

Integration of Personal Safety Education Programme in Schools: A Case Study



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Preface

Understanding whether a programme is delivering its initial objectives is critical to the creation of a successful programme. An evaluation assists in improving service delivery and enables policymakers and service providers to determine the effectiveness of a programme.

This research is intended to evaluate Arpan's Personal Safety Education Programme after it has been integrated into the school curriculum. Arpan has been conducting the Personal Safety Education for the last 9 years and has touched the lives of over 70,000 children and over 50,000 adults through 126 schools (March, 2017). While the sustenance of the programme and the encouraging feedback received from beneficiaries and stakeholders in itself speaks of its success; Arpan strongly believes in the culture of Monitoring and Evaluation as a process of learning. Arpan commissioned the first external evaluation of the Personal Safety Education Programme in 2014 by the International Market Research Bureau. This report aims to substantiate the earlier research in assessing the efficacy of the programme.

In this evaluation we investigated the imprint of personal safety in lives of children, their awareness of safe and unsafe touches, their ability to use refusal skills when faced with unsafe situations and their help-seeking behaviour particularly in the schools of Bombay Cambridge Gurukul which has been conducting the programme for the last 5 years after being trained by Arpan. We also mapped the process of integration of the Personal Safety Education Programme in the school curriculum. This evaluation in the context of child protection can offer evidence for school-based prevention programmes on Child Sexual Abuse. It can help Arpan to make the Personal Safety Education programme more robust. This can boost the contemporary child protection narratives in the Indian context by providing valuable information and direction to program advocates, professionals, schools, government and policy makers who are currently exploring models for primary and secondary prevention of Child Sexual Abuse within the school network.

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September, 2017

Definitions Used In This Research

Child Sexual Abuse: When a powerful person uses a child for their own sexual gratification, it is called Child Sexual Abuse. The person can look at, touch, or talk about the child's private body parts, or show them material that is sexual in nature. The abuser can also ask the child to touch/look at their private body parts.

Inappropriate behaviour: Inappropriate behaviour are cases where the person does not have the intention to abuse the child sexually, but the child feels unsafe and uncomfortable by the action.

Safe Touches: Safe touches are those that are healthy for children.

Unsafe Touches: Unsafe touches are those that are not healthy for children. Touches that make children feel uncomfortable, sad, angry, scared, shy or confused are mostly unsafe touches.

Confusing touches: Confusing touches are the touches that leave a child in a state of confusion and having mixed feelings.

Wanted touches: Wanted touches are those touches that we may want and feel are important for us. They can make us feel safe and happy. These touches can be safe or unsafe based on the situation. Sometimes we may appear to like or enjoy these touches. However, they can still be unsafe.

Unwanted touches: Unwanted touches are those touches that we do not like and do not want. These touches could be safe or unsafe. They could sometimes also cause pain.

Private Body Parts: Private body parts are those parts of the body that are usually covered with undergarments or swimsuit.

Personal Safety Rules/Guidelines 1: It is never alright for someone to touch, look at or talk about my private body parts except to keep me clean and healthy. It is never alright for someone to ask me to touch, to look at or talk about their Private Body Parts.

Personal Safety Rule/Guideline 2: Say No and Get Away.

Headmistress: Headmistress are the leading teachers, administrators of the primary section of the school.

Principal: The Principal is the chief administrator looking after both the primary and secondary school.

Abbreviations Used In this Research

- BCG** - Bombay Cambridge Gurukul
BCSE- Bombay Cambridge School, Andheri East
BCSW- Bombay Cambridge School, Andheri West
CAIE - Cambridge Assessment International Education
CAT - Children's Apperception Test
CBSE - Central Board for Secondary Education
CEO, Arpan – Chief Executive Officer, Arpan
CEO, BCG – Chief Educational Officer, BCG
CPP - Child Protection Policy
CSA- Child Sexual Abuse
DSRVB - Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishna Vidyalaya, Borivali
DSRVM - Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishna Vidyalaya, Malad
FGD – Focus Group Discussion
HRD – Human Resource Development
ICSE - Indian Certificate for Secondary Education
IGCSE - International General Certificate for Secondary Education
POCSO - The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012
PSE - Personal Safety Education
R&D – Research and Development
SSC - Secondary School Certificate
UNCRC - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
VBSVV - Veer Bhagat Singh Vidyalaya, Malad

Executive Summary

Arpan has been conducting Personal Safety Education (PSE) programme for the last 9 years to help children participate in their safety and make adults aware of their role in keeping children safe from Sexual Abuse. Up to March 2017, Arpan has conducted the programme with over 70,000 children and 55,000 adult stakeholders in 126 schools, 6 institutions and 14 community-based organisations in Maharashtra, India. Arpan has also trained 2,500 professionals including teachers, counsellors, and master trainers, NGO professionals. These professionals have in turn trained 460,000 children and adult stakeholders by implementing Personal Safety Programme in their settings. The outreach of the programme in itself speaks about the programme being well received. However, Arpan decided to conduct a qualitative study to assess the efficacy of the Personal Safety Education (PSE) program after a school integrates it as a part of the school curriculum.

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation is:

- To understand the process of integration of the Personal Safety Education programme in the school curriculum and the challenges faced.
- To map children's knowledge, skills and attitude on personal safety.
- To map parent's knowledge, skills and attitude towards prevention and intervention of Child Sexual Abuse.
- To map school staff's (Principals, Teachers and Counsellors) knowledge, skills and attitudes towards prevention and intervention of Child Sexual Abuse.





Overview of Evaluation

Arpan has trained the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul group of schools on the PSE programme. These schools have institutionalised the PSE Programme and integrated it into their curriculum from the year 2010. The teachers themselves teach personal safety to children after being trained by Arpan. The evaluation was conducted in the five schools of Bombay Cambridge Gurukul (BCG). Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with 152 children from 5 schools from 5th, 6th and 7th standards. Among these 152 children, individual interviews were conducted with 31 children. 5 headmistress and principals, 10 teachers (who conduct Personal Safety Education programme), 5 counsellors, 9 parents, CEO and Head of Dept - HRD were interviewed.

Overarching Findings

The key findings of the study include both the strengths of the programme and the gaps identified.

Management of Schools of BCG

- i. The Management of schools of BCG has developed a Child Protection Policy with a focus on responding to Child Sexual Abuse. The Child protection policy is child-friendly and responsive and showcases their knowledge on the issue of Child Sexual Abuse.
- ii. The school management and administrators have responded proactively to deal with the inhibitions of parents at the initiation of the programme. This demonstrates their conviction to integrate the Personal Safety Programme in keeping children safe.

iii. The school management has also identified the need for training and hand-holding of teachers and counsellors and invested their time to ensure that the quality of the programme is maintained and monitored. In spite of this, the need for training to standardise delivery and spaces to have dialogues on ethical issues are evident.

Children

- i. Children demonstrated increasing help-seeking behaviour as they identified unsafe situations, used refusal skills, and reported it to a trusted adult almost immediately.
- ii. Children's internalisation of the Personal Safety Education messages boosted their self-esteem and articulation of feelings. All children across groups agreed that they were special as there is "**no one like me [them]**".
- iii. Children, across all groups, are comfortable about their body, know that their body belongs to them and believe themselves to be active participants in ensuring their safety. They are comfortable with naming Private Body Parts and remember the Personal Safety Rules/Guidelines. Though there are slight variations in the vocabulary used of Private Body Parts across schools.
- iv. Children recognise that Personal Safety Education inculcates them with skills to face 'life' as **PSE is about life**". Children shared their learnings with their siblings, cousins or friends or by leaving messages for other children through this study. Some children felt that PSE becomes repetitive when repeated across grades. This can become a hurdle in children's absorption of messages.
- v. Nuances of certain messages, for example, 'Think NO' is lost. Children might come across situations where it might be challenging to use refusal skills immediately because of the fear of harm. In these situations, the PSE lesson plans introduce the concept of 'Think NO'.
- vi. The internalisation of the concept, 'Not My Fault' was not standardised among children.
- vii. In the FGDs, younger children's articulation of safe-unsafe situations was limited to unfamiliar spaces and people. However, in the individual interviews, the same children mentioned both strangers, as well as known persons, could be unsafe.
- viii. When children learnt the concept of 'I am the boss of my body' for the first time they reported about touching on the shoulder as facing a 'touching problem'. They also used names of private body parts in situations which the teachers thought to be inappropriate. Though this fizzled out over time.
- ix. Messages from the PSE lessons made children seek help from parents in unsafe situations. However, adolescent children shared that they would not reach out to their parents about situations in which parents might get angry or would perceive them to have done something "wrong". These can become hurdles for accessing help.

Parents

- i. Parents are aware of Child Sexual Abuse. They are aware of the fact that known people can be abusers. However, their understanding is significantly shaped by the media leading to reinforcement of popular myths.
- ii. Parents recognise Personal Safety Education Programme as age-appropriate, necessary and adequate. They are comfortable with the content and delivery of the programme. Some parents have expressed inhibitions at the beginning of the programme. However, all parents in the study expressed a sense of relief that it was the teachers who started the conversation about personal safety.
- iii. Parents identified the Personal Safety Education program in aiding their communication with children on personal safety.

Teachers

- i. Teachers are well aware of signs and symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse and proactive in responding to a child's disclosure. However, their response to children indulging in inappropriate behaviour is inconsistent and coloured by their value systems and beliefs.

ii. Teachers recognise Personal Safety Education Programme as a systematic age-appropriate model with adequate teachings aids and activities. It has helped teachers to initiate dialogue on this issue in a non-threatening manner. It has also helped to streamline the process of handling disclosures of Child Sexual Abuse.

iii. Teachers have taken the learnings from the PSE classrooms and have created safe environments in their homes and personal spaces.



Overview of Recommendations

For Arpan

- Arpan can use the learnings from the study in reviewing the Personal Safety Education Curriculum. They can ensure that there is an adequate focus on the nuanced concepts, for example, 'Think NO' and 'Not My Fault'. They can refine the content around how and where children need to use the names of Private Body Part so that children do not use them inappropriately. Arpan also needs to brainstorm as to how younger children can have better articulation that abusers can be both strangers and known people without inflicting fear in them.
- Arpan can evolve a long-term curriculum for 'Integration of PSE' in the school set up. This training programme needs to include continuous hand-holding, observation as well as refreshers and sequential step up training.
- Arpan needs to also continuously engage in Research and Development to evolve new teaching aids so that the content does not appear repetitive to children when repeated over grades.
- Arpan needs to conduct monitoring and evaluation of the programme across diverse setups to understand the emerging patterns across schools.

For schools of BCG

- Continuous engagement is needed with parents on the phenomenon of CSA to strengthen their understanding of the issue and battle the myths perpetuated by the media. Continued work is also needed to ease out the conversation between adolescent children and their parents.
- Training and hand-holding need to be provided to teachers and counsellors at regular interval.
- Critical messages of Personal Safety Education needs to be standardised across schools.

For new schools incorporating the Personal Safety Education programme

- Challenges, both big and small, at the initial stage of integration are normal. It is critical on the part of the school management and administrators of the new schools to have the zeal towards creating a safe school and conviction in this vision. Strategies used by the schools of BCG to address parents' inhibitions can be a good starting point to address parent's anxiety towards the programme.
- The school management needs to recognise the need for training and hand-holding and invest considerable time and energy to ensure the quality of the programme.
- The school management needs to develop a protocol for handling disclosure and evolve a Child Protection Policy.
- The school management needs to work towards having counsellors as part of the school system or develop an efficient referral mechanism.



Section I

Introduction

The United Nations' definition of Child Sexual Abuse defines it as "contacts or interactions between a child and an older, knowledgeable child or adult (a stranger, sibling, or a person in a position of authority, such as a caretaker), when the child is being used as an object of gratification for the older child's or adult's sexual needs". These contacts or interactions are carried out against the child using force, bribes, trickery, threats or pressure (UNICEF 2003). At Arpan, Child Sexual Abuse is defined as "any act using a child for the sexual gratification of the more powerful person". Child Sexual Abuse is understood as taking place both within and outside the family.

A review of epidemiological surveys from 21 countries, mainly high and middle-income countries, found that at least 7% of females (ranging up to 36%) and 3% of males (ranging up to 29%) reported sexual victimisation during their childhood. According to these studies, between 14% and 56% of the sexual abuse of girls, and up to 25% of the sexual abuse of boys, were perpetrated by relatives or step-parents. The global prevalence of Child Sexual Abuse has been estimated at 19.7% for females and 7.9% for males, according to a 2009 study published in Clinical Psychology Review that examined 65 studies from 22 countries (Pereda et al 2009). Based on a summary of existing studies, WHO estimates that approximately 20 percent of girls and 5 to 10 percent of boys are victims of sexual abuse (ISPCAN 2012).

The 'Study on Child Abuse: India 2007' by the Ministry of Women and Child Development with 12,447 children examined the incidence of sexual abuse among children and looked into four severe forms and five other forms of sexual abuse. The study result showed every second child in the country was being subjected to other forms of sexual abuse and every fifth child was facing severe forms of sexual abuse. Younger children reported being abused by family

members in 54.47% of cases and adolescents have reported it to be in 40.67% cases (WCD 2007). Some of the significant small-scale qualitative studies, which were carried out in various parts of India, quoted the prevalence of CSA as ranging between 47% - 76% of all respondents interviewed (Samvada 1994, RAHI 1998).

Impact of CSA

The sexual abuse experience alters the child's view of themselves and their view of the world. The ability to experience and express emotions is disturbed. The four critical dynamics of the impact are betrayal, powerlessness, sexualisation and stigmatisation which affect every aspect of the victim and are umbrella categories under which short-term and long-term consequences can be clustered (Finkelhor and Browne 1985). These effects vary depending on the circumstances of the abuse and the child's developmental stage but may include regressive behaviours such as a return to thumb-sucking or bed-wetting, sleep disturbances, eating problems, behaviour and/or performance problems at school, and social adjustment in school and social activities (Deb and Kerryan 2012). The negative effects of Child Sexual Abuse can affect the victim even into adulthood, if they are not healed. Prolonged anxiety, hyper vigilance, and fearfulness, associated with early trauma may lead to insomnia, depression, headaches, gastrointestinal upsets, and pelvic, abdominal and back pain. A study conducted in Kolkata, India, Deb and Mukherjee (2010) found that 69.2% of sexually abused girls suffered from moderate or severe depression compared with 27.5% of non-sexually abused girls. The study also found that 20.8% and 60.1% of sexually abused girls had poor levels of social and emotional adjustment respectively.

Section II

Arpan's Personal Safety Education Programme

Overview of Arpan's Personal Safety Education Programme

Given the prevalence and the negative impact, it is critical to work on prevention of Child Sexual Abuse. Arpan's prevention model, the Personal Safety Education programme, operates within the school system. This institutional module has the capability of mainstreaming prevention and intervention efforts to a wide segment of the community directly involved in the care of children. The key implementation strategy is to create safe schools by conducting awareness programmes as well as develop Child Protection Policy .



A

Implementation of Personal Safety Education Programme

The Personal Safety Education programme works at multiple levels engaging multiple stakeholders within the school system so that it can respond to the causes of Child Sexual Abuse. This life skill education module developed by Arpan is implemented to empower children from Grades 1-10 in a group set up to prevent instances of CSA as well as to seek support when such an incident occurs. The group based lesson plans are followed by creating individual spaces for children so that they can disclose any past or ongoing experiences of sexual abuse and inappropriate behaviour with the facilitator. Children who disclose cases of abuse are supported with counselling, and the ongoing abuse is stopped. Moreover, the programme works with children who have engaged in sexual misbehaviour, to prevent reoffending. Arpan believes the onus of protection lies with the adults and not on children hence the programme also works with adult caregivers like parents, teachers and service staff so that they can create a safe environment for children and respond effectively. The following 7 steps are followed in delivering the Programme:

- **Step 1:** Sensitising the Principal and management of the school/institution with information on CSA and PSE.
- **Step 2:** Capacity building of school counsellors/ support groups/ teachers/ caretakers/ staff to provide support to children who report abuse or undergo counselling.
- **Step 3:** Pre PSE sessions with Parents to create awareness about CSA, its causes, impact and provides information about PSE.
- **Step 4:** Lesson Plans are conducted over 6 sessions and 4 sessions with younger children (Grade 1 to 4) and older children (Grade 5 to 10) respectively to integrate key concepts of personal safety. The entire PSE lesson

implementation is supported by tools like worksheets which are sent home with children. The worksheets are based on the information and skills taught in the lesson plans. Along with each worksheet, letters are sent home to parents, and they are requested to support the children to complete them. The letters to parents are also sent with the intention to update parents about PSE implementation and give them information which they can reiterate with their children.

- **Step 5:** Individual Sessions are conducted with each child with an assumption that children may not disclose instances of sexual abuse in a classroom setting.
- **Step 6:** Counselling is provided in case of reported abuse.
- **Step 7:** Post Sessions with Parents and Teachers are conducted to understand their experience of the programme and to equip them with skills to address the issue.

Up to March 2017, Arpan has conducted Personal Safety Education programme with over 70,000 children and 55,000 adult stakeholders in 126 schools, 6 institutions and 14 community-based organisations. In addition, Arpan has conducted training with over 2,500 professionals including teachers, counsellors, and master trainers, NGO professionals who have in turn trained over 460,000 children and adult stakeholders by implementing Personal Safety Programme in their settings.

B Content of Personal Safety Programme



1. PSE programme: Content for Lesson Plans for Children

PSE is built on the core life skills of decision-making, problem-solving, critical thinking, interpersonal relationship building, self-awareness, resilience, empathy building and destigmatization. By facilitating a conversation on personal safety, the programme wants to reduce or eliminate the risk factors that are likely to increase the chances of sexual abuse and strengthen the protective factors. The programme focuses on the following key concepts with children:

- **Child Rights and UNCRC (The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)**

The Personal Safety Education Programme is based on the principle of, “everybody has the right to feel safe all the time” and all adults “should protect children from all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse” (Article 34 of UNCRC). While Article 34 is the edifice on which the present programme bases itself; its basic tenants and modalities are based on the overall principles of children’s rights. To make children aware of their rights and safeguard the rights of others; the lesson plans focus on:

- Article 19: Protection from Abuse, Violence and Neglect
- Article 17: Right to Access information
- Article 12: Right to Respect (for the views of the child)
- Article 13: Right to Freedom of Expression
- Article 34: Right to Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

- **Children are the ‘Boss’ of their Own Body**

PSE teaches children that they are the boss of their own body, and should take charge of it. This is in sync with existing school-based programmes internationally (Brassard, Tyler, & Kehle 1983, Wurtele et al. 1989 and 1991). This is necessary because the concept of consent regarding children is nearly absent. This is truer in the Indian context where children are believed to be owned by parents and the family. As part of this conversation, children are introduced to the vocabulary of Private Body Parts so that they are comfortable with their body and know that their body belongs to them.

When we fail to teach the names of a child's genitalia or give pet names to their genitalia, we create a secrecy and mystery around Private Body Parts. This secrecy can create shame and embarrassment and make it difficult for children to discuss any feelings of discomfort relating to their Private Body Parts. The names of Private Body Parts of boys that are introduced to children are penis, testicles, buttocks and anus. The names of Private Body Parts of girls that are introduced to children are chest, vagina, buttocks and anus.

• **Feelings and Types of Touching**

The success of the sexual abuse prevention programme, like PSE, depends on the accomplishment of teaching children to distinguish different types of 'touches' – safe, unsafe and confusing touches. In addition, older children are also taught about wanted and unwanted touches. This facilitates children in identifying the possible abuser and abusive situations and seek support. Assessing of touches is rooted in understanding and articulating feelings. However, in the Indian context, which values collectivism over individualism (Sinha 2014) children are not necessarily made conscious of their boundaries and given space to express their feelings. Hence this is another key area of focus for Arpan's Personal Safety Education programme.

This nomenclature is different from most other programmes conducted nationally and internationally which focuses on good touch and bad touch. At Arpan, the nomenclature used for touches is not "good" and "bad". The logic being, a child who has been subjected to "bad" touch may think of themselves as "bad". This can be extremely stigmatising for the child. The vocabulary of "safe" "and unsafe" focuses on the situation and what the child feels. Children are simultaneously taught Personal Safety Rules/Guidelines which help them identify unsafe situations. This is also in response to the critique of the concept of the 'Touch Continuum' (Wurtele et al. 1989, Krazier 1986) which has been identified as less effective given it creates ambiguity for children .

• **Assert, Avoid, Escape, and Report**

These words form the third component of

Arpan's prevention programme. Skills relating to these are taught to children to keep themselves safe from abuse. Saying "NO" is the key to this. Children failing to report the abuse is an encouraging fact for the abusers. To undo this, the programme has developed, Personal Safety Rule/Guideline 2 - "Say NO and Get Away" to teach children refusal skills as well as a strategy to leave the situation. Children are also made aware of both verbal and nonverbal components of being assertive, passive and aggressive. This is in sync with other national and international programmes which also follow similar protocol (Hitchcock and Young 1986). Children are also prepared for situations where they can find it difficult to say 'NO'. In this situation, the concept of 'Think NO' is introduced as it will help gather the courage and confidence for children to report the abuse to someone whenever the child feels safe. Children are also introduced to the vocabulary of "touching problem" to make children of all ages understand the violation of Personal Safety rules/guidelines and seek help from their trusted adults. Caregivers of children are also introduced to this vocabulary to ensure an effective response in case of disclosures.

• **It's Not My Fault**

The fourth component of the programme focuses on letting children know that it is not their fault if somebody has broken their Personal Safety Rule/Guideline 1. Sexual abusers may blame the child or put the onus of the abuse on the child and make their feel guilty. The child may feel that it was their fault that the abuse took place and may not report instances of abuse. To prevent self-blaming from happening it is important that children believe strongly that the abuse was not their fault. Even children who have learnt that they should report matters of abuse to their trusted adults start feeling a sense of guilt if they had not reported the matter earlier. They may also think that since the abuse took place a long time ago, they need not reveal it as it will not help them. This makes it important for children to understand that they cannot be blamed for someone else's behaviour and it is never too late to seek help.

In addition to these core concepts which are included in PSE modules for all age groups; there are some additional concepts which are

introduced to children from grade 7-10. They are self-awareness, respect and responsibility, personal boundaries, privacy, internet safety and healthy and harmful relationships. An understanding of self-awareness, relationships, respect and responsibility can help children create boundaries, respond to unsafe situations and report violations in both online and offline spaces .

2. PSE programme: Content for Adults' Sessions



Empowering children with knowledge and skills to participate in their own safety does not mean pushing them to make choices with consequences that they are too young to handle or entrusting the responsibility of protection on them. Hence empowering the primary caregivers on child rights, CSA and PSE is an essential component of the programme. The programme also inculcates skills in parents and teachers to respond effectively to the issue of CSA. The content for the each of the Adults' session is given below:

- The session with school management emphasises providing information on child development, child rights, Child Sexual Abuse and its impact and the effectiveness of the PSE project.
- The focus on the session with teachers, counsellors, and service staff is to enable the existing support system within the school with information, attitude and skills to identify visible detectors of sexual abuse, to handle disclosure, provide first level support to children who are reporting cases or undergoing counselling.
- Parents are the primary and the most important stakeholders in a child's life. The Pre-session with parents is focussed on creating awareness about Child Sexual Abuse, its causes, impact and the importance of Personal Safety Education. The focus is also to involve parents as an integral part of the programme and to address their anxiety around the PSE module. This session with parents also focuses on parenting skills which are geared towards initiating positive and open communication channels between parents and children as well as enabling parents to identify early symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse.
- The Post session with parents and teachers focusses on understanding their experience of the programme for example any change in children's behaviour and their usage of new terminologies of Private Body Parts, as well impart additional skills on handling disclosure.

Section III

Methodology: What / Why / Who / How

Rationale

Arpan has evolved a holistic prevention and intervention school-based programme in India to help children participate in their safety and make adults aware of their role in keeping children safe. Arpan's strategies have been guided by monitoring and evaluations conducted internally and externally. After conducting a quantitative study in 2014 by International Market Research Bureau , Arpan decided to conduct a qualitative study to assess the efficacy of its Personal Safety Education programme after it is institutionalised by a school as a part of the school curriculum. Exploring the experiences and impact of institutionalisation will add value to the current processes that Arpan follows and can support other schools who are aspiring to institutionalise the Personal Safety Education Programme in their schools. For this reason, the schools of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul were chosen as a subject for the case study. These schools have institutionalised the PSE Programme from the year 2010-11 and can have valuable inputs that will be useful in understanding the process and the impact of the programme.

Overview of Schools of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul

The schools of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul are co-educational, English medium schools catering to children from diverse cultural background since 1988. The socio-economic background of the children is in the middle to the upper middle-income group. The school is affiliated to both the CAIE (Cambridge Assessment International Education) (Commonly known as IGCSE - International General Certificate for Secondary Education) and the Maharashtra State Board (Commonly known as SSC - Secondary School Certificate) boards. Under the banner of BCG, there are 5 schools with student

numbers ranging from 1,120 to 4,250 children in the kindergarten, primary and secondary sections. The names of the 5 schools based in Mumbai Suburban areas from the Andheri to Borivali belt are:

- Bombay Cambridge School, Andheri West (BCSW)
- Bombay Cambridge School, Andheri East (BCSE)
- Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishna Vidyalaya, Malad (DSRVM)
- Dr Sarvapalli Radhakrishna Vidyalaya, Borivali (DSRVB)
- Veer Bhagat Singh Vidyalaya, Malad (VBSVV)



Objectives

The broad objectives of the study are:

- To understand the process of integration of the Personal Safety Education programme in the school curriculum and the challenges faced.
- To recognise and understand impact and perceptions of school authorities namely principals, teachers and counsellors; children and parents with regards to the integration of Personal Safety Education programme in their schools.

The specific objectives of study regarding each group are:

A

To map children's knowledge, skills and attitude towards participation in their safety by:

- Understanding children's perception of the PSE programme
- Exploring development of self-esteem in children
- Exploring the understanding of feelings in children
- Exploring children's understanding of body access
- Exploring children's ability to identify unsafe situations, avoid and report abuse

B

To map parent's knowledge, skills and attitude towards prevention and intervention of CSA by:

- Exploring parent's awareness of Child Sexual Abuse
- Exploring parent's perception towards Personal Safety Education
- Exploring parent's empowerment in responding to disclosure of CSA
- Understanding parent and child communication patterns on Personal Safety concepts and concerns

C

To map school staff's (Principals, Teachers and Counsellors) knowledge, skills and attitudes towards prevention and intervention of CSA by:

- Understanding school staffs' perception towards Child Sexual Abuse
- Exploring school staffs' perception towards Personal Safety Education
- Exploring teachers' empowerment in responding to disclosure of CSA
- Understanding attitudes towards child care and child safety

Case Study

Case Study as a method enables one phenomenon to be viewed at from different angles and get an overall picture of the situation (Yin 2003). This research is also envisaged to be a case study so that an in-depth understanding of the PSE programme as it is integrated into a school set up can be developed from perspectives of all the key stakeholders and beneficiaries. For this, interviews in all 5 BCG schools have been conducted with the following members:

FGD/Interview with grades	Number of Children
5th Standard	52 Children
6th Standard	50 Children
7th Standard	50 Children
Individual interviews	31 Children
Headmistresss	2
Principals	3
Teachers	10
Counsellors	5
Parents	9
Chief Educational Officer	1
Head of Dept. - HRD	1

Tools of Data Collection

Data was collected through in-depth interviews with all adult stakeholders. Focus Group Discussions and in-depth interviews were conducted with children. The in-depth interview method was chosen as a tool as it would facilitate an unbiased flow of feelings, perceptions and experiences of the research participants. Open-ended, in-depth interviews were guided by an interview schedule. The guide was constantly modified based on the flow of data. FGDs were conducted to understand how children as a group think about personal safety, their opinion and ideas, and bring out the inconsistencies and variations that exist. A checklist was used to ensure all of the relevant topics of the evaluation were covered in the FGDs.

• Semi-Structured In-depth Interviews with Headmistresses and Principals

5 interviews were carried out in total with Headmistresses and Principals. For three schools, the principals were interviewed, and for the others,

headmistresses were interviewed. The interviews were between 1 - 2 hours long for each individual.

- **Semi-Structured In-depth Interviews with Teachers**

Interviews were conducted with 10 teachers. The interviews were between 1 hour and 1 hour and 30 minutes long. All the interviews were done with teachers who have more than four years' experience with teaching children about personal safety; except one who had two years of experience. All teachers, except the one who has had two years of experience in the BCG school, were trained by the Arpan trainers before they began implementing in the classrooms.

- **Semi-Structured In-depth Interviews with Counsellors**

Interviews with counsellors were conducted across all five schools. The reason to engage with the counsellors was to understand their role in the PSE process and the way disclosures of sexual abuse are handled in the BCG Schools. Each of the BCG schools has at least two counsellors and one special educator as part of the BCG CARE Centre. Four interviews were conducted with the CARE Coordinators and one was with a counsellor.

- **Unstructured In-depth Interviews with Head of Dept. - HRD and the CEO, BCG**

Unstructured in-depth Interviews with the Heads of the two critical departments were conducted. These interviews were done to get an overall understanding of institutionalisation, handling disclosure and fill in gaps in data, if any.

- **Semi-Structured In-depth Interviews with Parents**

The study objective includes the perception of parents towards the PSE programme. For this, a total of 9 interviews were done with the parents. 6 of the respondents were mothers, one was a father, and remaining two interviews had both parents present. Parents' interviews did not follow the same grade sequence as for children but rather were based on the parents' availability. The inclusion criteria for parents' interview was that parents had attended the Parents' Awareness Session. The interviews were conducted with parents of two schools. All interviews were between 30 to 45 minutes.



Focus Group Discussions and Interviews with Children

In-depth Focus Group Discussions were done with 151 children. It was followed by individual interviews with 31 children. FGDs were done with groups of 10 to 12 children in each batch from 5th , 6th and 7th standards in each of the schools. The FGDs were between 1 - 2.5 hours. The reason for choosing this age group was to ensure that children have had opportunities to participate multiple times in the PSE lessons and are capable of verbalising their perception and response to the PSE programme. While PSE lessons end in the 5th standard for all groups; they are reiterated in the 6th standard, and if necessary in the 7th standard. Children were assessed against each objective of the study with the aid of different Personal Safety Education concepts. The individual interviews spanned between 20 minutes to 40 minutes. It primarily focussed on understanding children's help-seeking behaviour after their experience of any unsafe situation or touch. This could not be taken up in the FGDs due to ethical consideration.

Process of Data Collection

The first interview was conducted with the Chief Educational Officer to understand the process of PSE. After this, the design of the study was finalised. All interviews happened in the respective school premises. The process of data collection was between October 2015 and February 2016. Data was collected through the means of dictaphone, a device that records audio. For some interviews where there was no consent to audio record, field notes were maintained. For the FGDs and interviews with children, field notes and the audio recordings were maintained. Gaps in data were filled in with additional individual interviews in January 2017.

Analysis of Data

All data was transcribed. The descriptive data was coded and categorised for analysis. The common themes or essences that began to emerge were highlighted to discover any important underlying patterns and variations. Grammatical corrections have been made to the testimonials for better readability.

Ethical considerations

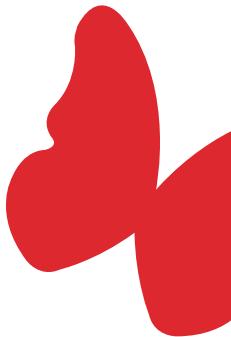
- All individuals in the study were included with their consent.
- Consent from children's parents and their respective schools was taken.
- Audio of the interviews was recorded with permission. Whenever consent was not given for audio recordings, handwritten notes were maintained.
- When working with children, it was ensured that all children are given a break after a span of 50 minutes to confirm comfort.
- It was kept in mind that sharing about unsafe experiences may be unsettling, and all participants were informed and encouraged to access support through Arpan's counselling number.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are:

The CEO of BCG schools directed us towards the Principals, Headmistress who were involved in the process of integrating the programme. The Headmistress and Principals, in turn, directed us to teachers who were involved in the process. The data was collected through interactions

with teachers and teachers were asked to identify children and parents to be part of the study. As the selection of respondents was dependent on the BCG staff, biases in selection may affect the study conclusions. Parents from two schools could be reached out to for interviews. This may not be reflective of parents from all schools. The experiences shared in the evaluation may not represent the experience of all students and parents and teachers; because the non-participants may feel differently. As the research uses a case study method, findings cannot be generalised. However, it can be seen as a model that can be replicated in other schools.



Section IV: Findings and Discussion

Schools of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul: Institutionalisation and Implementation of Personal Safety Education Programme



A

Institutionalisation of PSE: Setting the Context

Personal Safety Education is based on the ideology of providing an environment that empowers children and a belief that healing is a critical component of child care and protection. Personal Safety Education also revolves around keeping the best interest of the child at the centre of all decision making. Alignment of these values helped the school administration to identify the need for Personal Safety Education programme, support it and make it a part of their curriculum. This ideological congruence is echoed in the non-negotiable values embedded in the school's functioning, and various practices followed:

- **Children are the key anchors**

The motto of the schools of BCG is “where every child matters”. To ensure this, the school has inclusive policies of stress-free education, conducting Life Skills education (from 1998) and continuous care to the children by providing counselling and remedial services through the CARE centre. According to the Head of the CARE Centre, “all decisions are taken with the well-being of the child in focus”. A counsellor recounts cases of three children who were identified with Major Depressive Disorder and had problems of school avoidance. This narrative demonstrates how ‘children are key anchors’ in everyday practice:

“The children had full access to the CARE centre, even if they did not attend school. They could drop by anytime they liked. They could attend school in plain clothes. Parents could sit and wait in the reception. If the parents couldn't wait due to personal reasons, the child could call up the parents whenever required. The children were encouraged to sit in class as long as they could and were free to move out if they started to feel anxious or uncomfortable. Detention or moving them out of the school was never an option in the mind of the school authority”. (CARE Coordinator, BCSE)



- **Belief in Healing**

Schools affiliated to the CBSE (Central Board for Secondary Education) and ICSE (Indian Certificate for Secondary Education) were mandated to have school counsellors in the year 2002 and 2013 respectively. Maharashtra School Board only has a post allocated for a teacher - counsellor and CAIE has no such mandates. Schools of BCG, are affiliated to the latter two. The CARE Centre in BCG school had been established since the year 1988, much before it was a mandate for schools to have a counsellor in the school.

Supplementing the reflection of children as the key anchor, the counsellors' accounts also provide an in-depth understanding of the schools and the CARE centre's motto of aiming to provide an environment in helping the child discover inner resources, and apply them to challenging situations.

“Our focus is to provide an environment that the child feels comfortable in disclosing problems and helping them solve it. We are not magicians; children do it themselves. The point is to provide a place that can help.”(CARE Coordinator, DSRVB)

This ideology of healing being a critical component of child care and protection and children being the key anchor are embedded in the school's functioning. These reflect alignment with a programme like Personal

Safety Education which places children's well-being at the centre and is a model that blends prevention and healing. This value alignment of being child-centric and belief in healing had set the context and accelerated the process of integration of Personal Safety Education in the curriculum.

B Mapping the Institutionalisation Process for PSE

Inputs from the CEO, Principals and teachers who were part of the initial implementation have been collated to chart out the trajectory of integration of the Personal Safety Education programme in the BCG curriculum. The narrative of Chief Educational Officer of the schools of BCG provides the overview of the initial processes:

“The process started with Arpan approaching us with their PSE programme. At that time, Arpan was very new, and we were not sure if we wanted to let them teach our children. Then, they [Arpan] said that they would conduct the sessions without the presence of our teachers to ensure the comfort of the students with the content of the PSE modules. We were unsure about leaving our students with the Arpan trainers who they were unfamiliar with.

Since it was the pilot study, we allowed it in some classes but included teachers in the others. Our Chairman supported the programme; he felt it was essential for the schools to work towards students' safety. We had to address the parents of our students. Some parents had reservations, but it was resolved through parent interactions and dialogues. After the initial pilot study, we felt that it was important for our students to go through the PSE programme. We considered having our teachers trained for the PSE modules. We spoke to Pooja Taparia, (CEO, Arpan), planned for teacher training and the implementation of the PSE programme. Ever since it has been incorporated into our curriculum”. (CEO, BCG)

1. The Timeline of the Integration of PSE

Arpan facilitated the initial rounds of implementation of PSE with children between the year 2008 and 2009 in the DSRVB School followed by other schools. The timeline of the integration process is given below:

- 2008-10 – Direct implementation of the

follow-up sessions and counselling by Arpan

- 2010-12- Direct implementation of Personal Safety Education programme by Arpan in some specific grades and schools

The below table maps Arpan's direct work with children, parents and teachers in BCG schools:

Year	Grades	School	Total no. of children	Parents	Teachers
2008-09	1 to 4	DSRVB	757	326	57
2009-10	1 to 5	DSRVB	1,355	517	54
2009-10	5,6,7	VBSVV			
2010-11	1,3,5	BCSE			
2010-11	1,2,3	BCSW	2,037	1,085	207
2010-11	5	VBSVV			
2011-12	3	BCSE	257	108	
			4,406	2,036	318

- 2010 -11 - Workshops for HeadMistress and teachers on 'Understanding Child Rights, Sexuality and Child Sexual Abuse', Training of teachers to 'Implement Lesson Plans on Child Sexual Abuse (CSA) with students from grade 1 to 5', Trainings of school counsellors to 'Handle Disclosures and Provide Support to Students in the School Setup' were conducted by Arpan.

207 teachers and 34 counsellors were trained in this process. They were given copies of the Arpan's Personal Safety Education Lesson Plan Manual. With those as reference materials they were asked to prepare lesson plans for the rest of the group. Arpan trainers provided feedback and supported teachers in their implementation. The group consisted of the implementing teachers, headmistresses, principals and the senior administrative staff. This was followed by integration of the PSE programme in the school curriculum.

A teacher recollects her experience of participating in Arpan's Training of Teachers' programme:

"All staff were present [for the training]. It was very interesting and a great learning experience. We opened up, discussed at length and gathered knowledge. There were myths [about the issue], which were demystified. Even some of our teachers opened up for the first time about their past abuse. We were guided by them [Arpan facilitators] about what teaching aids we could use and what pictures [charts of Private Body Parts] we could use. We all were

given the books [Arpan modules] and had to conduct mock sessions. Arpan facilitators gave us feedback". (Teacher BCSE)



Another teacher shares her insights on how the institutionalisation of PSE helped the schools of BCG:

"This issue [CSA] had to come to the forefront sooner or later because there were cases that got disclosed in the school. We were handling them at our level and trying to respond to them with the existing Life school Education Programme. We wanted to help children but did not know how to do it most effectively. When Arpan came in [with the PSE programme], we got to know actually how to do it, and things became more streamlined. (Teacher, BCSW)

2. Initial Challenges and Mitigation plans

In spite of the management being invested in making schools of BCG safe for children; there were some challenges in the initial days.

• Inhibitions from Parents

There was resistance from some parents in the early days:

"When the programme was first introduced in the DSRVB in the year 2008-2009, a group of parents had expressed some resistance. They were angry, and the principal was anxious. It was new for them, and new for us." (CEO, BCG Schools)

"Parents had protested and gheraoed (encircled) us in those initial years because they were not comfortable with the concept [of Personal Safety and vocabulary of Private Body Parts]. They marched up to the school just to see how we can continue [with the PSE programme]. Some parents were very angry, and they could not understand why it was important. They would ask things like, "We did not know about all this (personal safety), but we grew up fine." When people ask such questions, it is sometimes very difficult to reply." (Headmistress, BCSE)

The reasons for resistance from parents were similar across schools. Concerns included reservations about the child using the names of Private Body Parts and awareness of rights. It was anticipated that this information would result in an oversensitivity towards all touches, including healthy ones. However, the way the parents communicated this varied across schools.

"Some parents would stay back until the meeting was over and asked very quietly if it was necessary. I could sense some hesitation in even asking the question – maybe what the school was doing was right, but they were still unsure. At times like these, it was easy to talk about what I knew." (Headmistressr, VBSVV)

To deal with this challenge, factual information was shared:

"We shared with parents the things that had worked for us and helped us understand the key messages of PSE. If children know the names of body parts like nose, eyes, etc., then why can't they learn about Private Body Parts? It is a part of their body, and it requires the same attention and care." (CEO, BCG)

Some other strategies used by the school to address parents' inhibition were:

- a) Use of media resources and government reports on Child Abuse (Study on Child Abuse: India 2007', Ministry of Women and Child Affairs) for explaining the gravity of the issue to the parents.
- b) Sharing the content of the PSE lesson plans with the parents before the implementation of PSE with children so that parents are aware and comfortable with the information reaching their children.
- c) Respecting the parents' choice in case, they feel strongly about not exposing their child to the PSE lesson plans.

"We show our worksheets and charts to parents so that they know it is about Personal Safety, not just some mumbo-jumbo about Private Body Parts. They see that we have charts for feelings and we do role plays around safe and unsafe situations. These discussions have helped greatly." (Teacher, DSRVM)

Despite these, there have been instances in the initial phase, where some parents were completely opposed to the idea of their children learning about Personal Safety. In such cases, the school takes a call on giving the child an alternate engagement during the Personal Safety Education lesson plans:

"Initially, for two years, some [parents] did not allow their children to participate in the Personal Safety Lessons. However, when they met other parents and realised what their child was missing,

they let go [and allowed their children to attend the lesson plans]. ” (Teacher, BCSW)

- **Inhibitions from Teachers**

Similar to the parents' response to the introduction of Personal Safety Education, there were teachers who were convinced about the programme since its inception; while there were others who felt unsure.

“Is it something that needs to be given to children at such an early age?” (Teacher, DSRVB)

For the teachers who were not convinced initially, it was finally the trust and faith that they had in the management's decision making that encouraged them to give the Personal Safety Education programme a try.

“We did not ask teachers who were uncomfortable to conduct the sessions. If the teachers said that they would be willing to take up this programme, then they were trained. Even if they were unsure but willing, we worked with them.” (CEO, BCG)

There were administrative challenges as well which may look trivial and insignificant in hindsight. The principal of the school in which the program was first implemented shares:

“When we first started the program, there were many challenges that may now seem like small issues. For example, we did not even have the physical place to keep the charts [the teaching aids] that the trainers got. We found a place to keep it eventually. But that seemed so difficult then.” (Principal, DSRVB)

This showcases that challenges both big and small at the initial stage of integration are normal. However, what leads to the successful integration of the programme is the zeal on the part of the management and administrators to have conviction in their vision and being innovative in mitigating the challenges.

C Mapping the Implementation Process

Arpan has the protocol of conducting awareness sessions with parents on Child Sexual Abuse and the Personal Safety Education programme before implementing the programme with children. The schools of BCG follow similar

practices and conduct the parents orientation to the programme and the issue of Child Sexual Abuse preferably on 'Access Day'. On this day, children perform an activity for the parents, ensuring a large amount of attendance of parents. The School's awareness program is between 15 minutes to half an hour. This is supplemented by further information on Child Sexual Abuse, legal provisions and response systems for dealing with the issue which is spread throughout the year. In situations, where the PSE lesson plan implementation is scheduled before the access day, the parents are called separately for the awareness session on CSA and PSE:

“PSE session for this year is in the month of October, so we will call the parents before that. It need not always coincide with the Access day. Sometimes, we do it with the Access day to ensure good attendance. Now I find that whether they [parents] come for a PTM or not when we call them for PSE session, there is 80-90 % attendance which shows parents are also becoming aware.” (Principal, BCSW)

The Personal Safety lesson plans implemented in the BCG schools are based on Arpan's Personal Safety Education Lesson Plan Manuals (Unpublished, Arpan 2010). Every year primary students in the 1st to the 5th standard are taken through the Arpan's Personal Safety Education Manuals. 6 lesson plans of Arpan are followed from grade 1 to 4 and 4 lesson plans for grade 5. It is conducted over two periods each day for 6 days for grade 1 to 3. However, in grade 4th and 5th, it has been observed that children have high retention, especially of key concepts. As this has been observed over the years across schools, in the 4th and 5th grade, the time span for the sessions reduces as teachers take less time to cover one module. Some of the content which is repeated and children have a high recall, are just touched upon rather than having an in-depth discussion. This has been organic based on the need of children rather than planned. In 6th grade, a quiz and discussion are conducted for 1.5 hours to assess children's recall and do a recap. The same teacher who had conducted the PSE session in grade 5 generally conducts the recap in 6th grade. In 7th grade, in some schools, group discussions are organised where children are given few situations for them to assess whether it is safe or not, and how to

respond to unsafe situations. (Constructed from discussions with CEO, principals, headmistresses and teachers)

Currently, all the five schools have different facilitators for implementation of the PSE programme. In some schools PSE is conducted by a core group of teachers; in other schools, class teachers implement the programme. Though flexibility around programme implementation has been a key reason for its sustenance; what has been simultaneously ensured is that the quality of implementation is not compromised. This has been ensured through timely responses to the challenges and proper training and handholding:

1. Challenges during Initial Implementation

- **Children's use of vocabulary of Private Body Parts**

After the initial implementation of the programme; children started to use their new found knowledge in every possible space. This added to the inhibition of teachers:

"When children learnt about boss of my body, if someone even touched them on their shoulder they said, "Miss [referring to the teacher] I have a touching problem". Some children after learning the names of Private Body Parts boarded the school bus and started screaming "vagina". The teachers had to be trained to handle these situations and also accept that this will fizzle out with time. After this, they were able to take things in their stride." (Principal, DSRVM and Principal, BCSW)

- **Different Roles, Same People**

Teachers who implement PSE lessons are academic teachers. They had to realign to the role of a facilitator to deal with this new role because there was no prior exposure to the role of a facilitator on child protection. The Principal of one of the schools articulates the challenge:

"Although, there were some teachers who would do it very well; some teachers did have reservations which came in the way of implementation". (Principal, BCSW)

Some teachers understand the prerequisite, the facilitation style that Personal Safety Lessons ask for and choose to shift their methodologies accordingly. A teacher talking about these differences explains how as teachers they need

to mould themselves:

"In these sessions, I feel you have to be more sensitive to them. More than group activities, I felt that during the individual sessions they understood me more. Every child was explained why we are doing this with them so that they do not misunderstand. (Teacher, DSRVB)

2. Training and Handholding to Ensure Quality Implementation

The teachers and administrators of schools of BCG both recognised the need for training and hand-holding and invested their time to ensure that the quality of the programme is maintained and monitored. The CEO, BCG herself reviewed the lesson plans and observed teachers' implementation in the schools when PSE was integrated. The CEO, BCG then supervised the monitoring of the programme along with the Headmistresses. The training and monitoring of PSE facilitators included:

1. Capacity building sessions on CSA and PSE
2. Observation of lesson plans conducted by Arpan staff or senior teachers
3. Observing the implementation the new facilitator
4. Providing feedback

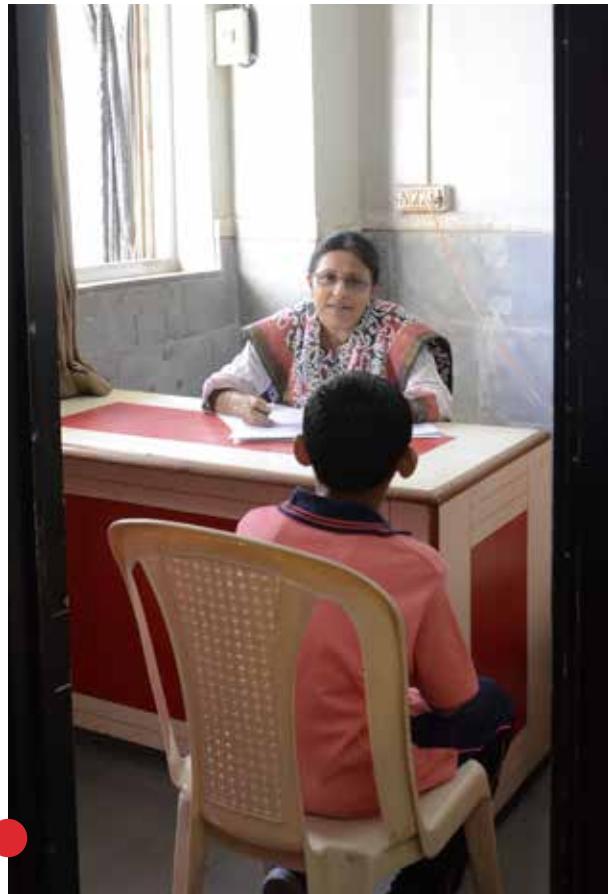
"We provided additional training for teachers who faced challenges. We had co-teachers or counsellors pairing up with them for implementation. Sometimes new teachers come in; they need more hand-holding. We also have co-facilitators with them so that they can learn how to handle different situations and questions. [This is important] because if teachers have any inhibitions, it will be transferred to the kids. But if they are at ease with the content then automatically kids are going to be eased into it. (Principal, BCSW)

Teachers recall their preparation before the first implementation:

"It was the first day of doing a mock implementation. I was supposed to give a presentation on the concepts of personal and private as used in the PSE manuals. I kind of messed up the whole thing. Our CEO was observing, and she told me that the concepts needed more clarity as otherwise, kids would not understand. Then she explained to me the way I should articulate it. Post this; it became easier." (Teacher, VBSVV)

"We were divided into pairs, and we were given a section to prepare. We were supposed to plan our entire sessions with all the games, teaching aids as well with our responses to children's probable questions. This happened in front of the other implementing teachers, Principal, Headmistress, CEO and Head of Dept - HRD. The focus was to support us and help us improve. We got detailed feedback on what could be added, what could be deleted and what could be shortened." (Teacher, DSRVM)

D Mapping the Process of Handling Disclosure and Counselling Intervention



1. Creating Safe Spaces

In the school set up the child has access to their PSE Teacher and the rapport between the child and teacher is already present. Hence, individual sessions after group based lesson plans are not standardised across schools. Teacher's discretion and time in the academic calendar are taken into consideration when planning a session. The schools have, however, come up with different mechanisms to ensure that the child reaches out to an adult, if they feel unsafe. After the PSE lesson plans, some of the BCG schools conduct individual sessions with

children, similar to Arpan. A couple of schools ask children to reach out to the PSE teachers if they want to discuss any unsafe situations. Some schools have the mechanism of children writing their concerns on paper and dropping it in a box placed in the classroom. Also, the teachers review the worksheets that children complete post-PSE lessons to assess whether there are any concerns that need be flagged. (Constructed from diverse interviews with teachers, principals and CEO)

Teachers explain these different modalities of creating safe spaces as well how children are given the agency to disclose:

"We do have individual sessions. We maintain a recording sheet in which details of every child along with their case details are entered. (Teacher, BCSW)

"I tell them [children] that if they face any problem, they need to come back to me. I always tell them that there is help available. For example, any problem that they are not able to speak about or feel shy, scared; they can just write it on a paper and put it in the box [placed in the classroom]" (Headmistress, VBSVV).

"We leave the kids with the thought that in case you want to share something you are most welcome to reach out individually. We let them know that even if you are uncomfortable now; you can always come later as we are available." (Teacher, DSRVM)

2. Teachers' response to Disclosures

The teachers' response to disclosure is geared towards providing standardised messages to children. These include appreciating the child for telling and not blaming the child:

"[If the child is] being abused currently - we ask since when is it happening? Is anyone aware of it? We tell them it's not your fault and appreciate the child for telling us because now we can do something about it." (Teacher, DSRVM)

Some teachers also identified safety planning as a key component while handling disclosure:

"I told the child, next time you see this person [one who abuses], please make sure you don't go to the person alone. Make sure there is

someone with you. Then we follow up with the parents, inform them about the abuse and tell them we've already spoken to the child. We also ask them to talk to their child as well.” (Teacher, VBSVV)

Apart from sexual abuse cases, there have been situations where children were found exploring each other's bodies, or there were complaints by one child about another for crossing their personal boundaries. In such situations, the teacher interacts with both the children involved but address them separately.

A teacher, who had experience of teaching PSE to children for the last five years, recounts a situation when she saw peer exploration in the class amongst 1stgrade children. This incident had occurred before children were introduced to PSE:

“One day after the last bell for school had rung, I [PSE Implementing Teacher] saw two children sitting on the last bench. Both of them were looking down, I became a little curious about what they were doing, and went closer. I could see that both of them were looking at each other's Private Body Parts. I called out loudly for them, but I did not say anything. It was one of the boy's birthday that day. They went home. The next day I spoke to them separately about why it is wrong. Then I spoke to them together so that no one should feel I am saying anything different to them.” (Teacher, BCSE)

The teacher's comfort in dealing with such situations is evident. However, it is not evident whether there was discomfort in naming the Private Body Parts as she chose to use “Private Body Parts” rather than saying penis in her interview. Moreover, the vocabulary that the teacher used was ‘wrong’ rather than inappropriate. This also reflects the teacher's own value positioning of peer exploration being wrong. This is different from theories on psychosexual development in children which flags peer exploration as normal though inappropriate.

Another teacher's narrative also reinforces empathy as a core value in handling such situations:

“I will say that they are very small children, so

you have to speak to them. First, you speak to the child who is being bullied. Try to give him some comfort because he is disturbed. This child should be taken care of but not in front of the one who has bullied. Then you speak to the child who has bullied and made him understand in very simple words as children don't understand high fi (technical) words. Ask him if it was done to him how would he feel? Would he like it? Sometimes, if one child is naughtier or more disruptive, then I speak to that child sternly.” (Teacher, BCSE)

While as caregivers, teachers understand what will work with a child; teachers' skills in dealing with situations of child indulging in inappropriate behaviour are inconsistent. Their discomfort in using certain language or not letting their general assessment of the child as “naughtier/disruptive” colour their response in these situations can be hurdles in evolving a



standardised practice.

Teachers are alert and vigilant as they recognise signs and symptoms of CSA in children and make the effort to pause and connect:

"If a child is very out of character then, I speak to the child and the counsellor to know if it is normal. I inform the counsellor if I see a child touching himself very often or if a child is not paying attention in class." (Teacher, DSRVB)

A counsellor shares how a teacher sought help to identify if the child was experiencing any unsafe behaviour:

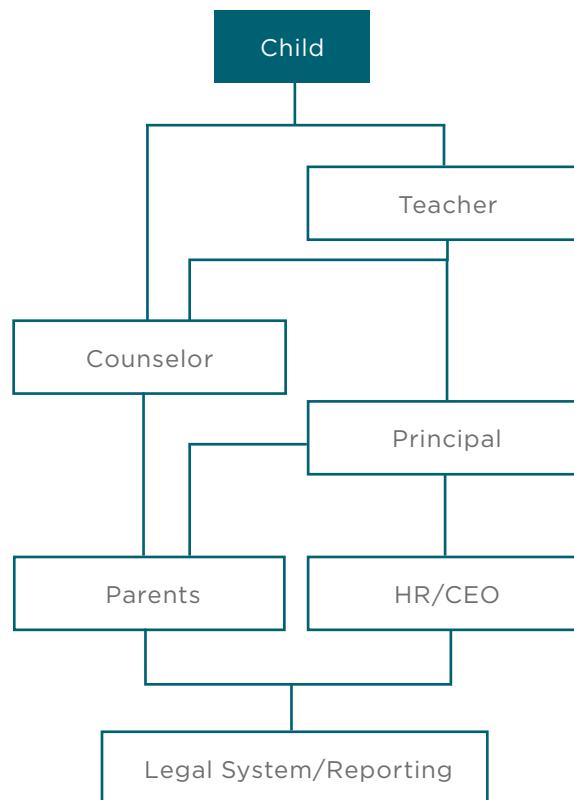
"We had a kid last year who was missing school frequently. Her absenteeism was because of a frequent urine infection. The teacher got alerted and contacted the CARE centre. We took up the case and followed up. So teachers may not always be able to identify abuse, but they are alert to identify symptoms and consult the counsellors" (Counsellors BCSW).

This shows that teachers are well aware of signs and symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse. At the same time, they are cognizant of the fact that these are just indicators and one needs to pause, think and connect with other resources, for example the counsellor before jumping to any conclusions.

3. Evolving CPP: Supporting Effective Handling of Disclosure

Until 2015, the BCG school had a protocol in place to handle disclosures of CSA cases through the PSE programme or otherwise. After 2015, the Child Protection Policy detailed the protocol for reporting of CSA cases. We will trace both the past protocol to handle disclosure and the current CPP.

The past protocol directed the concerned teacher to refer the case to the school counsellor and informing the Headmistress/Principal and Head of Dept - HRD of Human Resources about it. The role of the teacher was then minimised. Sometimes, the child could also disclose to the counsellor if the child was already accessing the CARE centre for other concerns. In that case, the counsellor informed the Headmistress/Principal and Head of Dept. - HRD. In both cases, the counsellor prepared the child about informing the parents. If the parents were willing, the legal process was started.



"For anything that the children of primary [section] disclose to me, I take the help of the CARE coordinator [in house counsellors] because she is the professional in this field. The plan is that she interacts with the child; meets the parents and then it is informed to the Principal. We tell the children that even if it is a teacher who is abusing them, the protocol is that either they [children] can walk up to me or they can go straight to the CARE coordinator." (Headmistressr, VBSVV)

The school introduced the Child Protection Policy (Refer to Appendix I) to read the complete CPP to all staff in 2015, and as of 2017, all staff have signed the document. It's not any one factor which led schools of BCG to develop the CPP. According to the CEO, BCG:

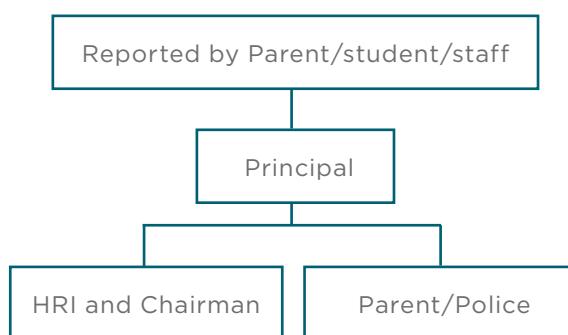
"The development of the CPP can be attributed to the mandate of the school management to have safe school environments, to the Personal Safety Education programme, and POCSO (The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012) coming into force".

Added to the school's zeal to create a safe environment, changes at the macro level with POCSO coming into force which mandated all citizens of India to report any cases of CSA

coming to their knowledge accelerated the process of developing CPP. At the micro level, the schools' learning from the existing protocol of handling disclosure of CSA cases after PSE or otherwise also shaped the development of the CPP. The school's assessment of the existing protocol was that it is a lengthy process involving too many individuals on the way: teacher, counsellors, Headmistress, Principal, Head of Dept. - HRD. Also, approximately 10% children access the CARE Centre for academic or behavioural concerns on a regular basis. The lower probability of reporting directly to the counsellors meant the need was to stop routeing of all cases through them. The plan was to involve the counsellors at a later stage in supporting children with their healing journey in case parents wanted to pursue therapy in the school set up. The Headmistress/Principal is the touch point for all CSA cases so that there is minimal need for the child to retell the story; the administrators have the authority to take fair decisions in case of staff involvement as well play a critical role in liaising with parents and the legal system. (Constructed from the interview with CEO, BCG)

The development of the school Child Protection Policy has supported the implementation of the Personal Safety Education programme and effective intervention of Child Sexual Abuse cases. The process of handling disclosure as mapped in the CPP is reproduced below:

Sexual Abuse: All CSA cases will be dealt by the Principal directly. No delegation is permitted.



- Principal will plan the coordination of information with relevant members of staff.

Admin will guide staff for handling reported abuse:

Any staff person if witness to disclosure or to actual abuse should be guided to:

- Follow guidelines for handling disclosure / stop the abuse and safeguard child.
- Report the matter to their Head on the same day, without delay.
- Ensure confidentiality.

Informing Parents / Guardians

It is essential that parents / guardians are involved in handling any cases of detected abuse.

In the event parents cannot be contacted, the safety of the child will be of paramount importance.

In certain circumstances, informing parents should be deferred particularly where there are concerns about physical or sexual abuse involving family members. These include situations when:

- Informing parents/ guardians might place the child at increased risk
- A disclosure by a child involves a parent or other family member
- Informing parents/ guardians might place staff at risk

In such circumstances, the school and Management may plan steps with caution and discretion.

When the abuse involves another child as perpetrator – the school admin will proceed with extreme caution. A discussion is essential before informing parents, and the decision should focus on the best interest of the children involved as well as other children of the school.

Source: CPP, BCG (Appendix I)

The development of the CPP, with a focus on handling disclosures of CSA, shows that the BCG administration is well informed and understands the nuances of a complex issue like CSA and has been able to use their learnings to draft a policy which is child-friendly and responsive. It also showcases their investment in the Personal Safety Education programme as well as child care, safety and protection.

4. Counselling in the context of Personal Safety Education

Based on the narratives of the school staff, to date, there are a few cases which have been

reported by children to teachers after the Personal Safety Education Lesson Plans. The most common source of discovery of abuse is through a teacher suspecting abuse due to some stark behavioural change in the child or a parent suspecting abuse and reaching out to the school. This is in line with international research which proclaims that disclosures also depend on who presented the program: a teacher or an outside consultant (Hazzard et al. 1990). It was critical to explore if disclosures post PSE programme is to other trusted adults, and this was explored through individual interviews with children [to be discussed later].

The basic steps that are followed after the disclosure or identification of Child Sexual Abuse, once it is referred to the Counsellor and the CARE centre include providing a safe space for disclosure, giving the child space and time, providing interventions and building a support group:

“What is important is trusting the child, listening to the child, and helping them to develop skills to use when in an abusive situation. We empower the child with information about safety and self-protection. We also ensure they don’t get scared or paranoid about things, but can stay realistic and prepared that things can go wrong sometimes.” (CARE Coordinator, VBSVV)

The three types of cases represented below provide a snapshot of cases handled by the CARE centre related to Personal Safety Education programme:

A student from secondary section came to us and confided that she was abused when she was young. This child was abused by her own grandfather and it happened years back. There was a gap of 7 to 8 years and she still had scars of it. The impact of the abuse was visible in her body language and her low self esteem. It took almost two years of rigorous counselling for that child to see a change in her self esteem, the way she carried herself, the way she would sort out problems and the confidence in her expressions. The mother said that she was not aware of the abuse when the counsellor discussed it with her. After initial hesitation, parents do come around. With this parent, it took some time for her also to build trust in

the counsellor. We made it non-threatening for the parent. We had quite a few reviews of the child’s progress with the parent. The parent still did not talk about details of the abuse, but an acceptance was present.”

What comes out, in this case, is the counsellor’s patience and tact in working with a parent who may not be ready to accept that their child has suffered abuse, while continuing to work with the child’s emotional wellbeing.

A parent reported that two children in the classroom including hers were trying to feel each other’s bodies. Parents suspected it was CSA. However, when we delved into the case we realised children were exploring. In this case, we psycho-educated the parents about children’s psycho-sexual development. Parents were also agitated. So we had to calm them down and also work with the children. We spoke to both the children and did a small recap of PSE. We also used some projective techniques like CAT (Children’s Apperception Test) to explore children’s unarticulated emotions, if any, related to the incident. We asked the teachers to observe and monitor as a follow up. We didn’t make it a huge issue with the children because we didn’t want the child to feel ‘Oh My God what has happened?’ We don’t want to scare the child.

In last 2 years we had 3 cases where teachers observed that these children were doing something with their penis which looked like masturbation. Teachers tried talking to the kids but it did not stop. Then the cases were referred for counselling. We found in two of the cases that children had an infection and parents had already consulted doctors. In the third case, the child had seen one of the older boys in the building masturbating. He was re-enacting it. We oriented the parents about it, supported them in coming up with strategies to keep the child safe. We worked with the child as well.

These cases speak about the importance of creating safe spaces for children to disclose, to be vigilant and at the same time to be calm and responsive to children rather than being reactive. These can also be learnings towards the importance of working with the child's support system.

5. Challenges in the Course of Counselling

Counsellors identify Child Sexual Abuse as a delicate and intricate issue and articulate feeling of urgency and helplessness in dealing with the issue of Child Sexual Abuse:

"There are so many levels: child to child, adult to child; a known person within the family, somebody unknown to you on the street [can be abusers]. There are different types of abuses as well. And each child internalises it in their own way. It's not only the child but the entire family you have to help. We are facing so much resistance social stigma, anxiety, fear, denial, pressure, aggression – it is more difficult than it looks." (CARE Coordinator, DSRVB).

The feeling that CSA needs to be addressed with the utmost earnestness is present. However, there is a sense of helplessness - "what-needs-to-be-done?" is also paralysing:

"I think the first thing which comes to my mind when I hear of a case is we have to stop it immediately. No matter how many other cases are already on the schedule, it's like there's a sense of urgency that you can't have the child go through this for another day or even another hour." (CARE Coordinator, DSRVM)

The counsellors and Head of Dept. - HRD also flag dilemmas that they face while dealing with cases of sexual abuse:

"Sometimes when you have major abuse cases, is it wise for the school counsellor to take it up or should it be possibly referred to a private psychologist or a psychiatrist? If the case is complicated, the impact of external counselling can be stronger." (Counsellor, BCSE)

"Schools have frequent breaks with vacations, and events, and exams. Gaps in sessions are not good for the child. Because we are in the school, we have greater access and rapport with the parent; and on the other hand, it can also build a barrier where the parent or child

may feel a social pressure of talking to someone familiar." (Head of Dept. - HRD)

The dilemmas that the school counsellors flag are critical and it is here that constant training, support and hand-holding becomes critical.

6. Training and Handholding Provided to the Counsellors

As discussed in the context of teacher's implementation of PSE, training and handholding support is also extended to counsellors for effective handling of cases of CSA. The Head of Dept. - HRD identified a few formal support systems that the counsellors rely upon namely partnering in counselling, case discussions with counsellors expecting support, monitoring through recording of case and use of assessment tools, for example, the General Assessment Form (GAF) which is a ready reckoner for the counsellor about the expectations of working with the child. Head of Dept. - HRD narrates how the progress of cases is monitored through audio recordings of sessions which also promotes skill building:

"I ask my counsellors to send me an audio recording of one session that they believe to be the best. It gives me an idea of what kind session they consider best, and understand their theoretical underpinnings." (Head of Dept. - HRD)

The counsellors' narratives also flag this handholding as critical:

"There are initiatives taken to upgrade the services continuously and to ensure that we are giving quality services to our children. Initially, we had experts, who would listen to us, guide us in cases where we got stuck. Even today if we don't know how to handle a case, you can call anytime. They will be there, giving you full time and energy and their support to ensure that they can make a difference to the life of this child." (Counsellor, DSRVB)

"Both in-house training and external training are all guided towards making us better counsellors and mental health care professionals." (CARE Coordinator DSRVM)

Recently, Arpan conducted a step up session with counsellors on working with children with trauma and CSA. A counsellor recounts her experience of it:



"It was a brilliant session. We got so much information, insight and felt so supported. Post the session we felt let's give it a try, let's keep reviewing and let's see how it's helping [the child]. So we felt a little more confident."
(CARE coordinator BCSE)

In spite of the school being invested in training and monitoring of cases, the need for training and spaces to have dialogues on ethical issues are evident. This highlights the need for additional step up training to focus on effective intervention to work with children with trauma for schools who integrate the programme.



Children's Reflections: Imprint of PSE on Their Lives

I. Children's Perception of the PSE programme: “PSE is About Life!”

It would be apt to start the discussion with a quote from a child who says “PSE is about life” (Student, 6th Grade, DSRVM). In all FGDs, children spoke positively about the PSE lessons. It is also a space for children where they talk to teachers and can bond with their teachers. The flexibility of the lesson plans allows them to bring the issues they may face elsewhere to the teacher and ask questions. This sense of relief in being able to express themselves is clear in this narrative:

“We can talk in any language that we want; the teacher does not stop us. She doesn’t ask questions. The last time we had PSE, I told her about the case in the newspaper, and we discussed it after the bell rang.” (Student, 6th grade, DSRVM)



There are voices which say they enjoy the PSE lessons because it unfolds like a narrative, and is “taught like a story” (Student, 7th grade, DSRVM). Many children opined that PSE tends to become repetitive when taught over a period of time. Children find the teachers “stretching a concept that we have already understood.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSW) But they still seem to be content with the PSE lessons:

**“It can be boring, but it should still be there.”
(Student, 6th grade, DSRVM)**

Children tend to prefer PSE lessons in spite of the repetition because the information is presented differently every time through the use of examples, stories, teaching aids as well videos:

**“[The] explanations [of the concepts] are different [in different grades]; it is not boring.”
(Student, 5th grade, BCSW)**

Comparing PSE lessons to other academic subjects, children recognise many lines of differences. Children recognise that PSE lessons are more about “them” and “theirs” than what is taught in the other subjects.

**“PSE is about what we do, how to react in situations, how to not hurt or bully anyone. Math or Geography is about the world; what is there in PSE is about us.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSW)
“There are right and wrong answers in subjects but not in PSE. Even English that has stories is not always true, but PSE is about true things.”
(Student, 7th grade, DSRVB)**

Children’s need for PSE is not limited to the space that it creates but also the importance of having information on safety and rights along with academics is recognised:

“We cannot do one and not the other. Because knowing about the world is also important and knowing about how to behave is also important. If I want to do something in life, I need to know Math and Science, but to behave in the world, I also need to know what is safe and who can harm me.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSW)

Because PSE is unlike other academic subjects, children feel a sense of newness and get a break from their normal routine. This was evident in the glee that children had during the FGDs. The fact that children enjoyed what was taught in the

personal safety classes is the first step in ensuring that children will internalise the messages and integrate it. This is supported by a review of the literature on the effects of education on children's development which concludes, "the long-term educational benefits stem not from what children are specifically taught but from the effects on children's attitudes to learning, on their self-esteem, and on their task orientation." Further "learning how to learn may be as important as the specifics of what is learnt." (Rutter 1985).

II. Incorporating PSE Messages in Everyday Life

The PSE programme aims at inculcating self-esteem and empathy in children so as to protect themselves from Child Sexual Abuse as well provide holistic growth to child's personalities (Wurtele & Alonso 2012). In the FGDs, the assessment was done in line with the concepts included in the Arpan Personal Safety Education Lesson Plan Manuals. The children were asked to talk about concepts that they remembered from the PSE lessons. The differences in retention of the PSE messages are not based on the class, or age of the child but differences are seen across schools.

For DSRVM and DSRVB, the children from the 5th standard had undergone PSE a week before the FGDs were done. It was observed that their recall of the PSE examples was higher, they had more enthusiasm in talking about the PSE messages. This is unavoidable because of recent exposure to the messages of PSE. Materials that are recurring have better internalisation than the ones that are not. They repeated the messages along with the actions as taught by the teachers. The language that these children spoke was exactly same as the PSE messages. While others have developed an understanding of the PSE messages, their reiteration was in a language of their own; showing the process of internalisation that has happened. This will be visible in the narratives presented in the rest of the analysis.

A

Exploring Development of Self-Esteem in Children

1. I am Special and Unique

Self-esteem refers to a person's overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her worth (Hewitt, 2009). Research shows that abusers manipulate a child with a depleted sense of self for their sexual gratification (Finklehor, 1988) . Children across

all groups agreed that they were indeed special. When asked to introduce themselves with any information that will help to remember them, the responses varied from hobbies to adjectives such as "cute" or "curly soft hair". While one may choose to look at this as naiveté, it also points towards self-assurance and self-awareness of children about themselves. Children also showcased an accurate understanding of what makes them special and unique. They related it to the fact that there is "no one like me [them]" (Student, 6th grade, BCSW) and hence they are special. As an explanation for "no one like me" children came up with many aspects of their personality, including hobbies, likes and dislikes and faults as well:

"I have talents that no one else does. Even if someone has the same hobby as me, [drawing], it will not be the same as what I do. I may choose to draw the same thing differently from them." (Student, 6th grade, BCSW)

A child also flagged that the mistakes that he makes also make him unique:

"You may make some mistakes that no one else makes. Like, you may feel angry very soon, and there may be no one else like that". (Student, 6th grade, DSRVM)

Not all children looked at their faults as a space for building on their self-esteem. However, some children displayed traits of self-awareness and self-acceptance. These were children mostly from the 6th standard of BCSW School . Self-esteem is not limited to simply believing that one is special, or unique; it pervades in one's communication as well as the decision to choose healthy relationships.

"If someone has not kept a secret I told him, I will not fight with him but choose not to befriend him. If you break my trust, then I will not be with you." (Student, 6th grade, BCSE)

"If I know that I have done something wrong, then I will tell [my mother]. She will teach me how to correct it." (Student, 5th grade, DSRVM)

Communicating faults, and then understanding that they can be rectified comes from children who have been in situations where their mistakes did not bring them the label of being a "bad" child. Researchers have found that an environment that allows children to make mistakes results in higher adjustment levels, higher self-esteem and efficacy. BCG schools have more than one mechanism

for building on to these aspects of a child's life. In such a situation, it is difficult to segregate the impact of schools' general environment in building children's self-esteem from the impact of PSE lesson plans. However, it can be said that PSE plays its part in initiating a formal conversation around self-esteem and creating a space for validation and honing of children's self-worth.

B

Exploring Children's Understanding of Body Access

1. I am the boss of my body

Children recognise that their bodies belong to them and that they can choose to express their feelings if they are uncomfortable with a touch, look or talk about their body. While the Personal Safety Education programme empowers children to participate in their safety, it is not intended for children to take the responsibility of being safe. Most children have the understanding that they are active participants in ensuring their safety. However, some children also articulated it as their responsibility as can be tapped in this narrative.

"I own my body, and it is my responsibility to keep it safe." (Student, 5th grade, VBSVV)



2. Talking about Private Body Parts

A large part of being the 'Boss' of one's body comes from knowing about the body. When children have the vocabulary to communicate about Private Body Parts, they are also equipped to voice any discomfort around Private Body Parts that they may be facing. The purpose of asking children about names of private body parts in this study was twofold: First, to assess children's recollection of the names of 'Private Body Parts' and understanding of the concept of 'private'. Second, to assess the comfort of children in talking about Private Body Parts.

While the children of the same school could recall the same names of private body parts; differences are observed between schools. This may be due to the comfort of some teachers in teaching names of private body parts, or the environment children have been exposed to at home or otherwise. One child, in a group in the 5th Standard, identified "lips" as a private body part. There are many schools of thought that include lips as a private body part. This child may have been exposed to knowledge other than PSE, in learning the names of private body parts. It was evident that the conceptual understanding about the importance of knowing the vocabulary of Private Body Parts was present in the language that children used. Children were not only comfortable in taking the names of Private Body Parts, but they also understood the rationale behind being taught about it.

Constructing from different FGD narratives, the definition emerges as:

"Private body parts are our own, and no one has the right to touch them. They need to be kept hidden because they have to be clean."

When asked about the situations that they will be comfortable talking about their Private Body Parts, children's responses were around health reasons or cleanliness. This is indicative of their recall and understanding of the Rule/Guideline Number 1.

3. "Rule/Guideline Number 1"

All children remembered what is in the PSE terminology is "Rule/ Guideline number 1". While many younger and older children remembered the guideline **'letter perfect'** along with the actions: "It is never alright for someone to touch, to look

at or talk about, my private body parts except to keep me clean and healthy"; Some children recalled the meaning of the statement - "No one can touch my Private Body Parts except to keep it clean." Others had their interpretations of the guideline - "my mother can only touch my private body parts" or "[If anyone asks me,] I can decide who can touch me or not." The next part of the message, "it is never alright for someone to ask me to touch, to look at or talk about their Private Body Parts" could not be recalled by most children.

It is evident that children have a concrete understanding of body access, they are comfortable about their body, know that their body belongs to them and believe themselves to be active participants in ensuring their safety. They display comfort in talking about Private Body Parts and understand personal boundaries.

C Exploring the Understanding and Articulating of Feelings in Children

Expressing feelings serve the important functions of identifying one's mental state and signalling to others how one feels, regulating one's own behaviour and play pivotal roles in social exchange (Shiraev & Levy, 2004). In the context of Personal Safety understanding one's feelings play a critical role in helping children assess safe and unsafe situations and touches. While all children in the FGDs had a large vocabulary of feelings and emotions; they could also identify situations where they felt certain emotions. Children identified: happy, sad, angry, shy, jealous, confused, angry along with a variety of words ranging from "ecstatic" to disappointed. The difference in vocabulary around feelings changed along with ages of children. Older children had more vocabulary of feelings.

Children identified happiness to be associated with times they are safe, or with family and even when they get what they want. Sadness was associated with "low marks", "angry parents". While the conceptual understanding of sadness is present in children; most children, across schools and groups, were unsure of the times when they felt sad and found it challenging to articulate it .

Children could identify feelings of fearfulness or scared. Experiences associated with feeling scared were around "having done some mischief" or "getting caught with bad marks" (Student, 7th

grade, BCSE). Scared is a feeling associated with perceived anger from adults mostly, parents and teachers. New unfamiliar environments, though safe were identified as scary as is evident in the narration reproduced below:

"Once I had to go to the Principal Miss's office, and I was scared though it was about a competition.... and my teacher was also there with me. It is very prestigious to go to her office, so if I made any mistake [it may result in something unsavoury]." (Student, 6th grade, BCSE)

Feelings of confusion were identified in situations where two things were to be chosen:

"Between chocolate and ice cream, if I have to choose [one]." (Student, 6th grade, BCSE)

Anger as a feeling could also be identified across groups. However, some children identified anger as a feeling in situations which to others may appear as sadness. "If Oggy's cake is gone, he will feel angry" (Student, 6th grade, BCSE). The differences in understanding this situation could be **age related**, personal choices, or the result of an ambiguous situation open to interpretation. Children identified feeling angry during situations when they had made mistakes as well as when they were punished for something that they did not do. Boys across groups had narratives around times when they were punished unjustly.

"Teacher does not listen to me even when I tell her that it was not me, but the other boy [who did it]." (Student, 5th grade, DSRVM)

Children identified feeling jealous when they do not have a certain gadget while others have it, or when another sibling has more attention from parents. Sometimes, jealousy was identified as anger as well. This is understandable, as anger is often termed a secondary emotion because one tends to resort to anger to protect oneself from or cover up other vulnerable feelings:

"I feel angry when I do not get what I want, but my brother can get what he wants [because] he is younger." (5th grade, DSRVM)

To say that PSE has solely helped children articulate feelings would be far-fetched and a negation of many factors including family,

teachers, peers, media, and age. However, it can be safely said that PSE has been a means through which children were introduced to the articulation of feelings. It gave children a chance to engage with their feelings and articulate them. It expanded their vocabulary of feelings especially challenging ones, which are otherwise bottled up. PSE also introduced the idea, concretely and definitively that others' feelings are important and **ones own feelings can be a window to understanding anothers' feelings**. The concept of respecting others' bodies and personal boundaries are embedded in the narratives of children:

"I do not want to hurt anyone by calling them fat; we have different bodies, and everyone does not have to be one size." (Student, 7th grade, DSRVB)

D

Exploring Children's Ability to Identify Unsafe Situations, Avoid and Report Abuse



1. Understanding Safe and Unsafe situations

The focus of the PSE programme is teaching children refusal skills (Say NO), to escape or avoid unsafe situations (Get Away) and to seek support (Tell a Trusted Adult). For children to develop these skills and translate it into action; an understanding of safe and unsafe situations and skills in identifying them are essential. Across all groups, children had an understanding of safe and unsafe situations.

In the FGDs, younger children's articulation of safe and unsafe situations is limited to unfamiliar spaces and people. Most of these children did not recognise the possibility of a known person being an abuser. Or they chose not to speak about it. Children recognised abusers as "strangers" (Student, 5th grade, VBSVV) and related unsafe situations to the presence of "weird (shady) strangers in a setting". Some children from the higher standards did speak about the abuser being anyone from their life:

"We can never trust anyone other than our mother. Even our mother, we have to think about." (Student, 7th grade, BCSE)

While no direct questions around who can be abusers were asked in FGDs for ethical reasons; it was probed during individual interviews. In the individual interviews, the same children mentioned both strangers as well as known persons being unsafe. There was not much difference in articulation between older and younger children. Children quite aptly articulated "looks can deceive us" (Student, 6th grade, DSRVB, Individual interview), "appearance does not define who you are as a person" (Student, 8th grade, DSRVB, Individual interview) and "not everyone keeps the trust" (Student, 8th grade, BCSE, Individual interview). Children spoke directly about the probability of family members, known people like boyfriends being unsafe:

"It may even be a person from my family who I may not think can have some bad intentions about me. It can be one of our family members whom we are comfortable with, and so the person takes advantage of our lenient behaviour with them." (Student, 8th grade, VBSVV, Individual interview)

"Having a boyfriend is unsafe as sometimes they just catch our hand or engages in other physical [sexual] activities. Because parents

don't allow us to have a boyfriend, we cannot even discuss it with our parents". (Student, 8th grade, DSRVM, Individual interview)

Children in their individual interviews identified a wide range of unsafe situations that they are aware of either through personal experiences, hearsay or media reporting. These situations were not restricted to Personal Safety Rule 1 but were inclusive of inappropriate behaviour as well other forms of abuse. Some of the examples for violation of Personal Safety Rule 1 included touching of private body parts, rape, molestation, staring, whistling, certain games, for example, Situation, Truth and Dare and Bats and Ops which include hitting the buttock. Some of the other unsafe situations and concerns expressed by children included peer pressure, teasing, bullying, hitting, kidnapping, getting lost, forced substance abuse, being scolded by teachers and parents, adults' inability to understand that children's personal boundaries change with age, depression, cyber bullying and malware attack while using a computer.

These narratives show that children have the knowledge and understanding to assess safe and unsafe situations. While all these situations are not covered in the programme; children used skills from the programme to assess these situations namely Personal Safety Rules as well as understanding their own feelings. This knowledge and skill will help students to avoid any unsafe situation and seek help. However, variation in responses from younger children on their understanding of safe and unsafe situations in the FGDs and individual interviews might highlight children's greater comfort in engaging in the conversation in an individual space.

2. Using Refusal Skills and Accessing help: Children's Account

All children, across all FGDs , remembered the messages of 'Say NO and Get Away' and 'Tell A Trusted Adult'. All children could identify the following characteristics of a trusted adult:

- a) [people who] believe [what we are saying]
- b) When we tell them what has happened,
they can help us
- c) The way they react
- d) Respond [to our needs]

e) Understand our emotions

f) Loyal person

Most children identified their parents as trusted adults; choosing either the mother or the same-sex parent. Children chose to focus on one of the characteristics of trusted adult rather than all of those mentioned above. The individuals that children are affectionate towards, for example, "older sister", "best friend", were also included in the list of trusted adults. Sometimes discussion around trusted adults included neighbours, security guards in the building, police officers that are friends of the family. Children also identified other family members that they share the home space with as trusted adults, for example, grandparents. Here, the proximity of the person took priority over the characteristics of the trusted adult. While fewer children identified teachers as 'trusted adults' in the FGDs; children in the individual interviews articulated that for any concern in the school especially around bullying, inappropriate behaviour of fellow students they reach out to their teachers and for concerns outside the school they reach out to their parents. This showcases that children not only remember the characteristics of a trusted adult but they also remember a related concept, 'Identifying Trusted Adults based on Proximity' taught in PSE. This concept helps children to seek help from a trusted adult who is closer as it ensures immediate help:

"I would tell my teachers if it happens in the school because they are the people who will understand the situation better. And if it happens in my building or somewhere else where I am close to my parents; at that time, I'll report it to my parents". (Student, 7th grade, BCSE, Individual interview)

Children's understanding of the aggressive, assertive and passive behaviour and their use of refusal skills were discussed in FGDS with an assessment trope where a child was abused in the school bus by the bus conductor . Children's responses included a combination of assertive, aggressive and passive behaviour as they recognised that different situations might call for different kinds of behaviour. Their responses can be placed under three categories – immediate response, intermediate resolution and long term solution.

None of the children across groups felt that the

conductor was only playing with the child or that it was a one-time episode that can be looked at as non-threatening. This is indicative of the children's ability to understand unsafe situations and the fact that children can identify abuse even when the abuser is a known person. As an immediate response, children thought of screaming, closing their eyes, talking to the driver which shows a combination of both assertive and passive behaviour. Responses from children of the 5th standard also included hitting the conductor which can be termed as aggressive behaviour. This is not going completely astray from what is taught in Personal Safety Lessons, which though encourages assertive behaviour also suggests, "the only time it is okay to be aggressive is when you need to save yourself, and you are by yourself and have tried other ways to protect yourself without success." (Arpan PSE Manual, 2016, Grade 5 and 6: 73)

As the next step, children suggested that they might get down before their home, say nothing to the conductor and speak to family members later. Children also recognised that the exhibitionism might be the beginning of something more sinister, and asking for help while being on the bus may be required. Most groups were convinced that the driver might also be an accomplice and brainstormed ways of getting away if that is the case. Children also articulated that the person engaging in unsafe behaviour might have more power than what is visible. They had the skills to adjudge and assess a situation as unsafe even before it was explicit and visible. Their response was well thought out and not reactive. So even if they chose not to address it with the conductor which might apparently appear to be passive; they had a well thought out plan to get out of the situation safely and to report it. This is in sync with Personal Safety lessons which teaches, "in a situation where we cannot get away immediately we try to wait patiently for the correct time and get away only when it is safe to do so" (Arpan PSE Manual, 2016, Grade 5 and 6: 75) as children's bodily safety is of prime importance. It is evident that continuous exposure to PSE messages have helped children think beyond simple scenarios and understand the layered aspects of a situation and also internalise the nuanced content of the PSE lesson plans and use it appropriately.

As a long term solution, children decided that they would take it up with the school authorities,

and get the conductor and if necessary the driver, removed from the job. The reasons that children gave for this included the safety for other children and need to restore justice. Here children seemed to be echoing from the Personal Safety lesson plan which urges children to seek help from a trusted adult not only for their safety but a "larger cause" as well. These solutions also showcase children's confidence in themselves, their trusted adults and the school system. Moreover, it showcases their trust in the learnings that PSE has inculcated in them.

In the individual interviews, 9 out of 31 children spoke about their experiences of unsafe situations. All 9 of them were able to use refusal skills and access help from trusted adults to keep themselves safe. These cases indicate the fact that children do not only retain knowledge to participate in their safety, but they also have the skills to use them when faced with unsafe situations. One child shares about two incidents that he faced - one before and after participating in PSE programme.

Before PSE: **"A big boy of 7th/8th hit me on my buttock very badly when I was in 1st grade. I felt very ashamed. I did not feel like coming to school. I missed school for 2-3 days. I did not tell anybody [about it]. After 2-3 days I told my parents. They came to the school and complained. This was before Personal Safety Education; afterwards, I attended PSE. Now if anything happens I will tell the teacher immediately".**

After PSE: **"In 5th grade, I was walking back from my tuition classes, two people came near me on a bike. One of them was just going to hit me on private body parts; I went aside. He again came towards me and tried hitting me. I said, 'Don't do it' and asked help from a man in a stall nearby. The man shouted at them. I ran away and spoke to my parents. My parents came and spoke to the person who helped. He identified these persons who lived in the nearby colony, and my parents spoke to them".** (Boy, 6th grade, DSRVM, Individual interview)

Though he sought help even before he was introduced to PSE; post-PSE he also used refusal skill assertively with the offender and sought immediate help without delay and any feeling of shame and guilt.

Out of the 9 children who spoke about dealing with unsafe situations, 3 were boys, and 6 were girls. This narration of a girl traces how PSE empowered her to take an assertive step towards her safety:

“There was one gang of boys. They would tease and follow me whenever I would go to take anything from the shop. Once, one of the boys caught my hand and pushed me behind. I went to my sister, and I told her. We both went to those boys and took them to our building. Our society members warned them to stop this, and their parents were called. After this situation, even my parents asked, “how did you even think to come and tell us and take steps to stop it”? That’s the best part! So I said that I was taught about this and my teachers told me to do this, and so I did it. They said the school is doing a great job. I did have a conversation before [with them on personal safety] but they did not think that I will stand up against the boys and that such an experience can happen to me.” (Girl, 8th grade, VBSVV, Individual interview)

Some of the other narratives of children's confidence in using refusal skills assertively and help-seeking behaviour are as follows:

“I was travelling on a bus. One man touched me on my private body parts. I directly told him “what are you doing?” So he kept quiet and stopped touching. Everyone began to look at us.” (Boy, 8th grade, DSRVB, Individual interview)

“I go for dance classes. My father comes home late from the office. My mother is there at home, but then she has to do housework. While coming back from the classes, I come alone, so I take an auto rickshaw, or sometimes I travel by bus. Once on the bus, a group of boys pushed me and touched me on my private parts. It was uncomfortable. They tried it twice or thrice. I was frustrated because of this. I took a minute or two to think and then said, “Please stop doing this” and “you can stand a little behind”. I told them this, and they stopped. The conductor also helped me out in this situation. I was a little disturbed. I spoke to my parents afterwards. When I spoke to them, I felt okay, I was relaxed, and my mind was free. I am confident that nothing will happen in future

and even if it does I will be able to respond” (Girl, 7th grade, DSRVM, Individual interview)

It is clear through these narratives that children have been able to identify unsafe situations, use refusal skills assertively, get away from the situation and tell a trusted adult. However, children's sharing did not include any instances where they felt unsafe from known people. It might be so that these children did not face familial abuse. It can also be that given the sensitivity of the issue children did not feel comfortable to share about familial abuse to an interviewer.

Children's sharing of unsafe situations, as articulated before, was not limited to sexual abuse but they also spoke about inappropriate behaviour either by friends or adults which made them feel uncomfortable. Here also children used refusal skills, sought help whenever they felt uncomfortable or confused.

“Sometimes, a few of my relatives hug and hold me very tightly, and I don’t like that. So I avoid them. I tell my parents, and they ask the relatives not to hug very tightly.” (Boy, 7th grade, VBSVV, Individual interview)

“Yesterday, when I and one of my classmates, were coming from the physical education class, one boy in the class touched her private body parts. Then she yelled at him and said no and told the teacher. The teacher spoke to the boy.” (Girl, 6th grade, BCSE, Individual interview)

In this instance, it is evident that children do reach out to the teachers when there is an unsafe situation in the school. In cases of inappropriate behaviour by classmates and bullying, children chose the action plan based on the intensity of the behaviour and who is doing it. In certain situations, children chose to be passive and ignore at times as they thought this to be the most effective strategy for it to stop. If it continued, they spoke to the person doing it and reported it to the teacher. The teacher then took steps in addressing it with the children.

“When there was bullying by another classmate, I ignored it. When the situation was out of control, I thought that why shouldn’t I tell it to miss [teacher]. After that, I told the teacher.” (Boy, 7th grade, DSRVB, Individual interview)

“I will tell him [the child indulging in misbehaviour] because it will make a difference. I will not [tell] an adult [first]. [I will check

with him whether it happened accidentally]. If it's done accidentally, then it's okay. But if he doesn't listen and it goes on then I will tell an adult." (Boy, 8th grade, DSRVB, Individual interview)

3. Using Refusal Skills and Accessing help: Caregivers' Account

Children's narratives of using refusal skills and accessing help are also substantiated by parents, teachers and counsellor's accounts. A father shares two incidents where his daughter had used assertive refusal skills and also sought help:

"I don't remember exactly which year; but once her [my daughter's] cousin patted her buttocks she immediately responded saying, "Don't touch my private parts". We were shocked. But the fact that she has spoken up even if it [referring to the cousin patting on the buttock] was done for fun; we are confident she will surely speak up in other situations [when her Personal Safety Rule is broken]." (Father, Grade 5, BCSE)

"The other day, in our building my daughter and other children were playing, and one of the guys pushed her on her chest. She came running home and told, "How can he push me like that [by touching] on my chest?" My

wife went down and explained the guy that he should not have done that. The guy's mother was also there, so she also explained it to her son. He was pushing everyone [other kids as well], but she is the one who objected. What I want to say is that she is quite aware and she takes actions very quickly." (Father, Grade 5, BCSE)

Another parent shared:

"This just happened some days back. I hit him on his buttock, and he told me, "You are not supposed to do this because it's my private body part". I said sorry immediately and told, "I just did it in masti [for fun], but I won't repeat it again." (Mother, Grade 4, DSRVM)

Parents accounts did not limit itself to sharing about situations where children's Personal Safety Rule was broken; it also included instances where children used skills to adjudge and assess a situation as unsafe even before it was explicit and visible:

"My son [younger child in Grade 2] told me that there was a college student who was distributing brochures outside the school to get in touch with the parents regarding some dance class. He was taking children's 'I card' [School Identity card] to note down parents contact numbers. My son said, "I just flipped the 'I card' and told that person I would not share my parents' number." (Mother of children in 2nd grade and 5th grade, BCSE)

"Just yesterday, there was no school bus available. So my daughter told me to come and pick her from the school. When I came to the school, I realised that school van was available. So I asked her the reason for calling me to the school. She said, "In the van, I was the only one to be dropped [as they live quite far away from the school] and I was not feeling comfortable, so I told you to come. This is a bold decision that she took for her safety." (Father, Grade 5, BCSE)

Teachers also echo parents in talking about children's empowerment in participating in their safety. However, their assessment provides a more generic shift among children in being assertive and seeking help:

"Before [the Personal Safety Education



Programme] the kids would never come to us or tell us that they are facing any unsafe situation or touch since they couldn't differentiate. But now I've seen kids talking [about these situations]." (Teacher, DSRVM)

"Now kids have become bolder. They have the right vocabulary to express themselves. We have made them confident and comfortable about the whole issue [somebody breaking their Personal Safety Rule 1]. If anything happens, they will immediately come and say. This shift is significant." (Teacher, BCSW)

The principal also brings in narratives from children who have passed out of school:

"The ex-students get back to us and share, "Ma'am in school, at times, we used to feel as to why teachers are always repeating the same things [Referring to PSE sessions being conducted from Grade 1 to 5]. Here [in school] we were in a very safe environment. But once we moved out, we are encountering those [unsafe] situations. Our learnings are helping us be safe and demonstrate safe behaviour". It is fantastic to hear kids say, "We can take care of ourselves at college, and we can say 'NO to peer pressure." (Principal, BCSW)

E Not My Fault

Another significant focus of the PSE programme is inculcating in children that it is not their fault if somebody has broken Personal Safety Rule/Guideline No 1. Using a situation where a known person is abusing a child as an assessment trope, children's understanding of the message 'Not My Fault' was explored in the FGDs. Simultaneously, this concept was explored in the individual interviews. A mixed narrative emerged.

"No, I will never think that it's my fault. I will just tell my parents or any adult who can help me. It's the person who has done that [is at fault]." (Student, 8th grade, VBSVV, Individual interview)

"Because I did not have bad thoughts in my mind, rather he would be at fault [the one who did it]." (Student, Grade 7, BCSE, Individual interview)

However, some children did bring out what some of their friends felt when they faced an unsafe situation:

"There are some of my friends who had told me [that their PSE Rule 1 was broken]. They think that it was their fault as they should not have gone there. Although some children do feel that, actually it isn't their fault." (Student, 7th grade, DBSRV, Individual interview).

Some children also communicated that this message needs to be seen in a particular context:

"It is our fault if we are allowing that person to do it [break PSE rule 1] but it is not our fault if they do it against our will." (Student, 8th grade, BCSE, Individual interview)

This line of thought was also predominant in the FGDs. Children communicated that if any child knows the Personal Safety Rules, then the child is also at fault along with the abuser. However, if the child is unaware of it, then the abuser was solely at fault. While some did feel that the rights of children have to be protected irrespective of whether they know PSE or not; all children did not associate with it. Children's faith in PSE is evident in the way they believed that if children knew the rules and wanted to stop the unsafe behaviour, they could have done it. However, a more nuanced understanding of children's vulnerabilities in spite of having knowledge; and children not being at fault even if they could not stop the situation or did not do so needs to be further reinforced.

F Messages from Children

4. Messages for the PSE Programme

It is evident from the above section that children have the skills to adjudge and assess a situation as unsafe, think beyond simple scenarios and understand the layered aspects of a situation and seek timely help. However, some children in the FGDs also shared some of their insights around situations where the personal safety messages might not be as effective.

"If I have to go out at night, to buy something and if someone comes and kidnaps me, how will I be able to say no? [Moreover] how will it help me? Sometimes my mother asks me to go out at night, and she needs help. I cannot say no." (Student, 6th grade, DSRVB)

"Every time, in the worksheet [PSE worksheets given along with lesson plan] we write that we have to say no and run away whenever we are feeling unsafe. In reality is it possible? They

[abuser] can run after us. And they are adults; we are children.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSE)

Children might come across situations where it might be challenging to use refusal skills immediately because of the fear of harm. In these situations, the PSE lesson plans introduce the concept of ‘Think NO’. ‘Think NO’ helps children remember that they do not want this to happen but they are not taking any steps to protect themselves at present and will tell someone when it’s safe. However, children did not speak about the concept of ‘Think NO’. They looked for absolute solutions like taking an adult with them, biting the kidnapper’s hand, screaming, and running away by throwing sand at the kidnapper. This can be used as a learning and focus in future can be to reinforce these nuanced concepts.

5. Messages for other Children

Children in the individual interviews also took the liberty to share that all children have not been privileged enough to undergo Personal Safety Education. Hence they wanted to leave some messages for these children:

“There are many small kids who don’t know what is happening so they can’t respond to it properly. There are even kids of our age and even older children who have been molested, and they get scared to talk to their elders or trusted people. Then they are molested again because the molesters get the confidence that children will not tell anyone. They may be scared to talk; they may choose to sit alone and be depressed. They may be scared of their parents because some parents do not believe in their children. In this situation, the counsellor can help them so that they are physically and mentally okay to stand up. It [PSE] has helped us, we get a lot of education on personal safety, and if something happens to anybody, we can educate them.” (Student, 7th grade, VBSVV, Individual interview)

“Until 6th grade, for 5 years we have been learning PSE so it may happen less for us but for those who don’t learn PSE it could happen more to them. Because in PSE even if it has not happened with that child, he is still informed about it. But people who first experience [unsafe situations] without knowing [about PSE] don’t know what to do. PSE gives us remedies to get out of unsafe situations.” (Student, 6th grade,

DSRVB, Individual interview)

“I feel that PSE can encourage children of my age and even the older children who face such problems and help them to face such situations.” (Student, 6th grade, DSRVM, Individual interview)

Some children also shared how they have empowered other children on PSE:

“I have many cousins. I have told them about these unsafe touches because even they can face these situations. They are small, so they won’t understand, but we should make them aware of it.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSE, Individual interview)

These narratives from children make it evident that PSE has not only left an imprint on their lives it has also prompted them to think about making other children safe.

6. Message for the Abuser

One child spoke about how PSE can also help the abuser:

“If an older person did not have PSE at a younger age, he doesn’t know that he should not do something like this [breaking personal safety]. So someone should tell them and check with them whether they know PSE rules. Everyone should be informed.” (Student, 6th grade, BCSE, Individual interview)

7. Message for the Parents

Children’s narratives (in the earlier sections) brings out the comfort to reach out to parents in case of an unsafe situation. This conversation in FGDs reached a different level with two groups who were in their adolescence. Talking about unsafe experiences in the past, children had a gender-differentiated response regarding comfort in communicating the same with their parents.

“If it [the unsafe touch] had already stopped, why would I bother them [my parents] about it?” (Boy, 7th grade, BCSE)

“I tell my mother even if it is something in the past. I remember it now, and that is enough reason for me to talk about it.” (Girl, 7th grade, BCSE)

Children, both boys and girls, shared that they would not reach out to their parents about

situations in which parents might get angry or would perceive them to have done something “wrong” (immoral, unacceptable) or where someone from the opposite sex is involved:

“If my mother comes to know that other children are teasing me with another boy’s name; she will not even ask [me] if there is something [any relationship] between us. She will assume that it is my fault.” (Girl, 6th grade, DSRVM)

“I will never talk to my mother about discussions related to boyfriend/girlfriend that happens in school.” (Boy, 7th grade, BCSW)

Children also spoke about their reservations in discussing concerns around sexuality and sexual exploration as they were wary of their parents’ overreaction:

“She will get scared and come to school... [Or worse] I will be called at fault.” (Boy, 7th grade, BCSW)

Sometimes, children believed the response from parents might not be helpful:

“They will ask me to ignore it, but ignoring makes these people do it more [referring to bullying].” (Boy, 7th grade, BCSW)

Based on these responses, it is clear that children especially adolescent children have some clear expectation from their parents for them to be true to the concept of ‘trusted adult’:

“The parents should be supportive. If parents shout at you, then you might not share with them. If parents beat children then will the children reach out? Parents should just be calm.” (Boy, 7th grade, DSRVM, Individual interview)

An adolescent’s relationship with the adult faces challenges regarding communication and mutual understanding. When the communication with parent changes, as may be the result of growing up, the child’s safety may be compromised. Messages from the PSE lessons made children seek help from parents; however continued work is needed to ease out the conversation between adolescent children and their parents.

Parents’ Reflections: Imprint of PSE on Their Lives

A Understanding of Child Sexual Abuse

Parents’ understanding of Child Sexual Abuse was largely shaped by the television shows that they watched. Shows like “Crime Patrol” and “Savdhaan India” came up in their narratives and understanding of sexual abuse. For a few parents, the awareness session that they attended also helped them to understand the issue in its totality. A sense of caution, when talking about Child Sexual Abuse in the context of their own families pervades their narratives.

1. Who are the abusers?

The understanding of the abuser is also largely shaped by the television.

“After seeing all this [on the television], I feel, more than strangers, it is our own people who take advantage [of us]. This is the reason we are extra careful. On TV, you see so many things. My God! That can happen to anyone. I am so scared.” (Mother, 3rd grade, BCSE)

“I have just seen it on TV, that the abuser is someone who is known to you, who is a family member or a friend and whom you trust a lot. It is shocking and alarming!” (Father, 2nd grade, DSRVM)

While sharing about their understanding of reasons behind sexual abuse, the responses ranged from complete oblivion to repulsion as well as helplessness:

“We just cannot fathom why someone would do that, why somebody does it. We know we will not do it but, then [out there] there is somebody who does it.” (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

“We cannot judge anyone by just looking at them.” (Mother, 5th grade, DSRVM)

The most common characteristic of an abuser was of an “abnormal”, “mentally ill” person who derives pleasure out of children. A strong sense of ‘othering’ was identified as parents viewed themselves as “normal” (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM) and the abuser as “abnormal.” (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM). However, this

did not stop them from accepting that anyone could be an abuser:

“They [Abusers] are sick people; what are they getting [by abusing] a 3-month-old baby or a 3-year-old child? Why is there so much desperation in them?” (3rd Standard, Mother, BCSE)

Sometimes, there was room for some understanding towards the abuser. But these are lone voices in a cacophony of disgust:

“Maybe there is some childhood problem.” (Mother, 3rd grade, BCSE)

2. At risk children

The conversation with parents naturally flowed from abusers towards children at risk of being sexually abused. As parents were not sure of how an abuser could be identified; they chose to recognise children at risk as a step towards prevention.

“We don’t know about others [as anyone can be an abuser]. We can only take care of our children and tell them what to do or not do.” (Father, 2nd grade, DSRVM)

Parents recognised children who are alone to be ‘at risk’. There were two predominant voices on this. One that identified a child being alone in any situation to be at risk; the other identified children who are from nuclear families being more at risk:

“Parents, who are both working in a nuclear family and the child is left alone at the mercy of just anyone [can be abused].” (Mother, 5th grade, DSRVM)

There is an acceptance that a boy could be abused albeit with some surprise:

“They are not even leaving a boy. Boys are more unsafe now.” (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

While discussing the personality traits of a child who can be abused, one parent identified introverts to be at a higher risk.

“Silent children are more prone to abuse because they will keep quiet, they will not speak up. If a bubbly [talkative] child is abused she will speak up so even if the child is abused, it will not continue.” (Mother, 3rd grade, BCSE)

3. After the Abuse

Two parents spoke about what needs to be done

for the survivor of sexual abuse. One of them had a legal perspective, and the other had a more psycho-social approach.

“We can see to it that he [abuser] gets rigorous punishment.” (Father, 2nd grade, DSRVM)

“Physical things outgrow fast but mental things remain in their brain. The foremost thing that she [survivors] must be told is it’s not your mistake. Unless this happens, the trauma remains and when she grows up, and there is no happy married life. Meditation and things like yoga can help.” (Mother, 4th grade, BCSE)

B Views on the Personal Safety Education Program

Parents were gratified and content that the PSE programme is taking a significant step towards ensuring the safety of their children.

1. “Happy that it’s not us.”

There was a sense of gratitude when asked about views on PSE program. All parents expressed a sense of relief that it was the teachers who started the conversation about personal safety. A sense of inadequacy in dealing with issues of sexuality and personal safety seemed to be the cause of the relief and gratitude.

“This is something I was not told about [as a child]. So I don’t know how to talk about it to my child. The teachers are teaching them, so it is good. They are trained, and they will do a good job.” (Mother, 4th grade, BCSE)

“[I am] extremely happy actually [about school teaching PSE]. Personally, I feel as parents if you say something to your children, it doesn’t remain in their mind. But kids follow what is being told by teachers. As teachers facilitate PSE, it helps them. It’s at the back of their mind. I think it is a very good start.” (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

“Since we both [parents] are quite introverted, we could not speak much openly. But, we didn’t want our child to be that way [introvert]. We don’t teach much about the body parts [private body parts] because we know it’s being taught properly in the school.” (Father, 5th grade, BCSE)

2. Does it start too early?

The experience of the school administration in implementing the PSE program had met with a

slight initial resistance. Interaction with parents gave an opportunity to talk to them about any inhibitions they may have had. All parents were at ease for the PSE program to commence from Grade 1. There is an understanding of the need for such a program. While parents have expressed inhibitions at the beginning of the program, those were settled with interaction with the child and looking at the worksheets of the lesson plans.

"Initially I felt what is this all about? Is this necessary to teach [about private body parts]? But then when you look at the [TV] serials you have this realisation that this has to be taught somewhere. And it is to be taught in a very decent and a good manner. Initially, we did not know the way you [school] are going to teach the child. Teaching is important but how? How is the child going to take it? When these worksheets came home along with pictures [charts showing Private Body Parts], we knew that the way private body parts are taught is okay." (Mother, 3rd grade, BCSE)

"I don't think there is any age to know all this. Children have to be taught at a very early age because I have heard of so many incidents [involving young children]. In the session on POCSO [The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012] the facilitators were talking about so many incidents." (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

"Our sons are very aware, and they need to be; we are hardly at home, and there is no one to look after them. Because they know about personal safety I feel a little assured." (Mother, 2nd grade, DSRVM)

C PSE: Aiding Communication around Safety

Along with conducive home environments, parents recognised that PSE is playing its part in aiding communication around personal safety:

"I could not discuss with her [my child] openly but now because of personal safety being taught in school; it has become a bit open." (Mother, 6th grade, BCSE)

"My son, who is in the 4th standard would not allow anyone to touch him. PSE program added to the child's verbal ability [in communicating about uncomfortable touches]." (Mother, 3rd grade, BCSE)

"We were told in the parent-teachers' meeting

[about PSE]. Then he [child] started getting the worksheets [worksheets being given along with PSE lesson plan] at home. We were informed children have to complete it, and parents have to do it with children personally. So that is what I have been doing with him since the first standard. I think last year or last to last year after the PSE session, my child told me, "Mummy, today they [teachers] shared with us about private body parts of male and female. I got a little embarrassed." I said it is a fact, a girl's body is different, and a boy's body is different. He said, "I felt a little embarrassed because there were girls in the class." I said that is normal because it happened for the first time. Next time you won't feel all that embarrassed. But, if you want to ask any questions, you can come to me, or you can go to your teacher." (Mother, 4th grade, DSRVM)

While children learn the language of personal safety from the PSE lessons and teachers, the same is reinforced by some parents:

"I would tell my daughter to always play near the building. I do not want her going too far off places. When travelling in the lift alone with a stranger, I have asked her to press all buttons. These are small things, but they help." (Mother, 4th, DSRVM)

Sometimes the parents chose not to talk to the child directly about certain situations, (especially if it involves a family member) but they ensured the safety of the child:

"He [my brother] had come down from Bangalore. He hardly comes, once in a year or so. So we were to leave at around 9 o'clock, and my child was to leave at around 12 o'clock. So I said he [your Uncle] would drop you. I had a second thought, and I stayed back. I dropped her [my daughter] along with my brother. It's not like my brother will do anything, it's just being safe. My child does not know why I stayed back. I'm not making her scared. I feel you just have to be a little vigilant." (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

D Sticky Situations

Parents spoke about situations where children have placed them in situations that have been embarrassing for them. These were situations where children had spoken out to other family

members when they experienced discomfort as well as used names of private body parts comfortably in front of other family members. The parents who had such experiences, also believed that it was a small price to pay for their child's safety.

"He [My younger son] was dancing on the bed and shouting the names of Private Body Parts." (Mother of children in 2nd grade and 5th grade, BCSE)

"She was in the second standard. We went to a shop, and my daughter was wearing a swimming costume. She said something about her private body parts openly. We didn't react, but people around were staring. It was embarrassing. But we were assured that she is comfortable speaking about it. With age, she will know where to speak about it. We don't want to stop her because it will put a barrier. She will start thinking, "Should I speak or not." I don't want her to live with that kind of fear."
(Father, 5th grade, BCSE)

"If my daughter says anything I listen to her. Maybe she is saying it because she has seen something. I don't want her to think papa-mummy do not believe her. Later if she does not say anything, [it will be because she thinks we did not believe her.]" (Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

All parents have not faced similar situations:

"My sons know when to say something [about private body parts]. If there are guests at home, they will not say anything. Later they may come and tell me." (Mother, 5th grade, DSRVM)

"I have made my child understand that there are some words [referring to names of private body parts] that we do not say in front of others, so it has never been a problem for me."
(Mother, 4th grade, BCSE)

The linkages to personal safety education with that of everyday disciplining are present in some parent's narratives as well. One parent shared about his older son taking photographs of his naked younger brother. The parents chose to speak to the older child and instil empathy, "how would you feel if the same thing happened to you?"

E Messages from Parents

Parents were comfortable with the content of the PSE lessons and thought it to be necessary and adequate. Feedback about the Personal Safety Education program included continuous reiteration and using more extensive role-plays.

"Sometimes telling children about personal safety is not enough, practising many more role plays about unsafe situations is also something that you can look at." (Mother, 5th grade, DSRVM)

Many parents emphasised repetition of information not only in an assigned time frame in the curriculum but more frequently:

"Even if we keep telling her about safety, she forgets, children forget. They have to be reminded. We need to keep telling them."
(Mother, 6th grade, DSRVM)

"I think that we were very lucky that our children got this education [Personal Safety Education]. I think you should start at an earlier stage for example from senior kg [Preschool]. Not the same curriculum that is offered to our children; but at least 10 % of the knowledge, if you can share with a senior kg child, it would be good. At least something on safe touch and unsafe touch." (Mother of children in 2nd grade and 5th grade, BCSE)

Teacher's Reflections: Imprint of PSE on Their Lives

Teachers' understanding of child protection, prevention of Child Sexual Abuse and their understanding of body literacy have been contributed fairly through the Personal Safety Education programme. Connecting with children, comfort with the vocabulary of Private Body Parts, and a larger affirmation of their self-esteem are the broad themes that emerge out of their narratives.

A Connecting with Children

Personal Safety Education lesson plans are spaces that help teachers emotionally connect to children. This is corroborated with children's experiences [as discussed earlier] where children also talk about connecting with teachers through this space:

"Children talk about their lives; we get a chance to connect with them through these lessons."
(Teacher, VBSVV)

"There are so many things that I get to know about my students through these lesson plans - you give them one chance to talk, and they will never stop." (Teacher, DSRVB)

B Comfort around Private Body Parts

Teachers expressed comfort towards using the vocabulary of Private Body Parts and an understanding of Child Rights through the PSE lesson plan implementation:

"Earlier when I started, I would not know how to talk about private body parts, but now with constant training [I am more equipped to talk about it]. Also, children take it in a better way than adults do. So one just gets accustomed to saying it [names of Private Body Parts] out loud." (Teacher, DSRVB)

"Earlier, I would feel very uncomfortable. There have been times where I would call someone else to do it [the personal Safety lesson plans] in my place. But now I feel comfortable, and I conduct the lesson plans myself." (Teacher, BCG Andheri East)

"When we were children, there were so many things that were happening - in buses, or anywhere outside and we would not even know that [it] was wrong. Now, I know that this is

something that should not have happened at all. And I can teach my children [in the school and at home] to stay safe. At least to talk about something that has happened." (Teacher, DSRVB)

C Changes in the home space

Internalisation of the Personal Safety messages has impacted the teachers to make changes in their personal spaces as well. Teachers talk about taking initiatives in stopping abuse and adding to non-BCG children's empowerment through the PSE messages:

"I could put a stop to physical abuse in my family. In my extended family, I was aware that adults are hitting children. We all grew up like that. I would never hit my children. But when I read articles in the lesson plans; I felt more certain the things we teach, you are special, you are unique also somewhere [have an] effect. [One wonders] if you are teaching these, then why are you hurting the child? I ensured that it stopped." (Teacher, BCSE)

Another teacher, who was initially opposed to the Personal Safety Education program talks about how she started making PSE a practice at her home space:

"My daughters are not from this school, so they were not getting the PSE lesson plans. I would go home and teach them about it at home. At first, they would listen, looking very scared, silent and later they would giggle. I made sure they would hear about it every few days." (Teacher, BCSW)

D Affirmation of own self-esteem

Teachers' professional development has also been aided by the implementation of PSE lessons:

"I have become more vocal, better equipped, more comfortable in my skin [in my everyday functioning and talking about private body parts and own body.]" (Teacher, BCSE)

"I think I have grown as a person. I always thought one shouldn't talk about these issues [CSA, Private Body Parts, PSE]. Now I feel it is absolutely ok to talk about these. Earlier if children asked me any sensitive question, I would keep postponing it. Now if the child asks me such questions, I answer them immediately." (Teacher, VBSVV)

Section V

Conclusion and Recommendation

Overarching Findings

The key findings of the study include both the strengths of the programme and the gaps identified.

A

Imprint of PSE Programme on the Management of Schools of BCG

- The Management of schools of BCG has developed a Child Protection Policy with a focus on responding to Child Sexual Abuse. The development of the CPP as stated by the administrators of BCG can be attributed to the mandate of the school management to have safe school environments, to the Personal Safety Education programme, and POCSO Act (The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012) coming into force.
- The Child protection policy is child-friendly and responsive and showcases their knowledge on the issue of Child Sexual Abuse. The management used their learnings from the existing protocol of handling disclosure of CSA cases and developed the CPP. The school's assessment of the existing protocol was that it was a lengthy process involving too many individuals on the way (teacher, counsellors, Headmistress, Principal, Head of Dept. - HRD). It was routeing all cases through the counsellor. However, approximately 10% of children access the CARE Centre (the counselling centre) for academic or behavioural concerns on a regular basis. The lower probability of reporting directly to the counsellors meant the need was to stop routeing all cases through them. The plan was to involve the counsellors at a later stage in supporting children with their healing journey in case parents wanted to pursue therapy in the school setup. In the CPP, the Headteacher/Principal became the touch point for all CSA cases so that there is minimal need for the child to retell the story. Also, the administrators have the authority to take fair decisions in case of staff involvement as well as play a critical role in liaising with parents and the legal system.

- The school management and administrators have responded proactively to deal with the inhibitions of parents at the initiation of the programme. This demonstrates their conviction to integrate the Personal Safety Programme in keeping children safe. This strategy has been effective as after 5 years of running the PSE programme; the new parents of Grade 1 children today are in alignment with the it.
- The school management has also identified the need for training and hand-holding of teachers and counsellors and invested their time to ensure that the quality of the programme is maintained and monitored. The CEO herself reviewed the lesson plans and observed the implementation by teachers in the schools when the PSE programme was integrated. The CEO then supervised the monitoring of the programme along with the Headmistress. The training and monitoring of PSE facilitators included capacity building sessions on CSA and PSE, observation of lesson plans conducted by Arpan staff or senior teachers, observing the implementation of the new facilitator and providing feedback. A few formal support systems that the counsellors rely upon namely partnering in counselling, case discussions with counsellors expecting support, monitoring through the recording of the case and use of assessment tools, for example, the General Assessment Form (GAF) which is a ready reckoner for the counsellor about the expectations of working with the child.

B

Imprint of the PSE Programme on Children's and Caregivers' Lives

The findings at the micro level are categorised below for each beneficiary and stakeholder involved in the programme:

1. Imprint of PSE programme on children's lives

- Children demonstrated increasing help-seeking behaviour as they identified unsafe situations, used refusal skills, and reported

it to a trusted adult almost immediately. All 9 children (out of 31 children with whom the individual interview was conducted) who disclosed about past unsafe experiences in the study have sought help from their trusted adults and have been able to evolve a plan of action to ‘Get Away’ from the situation. Their comfort in sharing these incidents to an interviewer also speaks a lot about their comfort to have a dialogue on personal safety. Even in the FGDs, all children were able to bring out an immediate response, an intermediary resolution and a long-term solution for unsafe situations that the protagonist faced in the assessment trope. Children’s narratives of using refusal skills and accessing help are also substantiated by parents, teachers and counsellor’s accounts.

- Children’s perception of PSE lessons has been that it inculcates them with skills to face ‘life’ as “PSE is about life”. They find PSE lessons interesting because it is taught in novel ways and break the monotony of everyday classroom.
- Children’s internalisation of the PSE messages boosted their self-esteem and articulation of feelings. All children across groups agreed that they were special as there is “no one like me [them]”. Children also related these messages to respecting others’ bodies and feelings.
- Children recognise that their bodies belong to them and that they can choose to express their feelings if they are uncomfortable with a touch, look or talk about their body. Children, across all groups, are comfortable about their body, know that their body belongs to them and believe themselves to be active participants in ensuring their safety. They are comfortable with naming Private Body Parts and remember the Personal Safety Rules/ Guidelines. Though there are slight variations in the nomenclature used of Private Body Parts across schools.
- Children shared their learnings with their siblings, cousins or friends or by leaving messages for other children through this study.

2. Imprint of PSE Programme on Parent’s Lives

- Parents are aware of Child Sexual Abuse. They are aware of the fact that known people can be abusers. A sense of caution, when talking

about Child Sexual Abuse in the context of their own families pervades the parents’ narratives. There is an acceptance that boys could be abused albeit with some surprise.

- Parents recognise Personal Safety Education Programme as age-appropriate, necessary and adequate. They are comfortable with the content and delivery of the programme. All parents in the study were at ease for the PSE program to commence from Grade 1.
- The Personal Safety Education program was identified by parents in aiding their communication with children on personal safety. All parents expressed a sense of relief that it was the teachers who started the conversation about personal safety. A sense of inadequacy in dealing with issues of sexuality/ personal safety seemed to be the cause of the relief and gratitude. However, parents reinforced the personal safety concepts once children have been introduced about it.
- The exposure to the sessions on CSA gives parents skills to be better vigilant as well as effectively respond to children. Sometimes the parents chose not to talk to the child directly about certain situations, especially if they involve a family member but they ensured the safety of the child by not letting the child be alone with the family member showing warning signs or if the parents are uncomfortable. Some parents also shared about responding to sexual misbehaviour with skills learnt from Personal Safety Education. One parent shared about his older son taking photographs of his naked younger brother. The parents chose to speak to the older child and instil empathy and personal boundaries.

3. Imprint of PSE programme on Teachers’ Lives

- Teachers are well aware of signs and symptoms of Child Sexual Abuse. If a child is displaying behaviour which is different from what the child usually does, the teachers speak to the child and the counsellor to know if it is normal. At the same time, they are cognizant of the fact that these are just indicators and one needs to pause, think and connect with other resources like the counsellor before jumping to any conclusions.

- Teachers recognise Personal Safety Education Programme as a systematic age-appropriate model with adequate teachings aids and activities. It has helped teachers to initiate dialogue on this issue in a non-threatening manner. It has also helped to streamline the process of handling disclosures of Child Sexual Abuse.
- Teachers emerged as empowered facilitators who have developed skills to connect better with children and have evolved to be comfortable with the language and vocabulary of personal safety.
- The teachers respond to children's disclosure with standardised messages. These include appreciating the child for disclosing and not blaming the child. Some teachers also identified safety planning as a key component while handling disclosure. They are vigilant and quick to respond effectively in cases of disclosure of past and ongoing abuse. Apart from sexual abuse cases, there have been situations where children were found exploring each other's bodies, or there were complaints by one child about another for crossing their boundaries. In such situations, the teacher interacted with both the children involved but addressed them separately.
- Teachers have taken the learnings from the PSE classrooms and have created safe environments in their homes and personal spaces. Teachers talk about taking the initiative in stopping abuse and adding to non-BCG children's empowerment through the PSE messages.
- An unaccounted impact of the programmes has been that PSE helped teachers in reaffirming their self-esteem and boosting their self-worth as they continue to articulate messages of self-esteem and empathy in Personal Safety Lessons for children. Teachers communicated that their professional development has also been aided by the implementation of PSE lessons as they have become "more vocal, better equipped, more comfortable [with themselves]."

C Gaps

- Nuances of certain messages, for example, 'Think NO' is lost. Children might come across situations where it might be challenging to use refusal skills immediately because of the

fear of harm. In these situations, the PSE lesson plans introduce the concept of 'Think NO'. 'Think NO' helps children remember that they do not want this to happen but they are not taking any step to protect themselves at present and will tell someone when it's safe. However, children did not speak about the concept of 'Think NO'. They looked for absolute solutions like taking an adult with them, biting the kidnapper's hand, screaming, and running away by throwing sand at the kidnapper. Internalisation of these messages is dependent upon the way it has been taught and the focus that has been given.

- The internalisation of the concept, 'Not My Fault' was not standardised. While some children communicated that the abuser is at fault; certain others felt that children who have been exposed to Personal Safety Education were responsible for responding to the violation.
- Though children who have faced unsafe situations demonstrated that they have been able to use skills from PSE to avoid those situations and seek support; some children expressed a feeling of doubt as to whether these skills will be effective in case they face unsafe situations. Children in the FGDs also shared some of their insights around situations where the personal safety messages might not be as effective. These included situations like being kidnapped and personal safety rules being violated, not being able to run fast enough to get away as the adult can run faster. This sense of helplessness in some children needs to be addressed.
- In the FGDs, younger children's articulation of safe-unsafe situations was limited to unfamiliar spaces and people. Most of these children did not recognise the possibility of a known person being an abuser or they chose not to speak about it. However, the same children in the individual interviews mentioned both strangers, as well as known persons, could be unsafe.
- When children learnt the concept of "I am the boss of my body" for the first time if someone even touched them on their shoulder they approached their teachers and reported they are facing 'touching problem'. They also used names of private body parts in situations which the teachers thought to be inappropriate, for

example, screaming vagina in the school bus. Though this fizzled out over time.

- Some children felt that PSE becomes repetitive as it is continued from Grade 1 to Grade 5. This can become a hurdle in children's absorption of messages. However, other children shared that they enjoy the PSE lessons because it unfolds like a narrative, and is "taught like a story".
- Parent's understanding of the issue is significantly shaped by the media leading to reinforcement of popular myths. Shows like "Crime Patrol" and "Savdhaan India" came up in their narratives and understanding of sexual abuse. At the beginning of the programme, parents were anxious about the child using the names of Private Body Parts and children's awareness of rights. At present, there are no concerns from parents after the school addressed it. Parents fall short of skills where they think children are using the vocabulary of private body parts in situations which they think are inappropriate. Though they have accepted these situations as a small price to pay for their children's safety
- Children's narratives throughout the evaluation bring out the comfort to reach out to parents in case of an unsafe situation. However, two groups in FGDs, who were in their adolescence flagged certain hurdles in communicating with parents. Children, both boys and girls, shared that they would not reach out to their parents about situations in which parents might get angry or would perceive them to have done something "wrong" (immoral or unacceptable) or where someone from the opposite sex is involved. Children also spoke about their reservation to discuss concerns around sexuality and sexual exploration as they were wary of their parents' overreaction. Based on these responses, it is clear that children especially adolescent children have some clear expectation from their parents for them to be true to the concept of a 'trusted adult'. When the communication with parent changes, (as may be the result of growing up), the child's safety may be compromised. Messages from the PSE lessons made children seek help from parents; however continued work is needed to ease out the conversation between adolescent children and their parents.
- While a sincere attempt to standardise key messages of PSE is visible; some variations are present across schools. This is true for

names of Private Body Parts and concepts, for example, 'It is Not My Fault'. Because of these, while some key messages are repeated over time, some nuances are also lost.

- Teachers, as a group, have specific roles. Added to this is the dual role expectation of being a disciplinarian in academic spaces and an empathetic listener and facilitator in PSE. These roles, like any other, are not free of biases. The teachers' response to children indulging in inappropriate behaviour is inconsistent and coloured by their value systems and beliefs. In teacher's narrative peer exploration is being termed as 'wrong' rather than inappropriate. This reflects the teacher's own value positioning. Teachers' discomfort in using certain language or letting their general assessment of the child as "naughtier/disruptive" colouring their response in these situations can be hurdles in evolving a standardised practice.
- In spite, of the school being invested in training and monitoring of cases, the need for training and spaces to have dialogues on ethical issues are evident. These flag the need for an additional step up training curriculum to focus on effective intervention to work with children with trauma for schools who integrate the programme.

Recommendations

The way Arpan conducts the Personal Safety Education programme cannot remain the same when another institution takes it forward. Incorporating a programme as a part of a curriculum requires flexibility in both, the curriculum and the content that goes in the curriculum as there are bound to be differences in knowledge being given and received. The evaluation recommends certain action steps which Arpan, schools of BCG as well new schools integrating Personal Safety Education need to consider to make the programme implementation more robust and effective.

For Arpan

- Arpan can use the learnings from the study in reviewing the Personal Safety Education Curriculum. They can ensure that there is an adequate focus on the nuanced concepts, for example, Think NO and Not My fault. These concepts are currently towards the end of the

lesson plans. They can be introduced earlier so that there is ample scope for repetition, reinforcement and clarification. Arpan can also refine the content around the touching problem and how and where children need to use the names of Private Body Parts so that children do not use them inappropriately. Arpan can also brainstorm as to how younger children can have better articulation that abusers can be both strangers and known people without inflicting fear in them. Arpan can also proactively address the doubts of some children around the effectiveness of the personal safety skills through the modules. Content for awareness sessions with parents of adolescent children needs to be revisited with particular focus on communication with children.

- Arpan can evolve a long-term curriculum for 'Integration of PSE' in the school set up. This training programme needs to include not only training during initiation of the programme but continuous hand-holding, observation as well as refreshers and sequential step up training.
- Arpan needs to also continuously engage in R&D to evolve new teaching aids, new modalities of conducting Personal Safety Education programme and share it with the schools who have institutionalised the programme. It will ensure that the content does not appear repetitive to children when repeated over grades as well teachers are using tools which have been systematically piloted and standardised.
- Arpan needs to conduct monitoring and evaluation of the programme across diverse set ups through systemic standardised evaluation methodologies to understand the emerging patterns across schools.

A For schools of BCG

- Continuous engagement is needed with parents on the phenomenon of CSA to strengthen their understanding of the issue and battle the myths perpetuated by the media; as the latter has a stronghold on parents' psyche. Continued work is also needed to ease out the conversation between adolescent children and their parents as well as inculcate skills in them to handle situations where children use the names of Private Body

Parts inappropriately.

- Training and hand-holding need to be provided to teachers for helping them balance the dual role of teachers and PSE facilitators. Teachers should be taken through value positioning exercises so that they are aware of their values and belief system. This will help them to identify if their personal values are interfering in their delivery of PSE and handling disclosure.
- Training and handholding on trauma and family counselling need to be provided to counsellors for handling Child Sexual Abuse effectively. Discussion spaces need to be strengthened to respond to counsellors' dilemmas.
- Critical messages of Personal Safety Education needs to be standardised across schools through rigorous monitoring and observation.

B For new schools incorporating the PSE programme

- Challenges, both big and small, at the initial stage of integration are normal. It is critical on the part of the school management and administrators of the new schools to have the zeal towards creating a safe school and conviction in this vision.
- The management of the schools integrating Personal Safety Education in their curriculum can learn from BCG's experience of mitigating challenges. Strategies used by the schools of BCG to address parents' inhibitions can be a good starting point to address parent's anxiety towards the programme.
- The school management needs to recognise challenges in the school set up, learn from existing processes and adapt the PSE programme without compromising on the essence of the programme and its thrust on childcare and protection.
- The school management needs to recognise the need for training and hand-holding and invest considerable time and energy to ensure the quality of the programme.
- The school management needs to develop a protocol for handling disclosure and evolve a Child Protection Policy.
- The school management needs to work towards having counsellors as part of the school system or develop an efficient referral mechanism.

Appendix I

THE BCG CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

In keeping with the United Nations Convention for Child Rights, and the Commission of Child Rights Act 2005, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, and the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul schools Mission and Vision, the Management hereby re-affirms their commitment to ensuring a child-sensitive school environment. Every school should do its best to provide both a safe environment for children and services which foster their health, developmental needs, abilities, self respect and dignity.

BCG believes that all children have the right to protection from abuse and exploitation, and it is always unacceptable for a child to experience abuse of any kind. The policy has been written to ensure that all BCG schools take every possible measure to prevent abuse. It aims to ensure that none of its staff, volunteers or partners engages in behavior that could allow abuse to occur or actions that could be misinterpreted by children, their families or other adults, as constituting or leading to abuse.

For this, all BCG schools shall:

1. Develop a Child Protection Policy that provides a guideline to manage the safety of all students in the school.
2. The policy shall apply without reservation to all staff with regards to all children – in school and outside of it.
3. The school admin will identify all potential points of risk, and define preventive actions towards the safety of children.
4. All decisions of the school, their programs and activities, will always place the best interests of the child at the heart of it.
5. The policy will outline the steps to empower staff to prevent abuse, identify abuse and deal with any instance of child abuse that is discovered.
6. The school admin shall ensure staff handle all students with sensitivity and handle misbehaviors effectively to prevent harm to the doer and the victim.
7. The school shall identify roles and responsibilities as well as a procedure to sensitively and responsibly manage disclosures, and coordinate with the appropriate authorities in a timely manner.
8. Adequate provision will be made to support people who report, even if proved to be false later, if reported in good faith. For this, provision will be made for adequate protection of whistle-blowers.
9. The school shall observe all protocols related to documentation and confidentiality.
10. The policy shall be communicated to all staff of the school, and their adherence ensured.
11. The school will develop a recruitment procedure that scrutinizes and whets all staff who are contracted to work with children.
12. The school will formulate a “minimum standard of protection” requirement for all outsourced vendors, agencies and suppliers, as well as for parents.
13. Every school may adapt this document to suit their particular demographic as long as the components are integrated without loss to the spirit of the content.
14. The policy shall be reviewed annually for 2 years, and thereafter every 3 years.

The principles on which the procedures shall be based are:

- All adults have a responsibility to care for children and to protect them from any kind of abuse as well as to promote their welfare in a positive manner
- In every preventative and / or protective action related to child abuse the best interests of the child is of paramount consideration
- All reasonable action should be taken to protect children from all forms of violence, injury, neglect or exploitation
- The value of the family unit is to be respected but not to the detriment of the well being of the child
- All persons involved in situations where abuse is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect
- If the wrong-doer is another child, then the school will handle the matter with consideration for both the guilty and the victim.
- Advice and assistance should be sought from the Management for ensuring right actions.

At all times the investigation must be conducted by adhering to the principles of confidentiality, natural justice, procedural fairness, and respect and support for the dignity of all involved.

Chairman
Bombay Cambridge Gurukul

Dec 15th 2014



CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The guiding principle of this policy is that the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul schools believe that it is our responsibility to protect and safeguard the children in our care. It is the right of every child to be protected from abuse. We recognize that all instances of abuse, in any form, have serious repercussions for the child, and assert a zero-tolerance approach towards abuse. This policy is written to ensure that the schools take every possible action to prevent abuse, so that no child in school has to experience abuse in any form either from an adult or from another child. The policy also identifies the need for all such incidents to be handled in accordance with laws laid down by statutory and regulatory bodies, at the same time ensuring respect and support for the dignity of all involved.

DEFINITION OF CHILD- Any person below the age of 18 years.

SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- **Staff covered in this policy:**

Those who have access/interact with students daily: Admin, teachers, librarian, computer- lab- AV staff, clerical staff, CARE staff, support and maintenance staff, part-time/leave vacancy teachers, trainee teachers, central department staff, drivers and conductors, canteen staff, SMART board resource staff and other outsourced (in house) staff.

Those who have access to /meet students situationally – trainers, camp organizers, vendors, suppliers, coaches, book distributors, photographers, tour operators, hobby class trainers, costume suppliers, choreographers, examiners and moderators, uniform suppliers, general visitors, parents in school premises, ex-students, any outsourced agencies, external repair and maintenance people.

- **Children covered in this policy:**

Every child regardless of gender, age, ability, culture, religion, race, or language is covered under this policy.

The staff is bound by this policy to show care and responsibility for all enrolled students in the school premises and grounds, school buses, and those taken off-site (tours, camps, picnics, for events and competitions), and all those children who are on our school premises incidentally.

THE POLICY SPECIFIES

1. THE DEFINITION AND TYPES OF ABUSE

2. PART -I

DIRECTIVES FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

- A) WITH THE SCHOOL AND STAFF
- B) WITH ALL OUTSOURCED AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES
- C) PROCEDURE FOR ADMIN TO HANDLE REPORTED ABUSE

3. PART - II

DIRECTIVES FOR SCHOOL STAFF

- A) WITH STUDENT MANAGEMENT
- B) WITH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (for students)
- C) PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING REPORTED ABUSE
- D) VIOLATIONS TO THE CPP

THE DEFINITION AND TYPES OF ABUSE

Definition of Abuse:

Abuse is a deliberate act of ill treatment that can harm or is likely to cause harm to a child's safety, well-being, dignity and/or development. Abuse involves all acts of omission or commission that are harmful to the child's physical, emotional or psychological well-being. Child abuse will have been committed regardless of any justification or reason that may be provided for the ill treatment including discipline, legal sanction, economic necessity, the child's own consent to it, or in the name of cultural and religious practice.

Types of abuse and their manifestation in schools:

Physical Abuse involves the use of violent physical force or physical punishment so as to cause actual or likely physical injury or suffering, e.g. hitting, shaking, pinching, slapping, shoving, banging or punching, tying or locking up, dragging or pulling, tight grips, denying food or water or washroom facilities, force-feeding, forcing a child to stay in uncomfortable or undignified positions, or to take excessive physical exercise; and any punishments that risk the child's well-being. Use of any sort of physical punishments constitutes abuse.

Emotional or psychological abuse includes humiliating and degrading treatment such as use of foul language, name calling, constant criticism, belittling or insulting, persistent shaming, humiliating, ridiculing, ostracizing, and any verbal violence such as shouting and/or threatening. Use of any sort of verbal aggression constitutes abuse.

Sexual Abuse includes any sexually intended action and/or threat to a child, including indecent touching or pointing or exposure, use of sexually explicit language or gesture, showing or drawing pornographic material, taking indecent pictures of children or stripping etc. Any involvement of a child in any sexually intended activity constitutes abuse.

Neglect - It is sometimes called the 'passive' form of abuse in that it relates to the failure to carry out actions that result in significant impairment of the child's health or development including a failure to thrive emotionally and socially. In school, this includes denying for the child's basic needs, including medical attention, not making referrals to other professionals when needed or communicating with parents/caregivers, as well as ignoring or overlooking the social, emotional and educational needs of children. This also refers to inaction when child is exposed to risky/threatening material or situations, and/or leaving them unsupervised.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Name of BCG school (To be written by each of the 5 schools of BCG)

PART I

DIRECTIVES FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

No plan for child safety can be complete without the sincere commitment of the admin. The success of this document depends on the actions and responsiveness of admin to student issues. Being conscious of every response in difficult situations, evaluating the efficacy of these actions, and generating better solutions are an integral part of applying a Child Protection Policy. It is expected that admin will ensure the CPP is always in focus when making decisions regarding staff and students.

A WITH THE SCHOOL AND STAFF:

- Model all the components of the Child Protection Policy (CPP) in letter and spirit. No violations are acceptable at the level of admin.
- Communicate the policy to all levels of staff and ensure comprehension of its implications.
- Organize training to all staff to ensure their awareness about what constitutes abuse, its impact, signs to identify abuse, sensitive ways to dealing with student misbehavior, & skills for handling disclosure.
- Admin shall plan access to staff, students or/and parents to report abuse in any form. The SCC will draw up the protocol for handling reports of abuse, including false ones. Plan for the effective identification of violations, and the addressing of offenders systematically.
- Admin will define ‘unsafe’ material for students and staff that they are prohibited to bring into school.
- The admin shall devise systems that will ensure that the policy stays fresh and active for all staff and is consciously progressing towards being an abuse-free school.
- Formulate minimum standards of protection for all outsiders such as visiting parents, suppliers and vendors, individuals or parties contracted or outsourced to work in the school and/or with the students, guests, visiting teachers etc. with particular attention given to newly recruited staff, newly enrolled students and their parents.
- Lay down clear guidelines for student to student behavior, and guide all children to treat each other with respect and sensitivity. Devise an anti-bullying policy for students.
- Plan a student suggestion box, and guide the student council to ensure awareness among children about ways to stay safe and communicate distress to key adults.
- Identify teaching points in the curriculum related to safety, design the life skills program based on perceived needs of students, & offer awareness programs for students, staff, and parents periodically.
- Any violations of the CPP must be responded to by the admin. Every opportunity to reaffirm the school's commitment to the CPP will have a cascading effect on staff. Once instructions are in place, and training has been instituted, the admin may plan consequences for violations that consider the type of violation, severity and frequency.
- The CARE centre should be adequately equipped to manage cases of child abuse with professional consultation and intervention skills.
- Ensure adequate measures for security in the school, control the movement of visitors and plan identification and validation for all non-staff who are on the school premises for any reason.
- **Recruitment guidelines:**
It is important that all new recruits are carefully whetted before being offered employment. For this the recruitment procedure should consider verification of credentials, inquiry with previous employers, and a well designed interview process. The first 2 years of service should involve

carefully monitoring and observations, and credibility should be established before confirmation.

- The admin will plan and maintain records of incidents related to indiscipline, and deal with them promptly and appropriately, enrolling the CARE center where necessary.
- The admin shall develop an anti-bullying policy that outlines the procedure of managing harmful and disturbing behaviors from time-to-time, in order to ensure that it remains effective and relevant. The policy should identify corrective actions for both the offender and the victim.
- The admin shall specify a student safety policy, a data protection policy, as well as a discipline policy for staff.
- Plan the method of measuring and evaluation of the school environment to track progress and impact of the policy.
- Review the CPP annually, and discuss revision thereafter every 3 years.

B

WITH ALL OUTSOURCED AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES:

MINIMUM STANDARDS OF PROTECTION

The MSP applies to all persons who have access/meet students periodically or situationally, as a result of a contract with the school, or the outsourcing/hiring of their services for a temporary period of time. The policy therefore applies to all persons who students are exposed to, and who are not staff of the school. This includes camp and field trip organizers, VG vendors, suppliers, coaches, book distributors, photographers, tour operators, hobby class trainers, costume suppliers, choreographers, examiners and moderators and visiting faculty, teacher trainees, uniform suppliers, general guests/visitors and prospective parents, applicants, any parents or ex-staff or ex-students in school premises, any outsourced agencies (including CD), external repair and maintenance people, couriers and salesmen.

MSP: (shaded area for display in school for parents)

- Please treat students with respect and sensitivity at all times, ensuring that you not cause offence by word or action.
- Please ensure you are properly and formally attired when around students. You will wear an ID supplied by the security while in school premises.
- Please restrict your movements in the premises, and leave the premises once your work is done.
- Please do not meet or interact with students or take them out of the premises without authorization from an admin.
- Please do not use any inappropriate or abusive language with students or in the presence of students.
- Please do not take photographs/videos in the school premises and/or of students without permission.
- Please do not carry unsafe or potentially dangerous material when in school premises, including sharp or inflammable objects.

In addition:

- You will not share or seek personal data of and from students. Any data regarding school students cannot be shared with anyone else under any circumstances. No student may be contacted directly but through parent or school staff even after the event.
- You will avoid any physical contact with any student for any reason whatsoever. Adequate distance must be maintained when talking to students.
- You will not consume any tobacco/alcohol related products when around the students (in and out of premises). If so found, strict action will be taken.

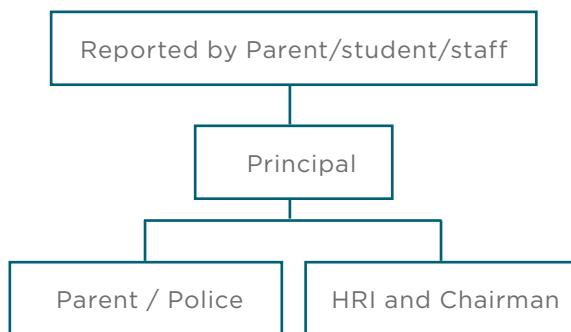
- You will not accept or provide any favors to students, nor engage with them in any commercial transaction outside the school contract.
- In case of an emergency, do not act without permission from the admin (except when the child's best interest supersedes this)
- You will report any observed abuse immediately to the school authorities.

All contracts with external suppliers and agencies should include: Clear instructions regarding contact in case of emergency, plan for medical emergencies, the right of the school to check any content that maybe used, policy regarding cancellation or use of helpers/substitutes, and ensuring students are supervised at all times (till handed over to a parent or teacher).

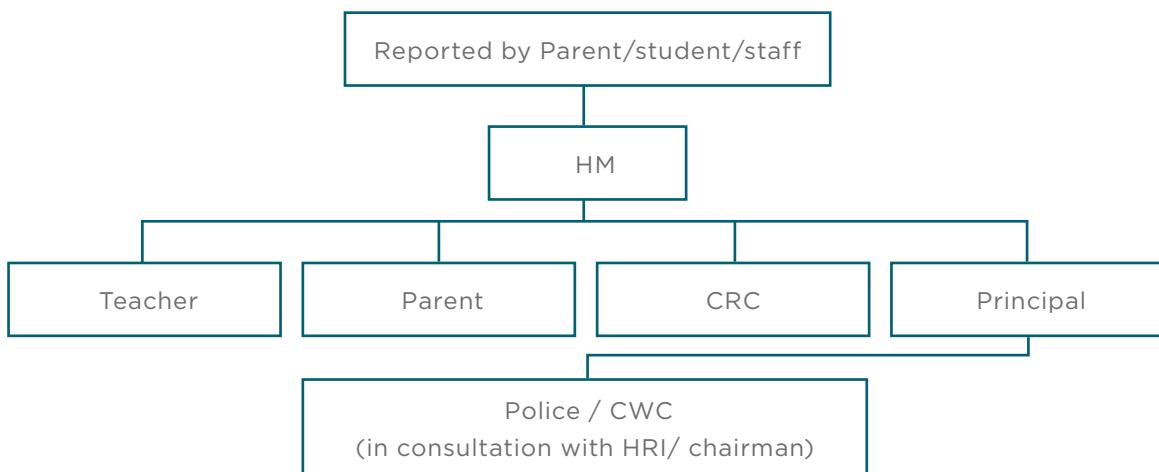
C PROCEDURE FOR ADMIN TO HANDLE REPORTED ABUSE:

All school personnel who in the course of any aspect of their professional duties, have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under the age of 18 has been / is being abused (physically or sexually), are required to comply promptly with the mandatory provisions of the document. A failure to comply with this statutory duty is an offence.

Sexual Abuse: All CSA cases will be dealt by the Principal directly. No delegation is permitted.



Physical /Emotional abuse:



Admin will guide staff for handling reported abuse:

Any staff person if witness to disclosure or to actual abuse should be guided to:

- Follow guidelines for handling disclosure / stop the abuse and safeguard child.
- Report the matter to their Head on the same day, without delay.
- Ensure confidentiality.

Informing Parents / Guardians

It is essential that parents / guardians are involved in handling any cases of detected abuse.

In the event parents cannot be contacted, the safety of the child will be of paramount importance.

In certain circumstances, informing parents should be deferred particularly where there are concerns about physical or sexual abuse involving family members. These include situations when:

- Informing parents/ guardians might place the child at increased risk
- A disclosure by a child involves a parent or other family member
- Informing parents/ guardians might place staff at risk

In such circumstances, the school and Management may plan steps with caution and discretion.

When the abuse involves another child as perpetrator – the school admin will proceed with extreme caution. A discussion is essential before informing parents, and the decision should focus on the best interest of the children involved as well as other children of the school.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Name of BCG school (To be written by each of the 5 schools of BCG)

PART II

DIRECTIVES FOR SCHOOL STAFF

In keeping with the United Nations Convention for Child Rights, the Commission of Child Rights Act 2005, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, and other related legislations, as well as the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul schools Mission and Vision, the Child Protection Policy has been drafted has a formal document applicable to all those in employment of Name of BCG school (To be written by each of the 5 schools of BCG) whether temporary, permanent or on contract.

As educators, it is our responsibility to provide a safe environment for children and services which foster their health, developmental needs, abilities, self respect and dignity. Every staff of this school must commit to the sensitive care & handling of students in the school in keeping with this policy. With this policy, every staff will ensure a learning environment for students which is free from any threat or fear, & will make every effort to reduce & eradicate wherever possible, incidents in which students are made to feel frightened, excluded or humiliated.

A WITH STUDENT MANAGEMENT

Rules for interaction with students in school:

1. Staff shall ensure that their behavior with students is decent and appropriate at all times, befitting the relationship of teacher and student.
2. Staff shall care for all children and focus on correction rather than punishment. No corporal punishment can be used with any children in the school. Any kind of physical violence, however mild it maybe, if intended to coerce, scare or humiliate a student, will be defined as abusive. This includes strict restriction of hitting, slapping, pushing, pinching, ear-pulling, throwing chalk or any other object with intent to hurt, making child kneel, pulling hair, bending finger, tight grips, or similar actions. No staff shall threaten children with the intent to cause fear or punish them physically for any reason. Staff must only use physical intervention as a last resort to protect the safety of children or adults, after appropriate de - escalation strategies have been used or in the event of serious situations where this is not possible.
3. Treat children with respect: No staff will use any form of verbal violence or emotionally hurtful language with students with the intention to cause shame, guilt, or fear. Verbal abuse will also include all forms of sarcasm, misuse of personal information of the child, labeling or discrimination, isolation or comparison or victimization, gossip or comments regarding his/her appearance, race, religion, or family. No staff shall shout, yell, or demonstrate verbally abusive behavior with students or in their presence.
4. Teachers will not show favoritism or partiality, nor will they victimize, persecute or target any student for negative attention. Teachers will not make any derogatory remarks on a student's worksheet or project or to any student for any effort s/he has made towards his/her academic and curricular work or performance in competitive and non-competitive events.
5. No staff shall assign handling of student misbehavior to another student. It is suggested that the word 'monitor' be replaced by the words 'class volunteer'.
6. No staff shall touch any student nor ask a student to touch them for any reason whatsoever. Touching or holding a child may be necessary to offer assistance in case of:
 - a medical emergency or
 - use of washroom (until the age of 4 years), or
 - physically challenged children who may require help, or
 - when a child is under extreme distress.

At all times, the child's permission must be sought. As much as possible above Std.1, the same gender staff will provide assistance (below that, female only).

7. If any child is found to be in distress or injured, any staff near-by must help the child and report the matter to their authorities immediately. Any student requiring first aid must be accompanied by someone for assistance.
8. No staff will be found alone with a student in any part of the school premises. Staff will maintain a physical distance from students that is respectful and appropriate.
9. Cleaning staff will not enter washrooms if there are any students inside.
10. No staff should be found carrying any inappropriate material, or download or have any such material on computers assigned to them, or carry any objectionable material on personal items such as cell phones and pen-drives.
11. No staff will share their personal information such as phone number, on-line information or address with students, and are restricted to acquire the same from students as well, unless permitted by the HM.
12. Staff will not meet any child outside of the school or at his/her house, nor invite any child to his/her place or any outside location in a personal capacity.
13. Staff will maintain strictly professional relationships with parents of the school, and avoid any casual or informal association with them in and out of the school premises.
14. Staff will ensure they report any inappropriate activity inside or outside school (involving students) to the HM without delay.
15. All student misbehavior (on or off site) will be handled with care, consistency and impartiality, and all serious misbehavior which is physical or sexual in nature, must be reported to the HM without exception.
16. Any staff who observes or suspects any potential sign of abuse (injuries, bruises, marks etc) on any child, will report it to the HM. If any staff witnesses any sort of abuse of a child, they will do all they can to stop it at once.

Rules for interaction with students off-site (outside school):

1. A suitable adult/teacher-student ratio should be planned and implemented for all off-site activity.
2. Staff will not leave students unaccompanied any time - to any places such as washroom, shops, food stalls - in any place except their assigned rooms.
3. Staff will not assign their students to the care of any stranger or any person who is not school staff.
4. Staff will ensure that students are not provided any unsafe material for consumption, nor provided any unsafe activity during their outing.
5. Staff should conduct a head-count every 2 hours.
6. Off-site, staff is on duty 24X7, and must ensure supervision of students throughout.
7. Staff must carry with them a list of all the children in their supervision with their contact numbers. If children are carrying a phone, the group leader must have those numbers as well.
8. Staff must carry with them a list of those children with medical concerns and emergency instructions.
9. Staff in-charge must report daily to the HM about their status, and of any concerns that have come about. Any medical emergency or major conflict must be communicated to the Principal immediately.
10. If admin is inaccessible, the teacher in charge shall consult all present teachers, and decide on the basis of consensus in the best interest of the child.
11. Staff must ensure they don't get informal or casual in their behavior with students during such outings.

12. Staff will observe all the rules that apply to students in the presence of students.
13. Staff should deal professionally with all unknown and outside people, and ensure they don't compromise the safety of the students by their own behavior.
14. Staff will not take pictures of students and upload or share them on-line, even unintentionally.
Staff will not allow outsiders to take pictures of students either.
15. Till students are picked up by their parents, the teacher will stay in charge of her students and will not leave them alone or unattended. Staff will not drop out mid-way to depart for home till all students have been handed over to their parents.

Rules for student information and privacy:

1. Staff will not interact with current students on any social media.
2. Staff will not carry or share any student information with anyone outside of the school (including the media) without proper authorization.
3. Staff will not upload any pictures of students on their personal on-line sites or retain on cell phones.
4. Staff will ensure respect and confidentiality for student information, and refrain from any casual sharing of information except with real cause and to those relevant.
5. No networking groups can be created with students or parents without the permission of the Principal.
6. Any photographs on the school sites or publications must be authorized by the Principal.
7. Staff will not collect any information about students except as directed by the HM.
8. For any sample document, care should be taken to black-out the child's name or any information that may reveal his/her identity.
9. If any unsafe material is confiscated from students, staff will immediately deposit said material with the HM.
10. If staff has any information about a student that puts him/her or others in danger or at-risk; the staff will immediately inform the HM of such information.

B WITH SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT (for students)

The staff will guide students towards socially responsible and sensitive behaviors with each other when in school. Such behavior may include any instances of bullying, aggression, coercion, ostracizing, shaming or harassment; or it may involve the carrying of material that is inappropriate or dangerous. We will strive to reduce and eradicate wherever possible, incidents in which students are made to feel frightened, excluded or humiliated.

All staff are required to bring to student awareness that creating a warm and safe school environment is the responsibility of all students. If every student were to be responsible for his/her own behavior, this can be smoothly achieved. The following rules can help create an inclusive and supportive climate for all students in the school:

- Students are expected to use polite and decent language at all times. Any use of offensive language, teasing and name calling is unacceptable.
- Students must help other students, and accept the right of another student to say 'No'. Any bullying, harassment, threats or intimidation to other students will not be accepted.
- Students will treat all students with respect, and awareness of their right to privacy. No student action should lead to outraging the modesty of another or cause humiliation.
- Students will use communication and cooperation to manage differences and refrain from resorting to verbal or physical aggression or violence of any kind.

- Students will operate social networking media responsibly so that it does not malign, abuse or embarrass anyone else.
- Students will ensure that they do not isolate, ostracize, or victimize any other student for any reason.
- Students will report all unsafe behaviors and any form of student distress to teachers immediately.

Role of staff with the Anti-Bullying Policy: To ensure the safety of children from bullying, every member of the school will contribute towards a culture of respect, tolerance and inclusion everywhere in the school premises and off-site when on duty.

- The staff will actively support the school and promote a respectful and peaceful environment in the premises and classrooms through all means available.
- Staff will ensure that they promote healthy strategies for conflict resolution amongst students, and ensure a healthy social climate in the classrooms.
- Advocacy will aim at creating awareness amongst all students, staff, and parents of the school about the impact and repercussions of unsafe behaviors.
- No staff shall allow, tolerate, condone or trivialize bullying behaviors. We must respond effectively to all instances of bullying that are reported to us.
- Staff will provide support to students who have been bullied, and use effective behavior management strategies to prevent recurrence of this act.
- Staff will ensure that whistle-blowers (those who report or inform) are protected.
- All staff will continually upgrade their skills with managing student aggression, and take responsibility for the effective management of all students in their care.
- The student council will be enrolled to spread awareness in the student body, and provide access to student for reporting abusive behavior.

All staff will ensure that students can access them when in need, and that they (staff) will make every effort to understand and appropriately handle the issue brought to them. Staff will ensure they are fair in their decisions and are able to plan consequences without violating child rights. Every staff person in the school will help students to solve problems and manage their disputes amicably. Matters of importance must be reported to the Principal without delay.

C PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING REPORTED ABUSE:

All school personnel who in the course of any aspect of their professional duties, have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child under the age of 18 has been / is being abused (physically or sexually), are required to comply promptly with the mandatory provisions of this document. A failure to comply with this statutory duty is an offence.

Any staff that has:

- committed any violation of the Child Protection Policy, or
- has witnessed any other staff violating this policy, or
- if during the course of conversation with student, parent or any vendor has detected an instance of abuse, or has been reported about the same, will immediately report the matter to the Head of their section.

Any staff person if witness to actual abuse will:

- Stop the abuse and safeguard child.

- Report the matter to their Head on the same day, without delay.
- Ensure confidentiality.

D VIOLATIONS TO THE CPP:

Both, acts of omission and commission, should be reported to admin immediately. Any violations of the Child Protection Policy will warrant immediate action for the staff concerned. The actions may include:

- Reassignment of duty
- Submission of Apology letter
- Entry in CR/service book
- Memo
- Withholding of increment
- Suspension
- Termination
- Report to police

Let's join hands to create a safe and sensitive school environment which will ensure the best possible psychological advantage to our students and to children everywhere.



CREDITS

The Child Protection Policy has been developed for the Bombay Cambridge Schools in December 2014 by the Principals and Administrators of the following schools:

- Bombay Cambridge International School, Andheri West
- Bombay Cambridge International School, Andheri East
- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan International School, Malad
- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan International School, Borivali
- Veer Bhagat Singh International School, Malad
- Dept of HRD and Center for Educational Design and Publishing

The policy was guided and formalized by the Chief Educational Officer, Ms. Achama Mathew, and the Head-HRD, Ms. Upasana Saraf.

With the enforcement of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act of 2012, the handling of children with care and sensitivity was nationally ratified, providing the much needed support to the beliefs and student sensitive endeavors of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul. By developing a formal document for Child Protection and defining its application, the Bombay Cambridge schools re-affirm their commitment to providing student services which foster their health, developmental needs, abilities, self respect and dignity.

The creation of the policy is a conscious goal towards developing a student sensitive and responsible school environment, and the focus of the implementation plan has been to involve all stake-holders to subscribe to it in letter and spirit.

The document has been created using the following references:

1. GOVERNMENT OF INDIA NATIONAL POLICY FOR CHILDREN, 1974
2. NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR CHILDREN 1992
Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development 1985
3. THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 1989 (UNCRC)
(Ratified by India on 11th December 1992)
4. THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM MENTAL AND PHYSICAL VIOLENCE
The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000
5. COMMISSION FOR PROTECTION OF CHILD RIGHTS ACT, 2005
The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), 2007
6. THE PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL OFFENCES ACT 2012

The first draft of the document will be applied for a period of 2 years from June 2015 to May 2017, as a means of preparing and establishing a system that is ready for implementation.

The preparation involved meetings with teachers to invite participation in the practical application of the document. Awareness sessions covering the entire teaching and non-teaching staff as well as the entire parent body of the 5 schools were conducted in this period.

After a review in August 2016, the final document as it appears has been ratified by the Core Committee of the Bombay Cambridge Gurukul schools, and is formally in effect to all members of the organization from June 2017.

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