

Theme: Awareness about Health and Hygiene among the School going Children

Village: Gopalnagar Hindupara

Date: 20-12-2024

Description of the Activity

Background and Problem Identified:

A preliminary house-to-house survey and FGD conducted by ASHA workers and MSW students observed & revealed lack of awareness among villagers specially among school going children, about basic hygiene and sanitation practices. Children were seen playing near dirty drains, open defecation was still practiced, and menstrual hygiene among adolescent girls was found to be poor. Improper waste disposal, stagnant water, and lack of hand-washing habits contributed to frequent illnesses such as diarrhea, skin infections, and seasonal fevers.

The community organization program was conducted by a student social worker on 20th December 2024 to raise awareness about health and hygiene among school-going children at Gopalnagar Hindupara village. The main purpose of the program was to educate children on the importance of personal hygiene, healthy eating habits, and safe water practices to prevent diseases. Two community resource persons—Dilip Ghosh (Panchayat Member) Shobha Hazra (ASHA worker) and Moyna Ghos (ICDS worker)—were invited to guide and support the program. The student social worker first discussed the issue with the supervisor and found that many children in the village were wearing dirty clothes, looked unhealthy, and lacked basic hygiene practices. With permission, the worker organized the community awareness program at the village primary school. The school was cleaned and decorated, and the program started at 10 AM. During the program, the student social worker explained basic hygiene habits such as washing hands regularly—especially after using the toilet and before eating—bathing daily, brushing and flossing teeth, trimming nails, wearing clean clothes, and drinking clean water. Children were also advised to keep their surroundings clean to prevent skin and waterborne diseases. Then the ASHA worker gave a health talk, highlighting the importance of personal hygiene and daily healthy habits. The ICDS worker and Dilip Ghosh Panchayat member also

joined and spoke about child health, menstrual hygiene for girls, and issues like early child marriage. The workers tried to create awareness among the children, especially the girls, since many of their parents were not fully aware of the importance of hygiene.

During observation, the social worker noticed that some children did not use soap, did not brush their teeth regularly, or avoided using toilets. This was identified as a major problem that affects children's health. One



child attending the program was even found suffering from a skin disease, mainly because he was not bathing regularly. The program helped the children understand how neglecting hygiene can lead to sickness. Through this CO program, the social worker encouraged behavior change by making the children understand the importance of staying clean and healthy. The children listened actively, and the awareness message was clearly delivered with the help of community health workers. The session ended with a group discussion and interaction between the children and the resource persons. Overall, the program helped the community, especially children and their families, become more aware of health and hygiene. The social worker played an important role in bringing together the school, children, ASHA, and ICDS workers and Panchayat member for the betterment of child health in the village.

Number of participants of the community: 27

Outcome of the Program

The Community organisation program in Gopalnagar Hindupara aimed to spread awareness about health and hygiene among school-going children. This awareness program successfully sensitized the students of Gopalnagar on the importance of hygiene and sanitation. Children began adopting hand-washing habits, and several families expressed interest in building and regularly using toilets. Adolescent girls reported gaining clarity on menstrual hygiene practices. Mothers of young children appreciated the sessions on food hygiene and clean water storage.

