

Student Knowledge Initiative (SKI)

26 November, 2009

Vasant Valley School, New Delhi

Introduction

The Student Knowledge Initiative (SKI) is a national-level initiative designed to recognise and celebrate adolescents' and young people's rights and understanding about HIV and sexual and reproductive health in the context of their lives and realities. The initiative led by UNAIDS, Vasant Valley School and the Center for Human Progress (CHP) will be rolled out in New Delhi in 2010.

In its first phase the initiative will bring together several students (estimated 50-plus) in the age ranges of 14-18 from across a variety of schools in Delhi (e.g., public, private, government) spanning the National Capital Region (NCR) to share voices and engage as peer leaders with HIV, health and rights issues. In the second phase (in 2011), SKI will be rolled out to other cities in India. Finally, over the next few years, it is expected that SKI will be rolled out to all regions of the country.



The poster features silhouettes of people holding hands, with the letters 'SKI' in large, stylized font. Below the silhouettes, the text reads: 'Student Knowledge Initiative'. A red-bordered box contains the text: 'The Student Knowledge Initiative (SKI) celebrates adolescents' and young people's rights and understanding about HIV and sexual and reproductive health.' The event details are: '26 November, 2009', 'Vasant Valley School Sector C, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi - 110 070'. The poster is divided into two columns for Class 8 and Class 9 activities. A silhouette of a person sitting at a desk is at the bottom center. Logos for UNAIDS, CHP, and Vasant Valley School are at the top left. The background has decorative floral patterns in purple and orange.

CLASS 8

12:00 - 12:30: TALK AIDS: An interactive session on HIV/AIDS and the stigma of MENTAL HEALTH with Parmeet Singh Chipra – Peer Educator and Trainer - CHP

12:30 - 1:20: ARTS FOR AIDS: Poster making on HIV/AIDS and YOUTH, DRUGS the DESTROYER and MY LIFE MY CHOICE

CLASS 9

12:00 - 12:30 – EXPRESSIONS: Creative sharing of ideas on HIV/AIDS, SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS

12:30 - 1:20: LEARNING FOR LIFE: Interactive session on ADOLESCENT REPRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH AND RIGHTS, LIFE SKILLS AND PEER-TO-PEER DIALOGUE with Dr. Ash Pachauri, Director – CHP

Designed By Haroon Khan

SKI for World AIDS Day

To mark the launch of SKI, UNAIDS, Vasant Valley School and CHP conducted an HIV, human rights and sexual and reproductive health related knowledge sharing event on 26 November, 2009 at Vasant Valley School, New Delhi. The timing of SKI's launch was



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symbolic as it commemorated World AIDS Day (WAD) and celebrated this year's WAD theme of my "right to health".

The SKI Event

The SKI event at Vasant Valley School was attended by approximately 90 students each from class 8 and 9 and several Vasant Valley School staff members. The average age range of students from class 8 and 9 is 12-14 years.

The event focused on building awareness, promoting dialogue and sharing knowledge about adolescents' issues related to HIV, sexual and reproductive health and rights. The initiative focused on use of various creative forms of expression to share, dialogue and network.

Class 8

Students of class 8 dialogued and discussed HIV, health and rights issues related to adolescents. Following an initial discussion, they were asked to select one of 3 themes: "HIV/AIDS and Youth"; "Drugs the Destroyer" or "My Life, My Choice" as part of a poster making exercise. Students developed posters highlighting critical adolescent issues and messages related to their choice of theme. Since some students could not finish their posters before the end of the session, they were asked to go back home and complete their posters. Vasant Valley School will exhibit the posters developed by students at a World AIDS Day event. Each student will have a chance to dialogue about the issues and messages they have highlighted in their posters.



Class 9

Students of class 9 were asked to briefly explore key issues related to HIV, health and rights and adolescents. Following a dialogue, students were asked to break into five groups. Each group was given the task of identifying one *real* "health, rights and choice" issue connected with the lives of adolescents. Each group was asked to choose one creative form of





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expression (e.g., music, dance, drama, painting) to share their story. Groups were given 15 minutes to prepare their stories. The format of presentation involved introducing the topic (1 minute), presenting the story (3 minutes) and sharing key issues and messages (1 minute).

A number of extremely powerful and creative stories emerged. Each of the five groups came up with unique issues, including 1) the rights of children/child labor and trafficking (creative format: poem); 2) rights of sexual minorities (focus on stigma and legal issues) (creative format: theatre and dialogue); 3) HIV risk and vulnerabilities of injecting drug users (creative format: theatre/role play); 4) peer pressure and smoking (including issues of stigma and health risks) (creative format: 3-scene role play); and 5) peer pressure and alcohol (and HIV-related risks) (theatre and dialogue).

Students were asked to return to the larger group and share their experiences and feedback from the exercise. They were given a few minutes to discuss the issues raised during presentations. Discussions around substance abuse, human rights and the role of peer pressure were highlighted. Students shared the importance of using creative expression to exchange messages. They also underscored the need to reach other students and share voices with important stakeholders to promote sustainable change.

Conclusion

Over the next few months, UNAIDS, Vasant Valley School and CHP will implement SKI across the NCR region. Through SKI, students will have a chance to come together and work with several peers in the process of identifying real stories pertinent to adolescent health, sexuality and rights. They will adopt various communication and documentation tools to capture issues and real stories of challenge and triumph. These stories (which will use various forms of expression, e.g., music, digital stories, films, photography, art, dance, drama) will find resonance across several, wide-ranging students, young people and groups of stakeholders. Ultimately, as culmination of the first year/phase of SKI, the work of students will be showcased at a festival (to be held in New Delhi in November/December 2010), which will be conducted by students themselves. The event will consolidate SKI's activities and disseminate knowledge as well as support student networking and advocacy with key stakeholders around relevant issues.