

Evaluation of Adolescent Education Program (AEP) in Chandigarh initiated by Chandigarh State AIDS Control Society (CSACS)”



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- Customized assignments undertaken based on client's needs to inform policy & program initiatives

Capacity
Development



- Facilitate skill transfer using innovative & participatory methods

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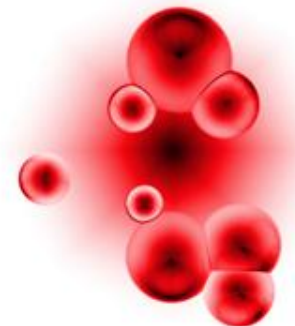
Rural
Development

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Introduction

Adolescent Education Program

- The Adolescent Education Program was initiated in Chandigarh in 2009-10.
- In 2013 – 14, 119 schools are implementing this program.
- The aim of the program is bring about a transformative change in the behavior of the youth leading to lower HIV prevalence, lower substance abuse, change in behavior and practices related to sexual health and dealing with cases of sexual exploitation.



The Adolescence Education Program (2005)

aims to:

- Reinforce/support development of behaviors that will empower adolescents to make healthy choices.
- Provide opportunities for the reinforcement of existing positive behavior and strengthening life skills that enable young people to cope and protect themselves from risky situations they encounter in their lives

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the implementation of AEPs across Chandigarh and understand the influence AEPs have had on the adolescents in Chandigarh.

Objectives of the study

- Assess the knowledge level about HIV/AIDS and life skills and perception about AEP among the students.
- Evaluate the implementation of AEP by schools.
- Evaluate the processes under the program and documentation

Methodology

Study Universe : Study universe is 119 program schools where AEP has been implemented in the Chandigarh.

Sample Size and Design :

- From the sampling framework of 119 schools, randomly 30 schools were identified. From these 30 schools, randomly 7 students who have participated in the AEP were surveyed using the semi-structured questionnaires.. So total of 210 students were surveyed.
- From the sample schools, 30 IDIs were conducted with the Institution heads and teachers who are involved in AEP to capture their perception and processes / methodology followed in implementing the program. One IDI was conducted from each of the 30 sample schools

Methodology contd....

Sampling method

For **qualitative survey** : Two stage sampling design is used

- The sample respondents in the study area were selected in a two stage sampling design: the first stage involve random selection of Primary Sampling Units (PSUs), i.e. 119 program schools where AEP has been implemented in the Chandigarh; the second stage involved the random selection of students within each PSU.
- In the study area, the list of program intervention school served as the sampling frame.
- In addition for, in-depth interviews (IDIs) were conducted with the teachers.

Methodology contd....

Sampling Tool:

- The **semi structured questionnaire** for the students of class IX and XI: To evaluate the knowledge level about HIV/AIDS and life-skills and perception about AEP among the students
- **In depth Interviews (IDIs)**: IDIs were conducted with the In charge of program in selected educational institution, involved in Adolescent Education program. The semi structured questionnaire was used to conduct the IDIs

Results

Background Characteristics

- Due to the feasibility of implementing the program given the academic calendar, the program largely concentrates on students in Class IX and XI. Therefore, the sample of respondents chosen in the schools was concentrated on Class IX & Class XI students.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents in terms of class

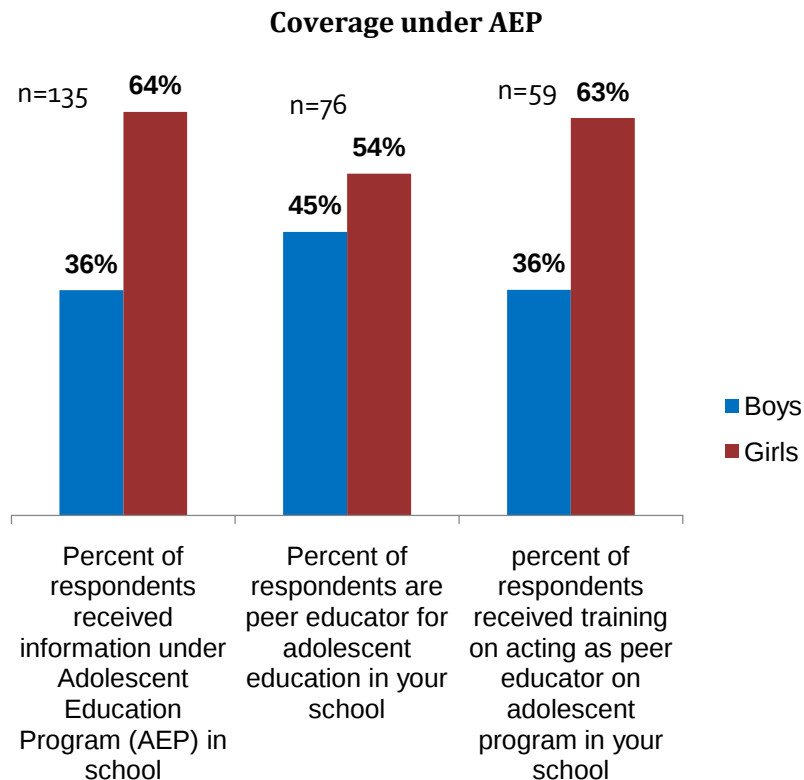
Class of Respondents	Total	Boys	Girls
Class IX	87%	49%	51%
Class XI	13%	48%	52%

Table 7: Distribution of respondents in terms of age

Age of Respondents	Total	Boys	Girls
13 Years	6%	62%	38%
14 Years	41%	88%	12%
15 Years	31%	53%	47%
16 Years	12%	65%	35%
17 Years	9%	61%	39%
Above 17 Years	-	-	100%

Section- I. Knowledge and Perceptions of School Students on HIV /AIDS, Life skill issues and Drug Abuse

Coverage under AEP



In Chandigarh, AEP has been implemented since 2009. The survey revealed that the program has a higher outreach among girls in the target group:

- 64% of girls and 36% of boys have received information under the AEP program at school
- 54% of girls and 45% of boys are peer educators for adolescent education in their school
- 63% of girls and 36% of boys have received training on being a peer educator at school

Results

Understanding Adolescence

With the onset of puberty, the reproductive and sexual health needs of an adolescent become relevant when considering their well-being. The program aims to impart accurate scientific knowledge and pertinent life skills to the adolescents so that a health enabling environment can be created for the students.

Survey findings reveal that knowledge levels regarding the changes experienced at the onset of adolescence are mixed:

- More than 60% of the students are aware that puberty results in the growth of hair on private parts, an increase in height and weight, the appearance of acne, menstruation and the development of breasts.
- In government schools both in urban and rural areas, only 25% of the boys were aware that menstruation occurs in women at the onset of puberty. However in the private schools in urban areas 63% of the boys were aware of the same.
- Low awareness among the students regarding the change in voice, the increase in the size of genitals, widening of chest and shoulders and ejaculation during sleep.

Results

Knowledge levels on the sexual reproduction process were staggered:

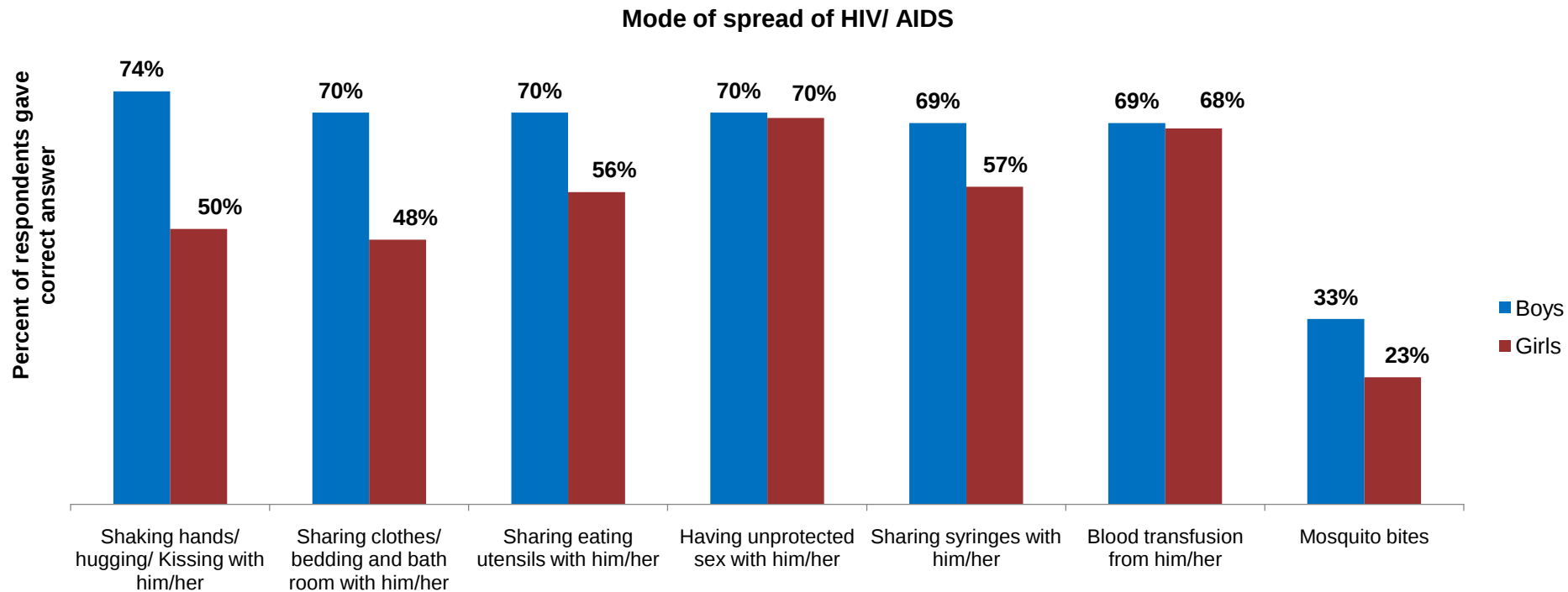
- 68% of the students were aware of the ways to get pregnant
- 58% were aware of the signals by which one could suspect pregnancy.
- Only 44% of the students were aware of the process by which the sex of the child is determined.
- However awareness levels among the private schools were much higher among girls.
- More than 70% of girls across government and private schooling were aware when they could suspect pregnancy.
- However the awareness levels among girls on how one can pregnant were lower.

Results

The low awareness level regarding their reproductive and sexual health can be linked to the limited information that adolescents have access to. In co-educational institutions, dissemination of information regarding sexual health was challenging.

In addition, the quality of teacher training on reproductive and sexual health has a direct link to the quality of information imparted to the students.

Knowledge about mode of spread of HIV/AIDS



Results

Students were surveyed to understand their sources of information regarding HIV/AIDS.

- The primary source of information among students is via the Newspaper/TV/Radio (51%). The AEP program presumably has the following outreach among the students:
- 45% of students receive information from the teachers at schools
- 29% of students receive information from the peer educator at school as opposed to 18% from their friends/relatives.
- 4% of students restricted to students studying in government schools receive information from the telephone helpline run by CSACS.
- Private schools were unaware or hadn't received any information from the telephone helpline services.
- It was found that girls are more likely to receive information from peer educators at schools, while boys were more likely to gather information from the internet.

Results

- Students were also surveyed to understand the level of stigma prevalent in their social interactions with PLHAs. About 3/4th students (75%-89%) are willing to interact with PLHA. However, only 58% said that they will share food with PLHAs. Level of interactions is highest among girls studying at private school on an average.
- Knowledge levels regarding HIV testing facilities are low. Only 59% of the sample was aware of testing facilities available at the Govt. Multispecialty Hospital in Sector 16 and 74% were aware of testing facilities at PGI.

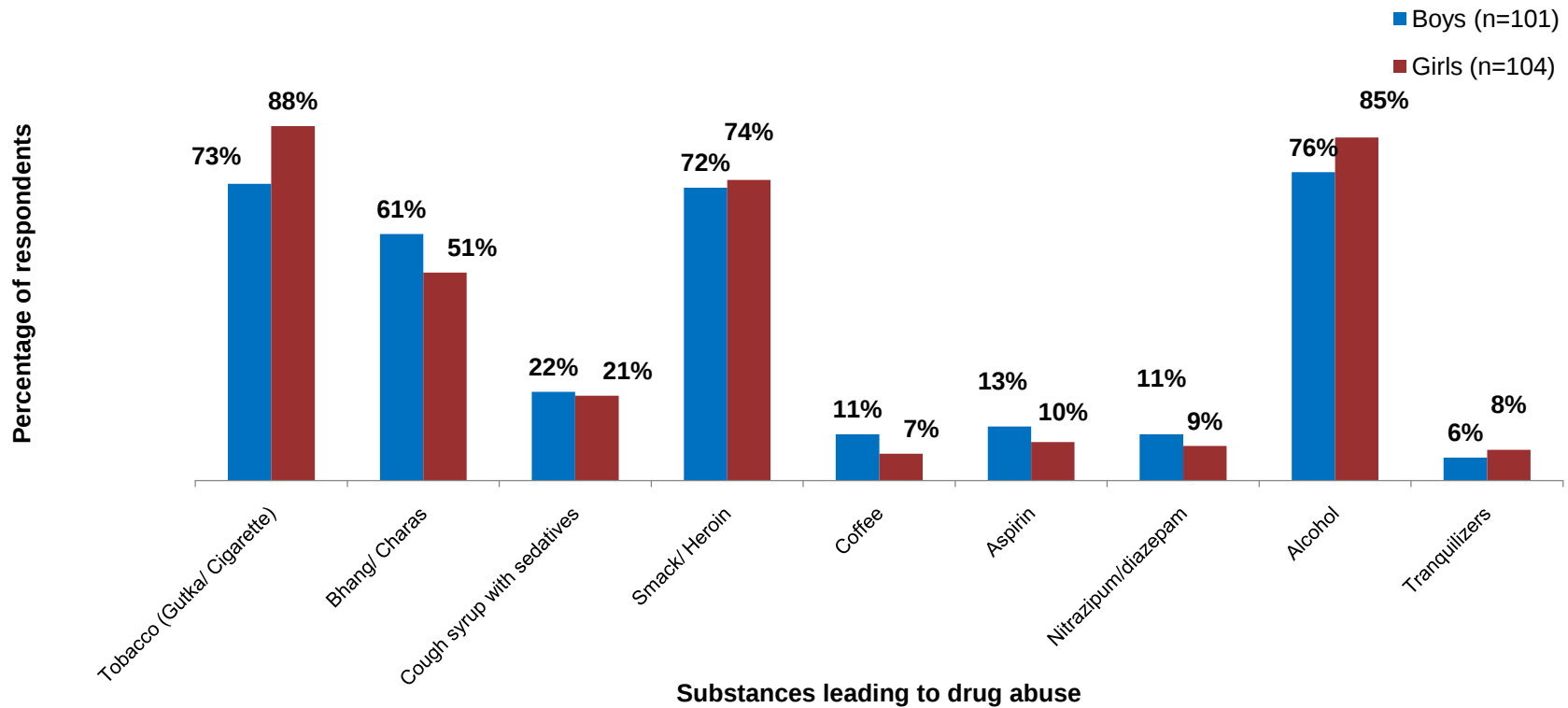
Drug Abuse

The Adolescent Education Program has a component on substance abuse that covers the mental health concerns and the situations in which adolescents are driven to substance (drug) abuse. The component is designed to inform adolescents on what constitutes substance abuse, what are the commonly abused substances (drugs), what are the consequences of substance abuse, the preventive measures that can be taken, treatment facilities and the rehabilitation of drug addicts among others.

Survey findings reveal that students are aware that intake of tobacco, alcohol and heroin are considered drug abuse respectively.

- Less than 20% of the students considered intake of coffee, aspirin, tranquilizers, cough syrup with sedatives, and diazepam as substance abuse.
- On an average, in the private schools, boys had a higher level of knowledge regarding substance abuse than the girls.
- Students had lower awareness levels regarding the symptoms of drug addiction. Less than 40% of the students were aware that drug addiction results in an increase in appetite and in the slurring of speech.

Results



Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

- The Adolescent Education Program is disseminated through a host of facilitators, and to a large extent the success of the program rests on their capability.
- Teachers are trained with the contents to enhance their capacity and capability in delivering the contents keeping in mind the various stakeholders.
- The program follows a cascade training module.
- Training is conducted for master trainers who in turn train the nodal teachers, peer educators and other functionaries.

Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

Through this survey, the AEP in charges in each of the 30 schools in the sample were interviewed to understand the implementation process of the program and to identify areas for strengthening. Not all the AEP in charges are trained to be nodal teachers yet. Survey findings revealed that:

- The AEP in charge in 93% of the cases was a female
- 70% of the AEP in charges had a post-graduation degree
- 60% of the AEP in charges had more than ten years of teaching experience

Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

The teachers are the key actors and their capability is a necessary condition for the success of the program. Keeping in mind the components of the program, the training structure is designed as follows.

- Training of master trainers who are responsible for training nodal teachers, peer educators and other functionaries
- Intensive training of teachers, peer educators and other functionaries to empower them in delivering the AEP module with ease and competence

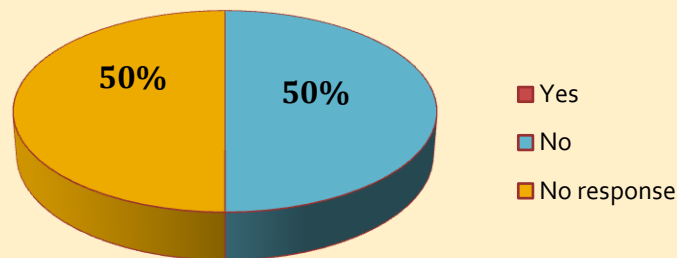
A five-Day Training Program for nodal teachers is prescribed. The Teacher's work book is to be used as a core material for the training program. The starting point of the training program is a needs assessment of the trainees to identify areas which need concerted focus. As part of the monitoring and evaluation process of the training program, a pre test and a post test is prescribed to document the change in knowledge level, perception and behaviors of the teachers.

Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

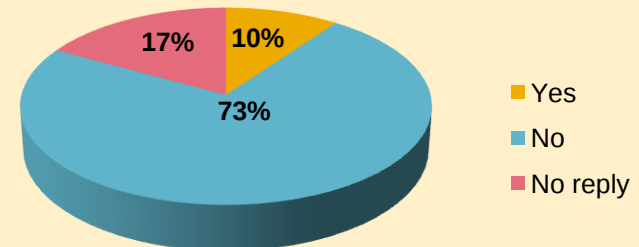
Survey findings reveal that

- a pre-test wasn't administered to at least 50% of the respondents.
- 10% of the nodal teachers trained have received fresher training.

Pre test-Post test done for all the training / orientation programme



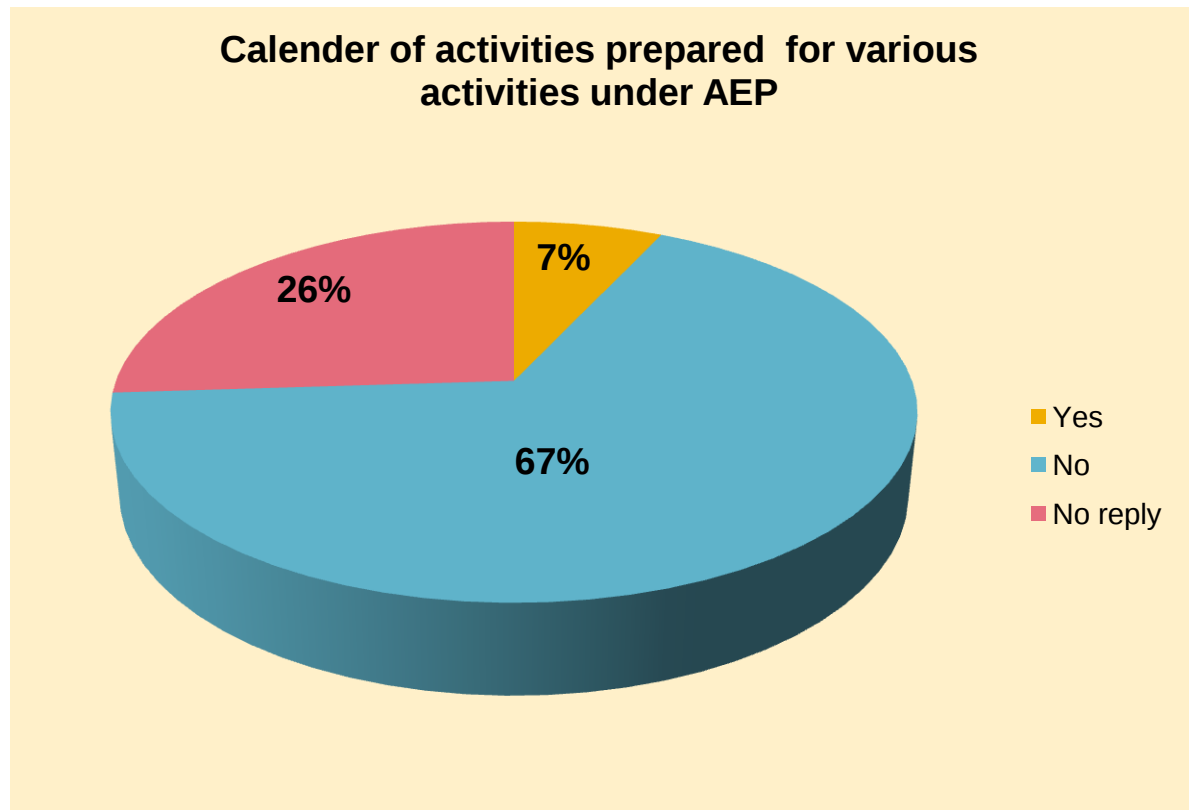
Any Refresher training provided after initial training to nodal teacher



AEP Integration with Curriculum

Adolescent education currently is not a curricular activity. Given the non – institutionalized implementation of AEP, special efforts are required on part of the teachers to institute it at the school level.

As per the guidelines of the program, 16 teaching hours need to be dedicated to the program. Survey findings reveal that only 7% of the schools have prepared an activity calendar for the programme, while 67% have not.



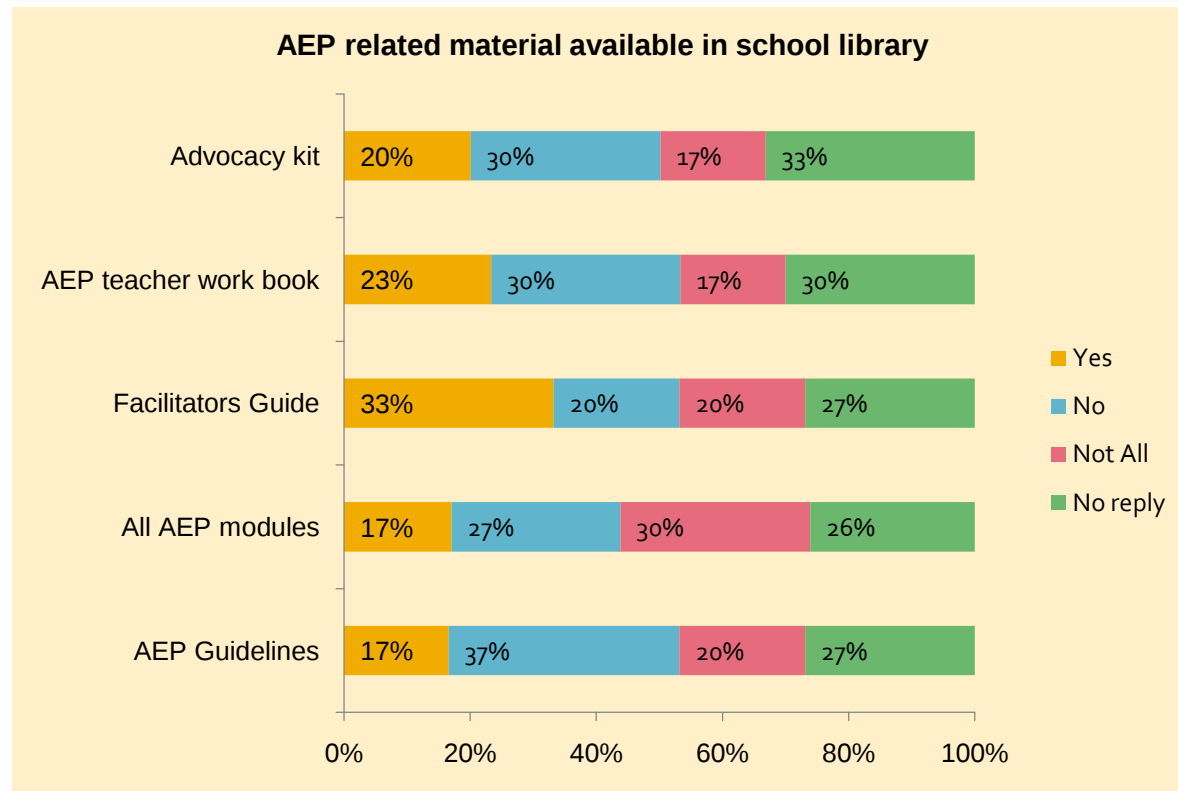
Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

- In the absence of an activity calendar, inferences can be made regarding the degree of functionality of the programme. In a school timetables are essential in the planning teaching hours. In the absence of a calendar of activity an assumption can be made that AEP modules have not been included in the time table of the school.
- For the successful implementation of the program there is a need for schools to ensure dedicated time and efforts towards the modules of the AEP. Apart from training teachers, it is necessary that the school timetable allots time towards the programme.

AEP related material available in school library

As part of the Adolescent Education Program, various materials have been developed for different stakeholders with the aim of standardizing the quality of training and information disseminated. These include the advocacy kit, the AEP teacher work book, the Facilitators Guide, all AEP modules, and AEP guidelines.

Survey findings reveal that less than 1/3rd of the schools have access to the above AEP material. Given that sensitization of teachers and students is essential towards the success of the programme, there is a need to increase the availability of information.



AEP Outreach

Survey findings reveal that

- 81% of students in Class IX and 57% of the students in Class XI participated in AEP programmes in the last academic session
- Of the 12 themes covered under the AEP programme, sessions on HIV/AIDS have been implemented the least.
- Sessions on drug abuse have been implemented the most. These include sessions on prevention and consequences.

Particulars	Class IX	Class XI
Number of student enrolled	1041	1108
Number of student participated	840 (81%)	627 (57%)

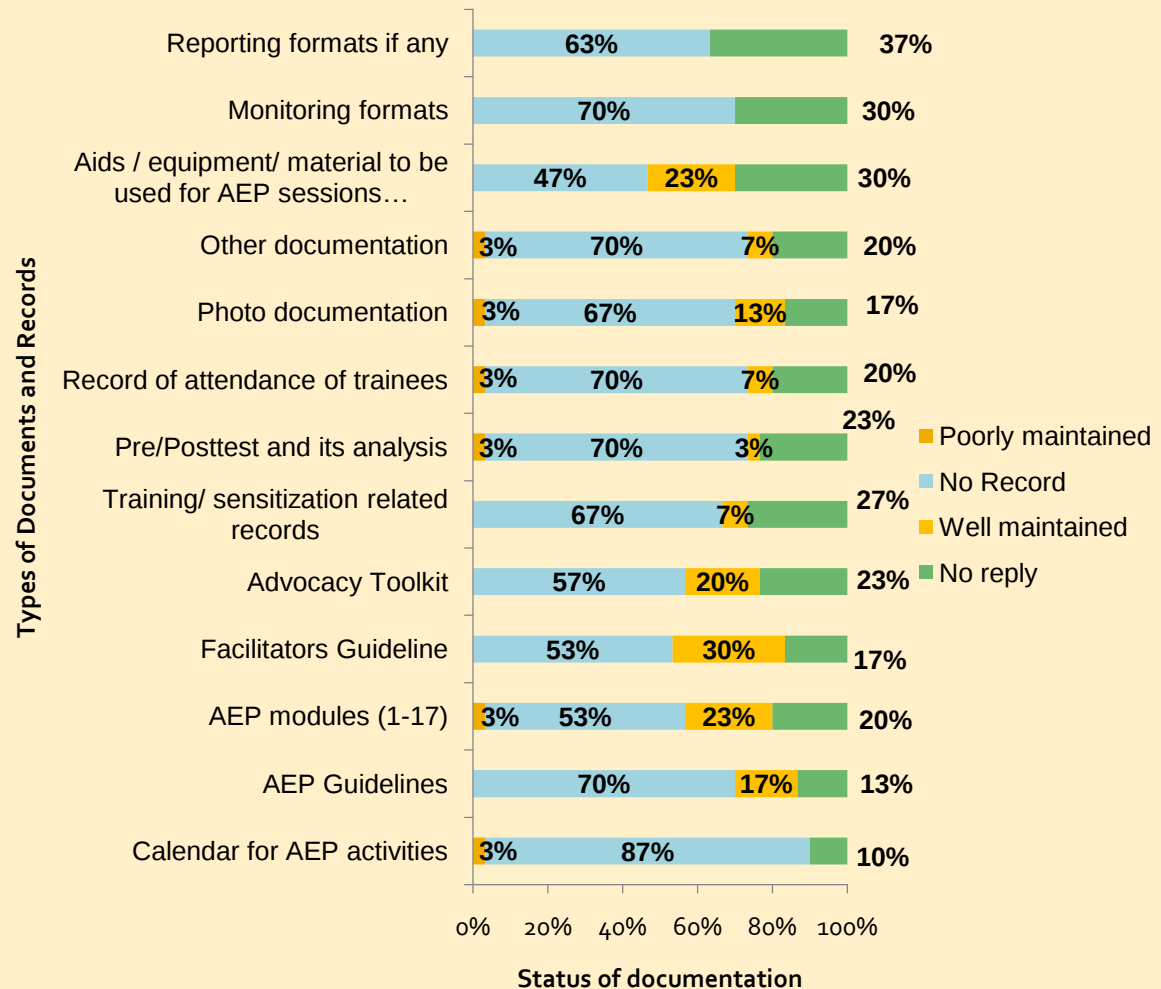
Section II- AEP Process Implementation and Documentation

Given the data above, a resistance may be perceived on part of the teachers in conducting trainings related to HIV or alternatively the need may not be felt. The non-mandatory nature of the program provides the schools with the flexibility to conduct the program at a frequency as they see fit.

The sessions are administered largely by teachers of the same school. This may prove to be a challenge in successful implementation – given the sensitive nature of the topics, absence of a confidential atmosphere may deter students from engaging in the programme. Some schools in efforts to create a confidential environment have instituted drop boxes. Depending on the questions received, teachers conduct formal lectures

Documentation of AEP

Survey findings reveal that the available documentation on AEP activities is largely weak. More than 50% of the schools do not have any records to the different monitoring formats and documentation. Less than 25% of the schools have access to some monitoring formats that are well maintained.



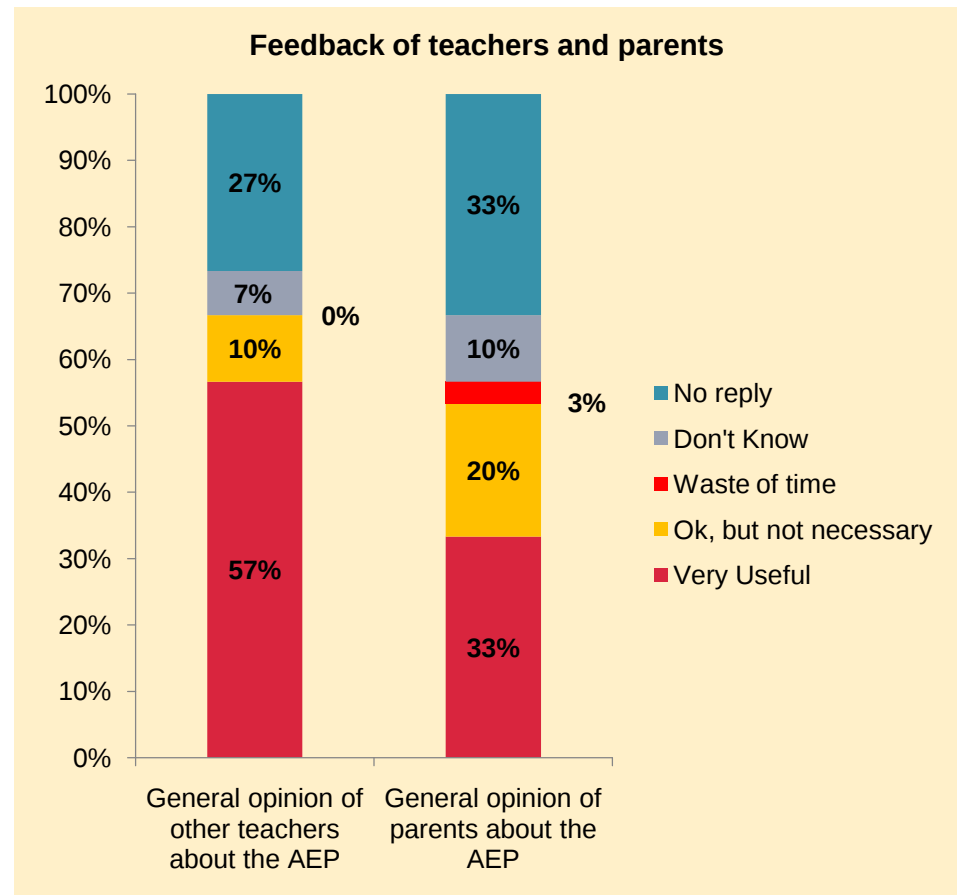
Perception regarding AEP

Prior to AEP, a number of adolescent related programmes were criticized for the reproductive and sexual health issues that they addressed.

Implementation of programmes such as AEP hinge on the buy – in they receive from stakeholders.

Survey findings reveal that:

- 57% of teachers and 33% of parents find the program to be very useful
- 10% of teachers and 20% of parents to be comfortable with the program but do not consider it necessary
- Only 3% of parents consider this program to be a 'waste of time'



Observations

Based on in-depth interviews conducted with the AEP in charges and the surveys with school children of both genders, the study is able to answer the key research questions it set out to address.

- The evidence and insights gained from the respondents in the sample suggest that the AEP has been successful in reaching out to the adolescents at schools in Chandigarh.
- They have been generated awareness regarding life skills, adolescent reproductive and sexual health, HIV/AIDS prevalence and consequences, and substance abuse.
- However, some areas need further attention to improve the functioning of the AEP and its effectiveness.

Recommendation

- Going forward, the program should focus on strengthening the capacity and eliminating challenges faced by facilitators in disseminating information. The key recommendations of the study are summarized below;
- Survey findings reveal that the response rate of teachers was not very high on questions related to implementation and documentation. Also it has been observed during the survey that nodal teachers and in-charge of many schools were not much interested as well as cooperative on the issue of adolescent education. Thus there is need to trigger the advocacy efforts on the issue.
- It is recommended that the advocacy program especially involving school principals and parents , PTA members to be incorporated in the next year

Recommendation

- Monitoring system require further strengthening. It is suggested that holding a periodic (quarterly/ half yearly) program review meeting with representatives from all the schools
- 20 % of schools do not have any counsellors. Thus provision should be made to appoint a counsellor in these schools or alternatively the teachers of these schools should be trained on counselling under AEP.
- The IEC material to be provided to schools on regular basis
- Considering the turnover of teachers especially in private schools and contractual teachers; Regular trainings/ Refresher trainings of facilitators is organized based on the need assessment of challenges faced by facilitators in disseminating information

Thank you

