

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

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2763
TO BE ANSWERED ON 22.12.2021

Mental health as part of school curriculum

2763 Dr. Amar Patnaik:

Will the Minister of *Education* be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government has studied the deteriorating mental health condition of young people in India post the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government will take any steps to address rising mental health concerns due to COVID-19 and the stigma around mental health in young children as part of school curriculum;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether Government intends to increase budgetary allocation for mental health programmes in educational institutions; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
(DR. SUBHAS SARKAR)

(a) to (d) The Ministry of Education has undertaken a proactive initiative, named, '**Manodarpan**', covering a wide range of activities to provide psychosocial support to students, teachers and families for Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing during the COVID outbreak and beyond. A Working Group, having experts from the fields of education, mental health and psychosocial issues as its members, has been set up to monitor and promote the mental health issues and concerns of students and to facilitate providing of support to address the mental health and psychosocial aspects during and after COVID-19, through counselling services, online resources and helpline.

The following components are included in the 'Manodarpan' initiative:

- a. **Advisory Guidelines** for students, teachers and faculty of School systems and Universities along with families.
- b. **Web page on Ministry of Education website** (URL: <http://manodharpan.education.gov.in>) carrying advisory, practical tips, posters, videos, do's and don'ts for psychosocial support, FAQs and online query system.
- c. **National level database and directory of counsellors** at School and University levels.
- d. **National Toll-free Helpline (8448440632)** for a country wide outreach to students from school, universities and colleges.
- e. **Handbook on Psychosocial Support: Enriching Life skills and Wellbeing of Students.**
- f. **Webinars, audio-visual resources including videos, posters, flyers, comics, and short films with focus on convergence of resources from other Ministries/Departments on** physical and creative well-being which are essential parts of mental well-being.

National Toll-free Helpline (8448440632) for a country-wide outreach to students from schools, colleges and universities to provide them tele-counselling to address their mental health and psychosocial issues during and after the COVID-19 situation has been set up. The National Toll-free helpline has been functional since 21st July, 2020. Tele-counselling has so far been provided to more than 18600 callers since the launch of the toll-free helpline. Regular Webinars are organized under the aegis of Manodharpan on mental health and wellbeing of children

The National Council of Educational Research and Training has started 'NCERT Counseling Services for School Children' in April, 2020 to help school students across the country share their concerns. This service is provided free of charge by about 270 counsellors across different regions of the country. Live interactive sessions on 'SAHYOG: Guidance for Mental Wellbeing of Children' are telecast on 12 PM eVidya DTH-TV channels for classes 1 to 12. To handle stress and anxiety recorded videos on Yoga are telecast through 12 DTH TV channels with effect from 1st September, 2020 from Classes 1 to 12 and also digital resources are made available in digital platforms, i.e., DIKSHA.

The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) arranged pre-exam and post-result toll-free tele-counselling with the help of trained counsellors and principals in India and in other countries such as Japan, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Nepal and Kuwait. CBSE has also brought out a manual on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing during covid. Toll-Free Tele Helpline on CORONA VIRUS safeguards was set up by CBSE for students as well as general public and provided guidance on preventive care and counselled them about their fears and concerns.

Under the aegis of the School Health Programme under Ayushman Bharat, the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has developed a comprehensive package titled “Training and Resource Material: Health and Wellness of School-going Children. A specific module has been included on “Emotional Well-being and Mental Health”, which has activities related to the mental health and well-being of students and teachers.

(e) & (f) The Central Government releases funds to States and Union Territories (UTs) in lump sum towards the Central share under the Samagra Shiksha and no separate interventions-wise releases are made. University Grants Commission (UGC) is also releasing the grant to Central Universities in a form of Block Grant. Central Universities can incur the expenditure for mental health programme under recurring head.
