice columnists, sex columnists, or sex education web sites. Formal sex education occurs when schools or health care providers offer sex education. Slyer stated that sex education teaches the young person what he or she should know for his or her personal conduct and relationship with others. Gruenberg also stated that sex education is necessary to prepare the young for the task ahead. According to him, officials generally agree that some kind of planned sex education is necessary.

Sometimes formal sex education is taught as a full course as part of the curriculum in junior high school or high school. Other times it is only one unit within a more broad biology class, health class, home economics class, or physical education class. Some schools offer no sex education, since it remains a controversial issue in several countries, particularly the especially with regard to the age at which children should start receiving such education, the amount of detail that is revealed, and topics dealing with human sexual behavior.

#### **Sex Education in India :**

India, there are many programs promoting sex education including information on AIDS in schools as well public education and advertising. AIDS clinics providing information and assistance are to be found in most cities and many small villages.

“India has a strong prevention program which goes hand in hand with care, support and treatment. We have been able to contain the epidemic with a prevalence of just 0.31 %. We have also brought about a decline of 50% in new infections annually.” Shri Gulam Nabi Azad, Hon’ble Minister of Health and Family Welfare, 2011.

Nevertheless, according to experts such as Rev. Fr. John Zachariah one of the sexologists in India, sexual ignorance is one of the major problem faced by the population of India. In most of the schools, sex education is included as a part in broader subjects like biology. Although criticism is that it should be made compulsory to teach as a subject, because of values and beliefs of the different ethnic and religious communities on sexuality issues.

Many times it leads to ban on sex education like news some time ago says:

Politicians in Maharashtra, cutting across party lines, on Friday decided not to impart sex education in schools. Moreover, the government even promised to ban books published by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) on the subject. This means schools in the state affiliated to the CBSE may not be allowed to include sex education in the syllabus. The government would impose a ban on sex education in CBSE schools in Maharashtra, minister of state for school education Hasan Mushreef told the legislative assembly.

The National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT) and National Aids Control Organisation has drafted manuals on sex education for introduction at secondary school level. Maharashtra government, the minister assured the House, would not issue these manuals to CBSE schools.

A committee, recently formed by the Goa government to suggest ways to avoid offences of rape or sexual attacks on minors in schools, has come out with a recommendation for making sex education a compulsory part of school curriculum. The committee, chaired by MLA Vishnu Surya Wagh, was formed around two months back following the alleged rape of a school girl at Vasco town in January this year and a case of girl's molestation by her teacher in Panaji last year. The girl later committed suicide. The panel has come out with an elaborate report suggesting ways of curbing such crimes. "Health and sex education should be made mandatory in the school curriculum. The department should also organise talks by resource persons, open forums, workshops, street plays and others to make students, teachers and the public aware about the sex education," the committee has said in the report.

"Police clearance for appointment of teachers in any school should be made compulsory," the report recommends, adding that any teacher with criminal background should not be allowed to join the school.

**How good is the current Sex Education system is and Solution :**

**A study by British newspaper Guardian reveals :**

The sexual advice service for young people, found nearly half of secondary-school pupils find their sex and relationship education (SRE) lacking, while just 6% of young people said they got the information about relationships they need from SRE lessons. You only have to look at the controversy whipped up by groups such as the Christian Institute, whose recent report Too Much, Too Young complained that children were being shown "explicit" images in school sex education.

**Some of the factors pulling back sex education are :**

Lack of proper media for education: Many times manuals are used to educate students but it might prove ineffective as the education on subject like this should be interactive. So interactive class would be helpful.

**Opposition from religious groups :**

Sexual education doesn't fit into religious emotions of many religious organizations and it puts pressure on government to hold back sex education.

Question whether family should teach sexual aspects to children by discussion: This seems to a good solution but the truth that many times children don't get any sexual education from their parents or they get it very late in time.

Some claim that certain sex education curricula break down pre-existing notions of modesty

**Possible solutions :**

Many solutions are there for solving these or problems. Use of digital media can be quite useful and effective as students can access information easily and whenever they need. Also it is also important to have compulsory subject about sexual education in secondary education system. Current system of including sexual education as a small part of another subject proves to be ineffective and full course is necessary. It should be supported by educated teachers and well equipped environment for education, as in countries like UK where sexual education system is already exists many students complain that the course is lacking and found that they even got the wrong information. Public awareness can prove as backbone for this system as it would help in bringing down many opposing factors to sexuality education. Public awareness programs are already in action in some of the countries and are proving to be helpful as a supplementary to main objective. This is done by personal talks with parents at meet ups or by public media.

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