

## WOMEN HYGIENE DRIVE

**WHAC/23/2019-20**

**Molar band, Badarpur**

**September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

In several parts of India, the topic of menstruation brings with it the associated baggage of stigma, and shame. According to a report by WaterAid, 70.9 percent of Indian girls were unaware of what was happening when they got their first period.

Schools shy away from teaching students about it, social circles close their doors to the topic, and families maintain radio silence. This has resulted not only in the creation of myths and misconceptions, but also in unsafe and unhygienic practices. It is precisely this taboo that Oxigen & Sahyog Foundation under its CSR tackles through its Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) awareness campaign.



The campaign addressed key issues related to menstrual health in a bid to sensitize girls & women across. One such session was organized at Gangadevi Public School, Molar band, Badarpur on 11th September 2019 with around 115 girls from class6-10. During the session we found that 88 percent of menstruating girls in the School and their mothers are unable to access sanitary napkins. Using old cloth, which hasn't been properly washed or dried, cause major health problems? However, these issues are swept under the carpet as girls & women are unwilling to talk about them.

While addressing the importance of MHM we shared charts and videos on reproduction with girls and answered their queries about menstruation. We also encouraged girls to first break the taboo within their own circles. They were asked to share stories about their first period

experience with their classmates though hesitant in the beginning; one by one; few girls came forward and broke their silence. Girls also took an oath to break society's silence on menstruation

“While I always knew what menstruation is, I didn't really know that it is part of a cycle. I didn't know why it begins, or how it ends,” confesses Aparna class 10th Student. Going forward, We also shared our believes that “open communication” is one And 'scientifically accurate information' is another way that Can bring a change.

We also discussed with the girls about “Mainstream MHM strategies are proving to be quite problematic because they promote the usage of chemical laden products that require incinerators for disposal,” “We need to think about sustainable approaches before it is too late”.

**Seema Khurana**  
**CSR Lead & Activist**

