



WOMEN HYGIENE DRIVE

WHAC/32/2019-2020

**Devli Village, Delhi
November 28th, 2019**

It was November 28, 2019 when Oxygen & Sahyog foundation reached a remote semi rural village Devli, Delhi to organise an awareness session for underprivileged women to improve their menstrual health and hygiene with the help of Sarav Samman, a not-for-profit organization .The Session aims to shatter the myths and taboos surrounding menstruation through programmes that educate young girls, women and the society about a subject that is rarely ever talked about.

During the session we found out that girls were being forced to miss school, and at times, even drop out of school when they started menstruating and it wasn't just that we also came across a lot of myths and misconceptions around menstruation that prevail in our communities.. "Subjects as normal as menstruation are considered taboo. Thousands of women do not have access to information and facilities in order to live a healthy and empowered life.



"The session took a holistic approach by training parents and teachers simultaneously, so they can ensure a safe and healthy environment for adolescents after the sessions," The basic components of the session include understanding gender and gender roles, introduction to puberty, physical, psychological and social changes during puberty, hygiene management, myths and misconceptions related to puberty, body positivity, bullying and harassment and a special focus on menstruation for girls. The Session also included a education programme, Menstrual Hygiene Drives, focuses on awareness sessions through peer-to-peer counseling and interactive teaching tools

"The aim is to create a friendly space where anyone can talk about their periods freely and ask questions without being judged,"

CSR Activist discussed that stigma exists because the society has attached shame to women's bodies. "It's these taboos that have conditioned the society to view menstruation as something shameful or as something to be ashamed about. It is because of this that the way we view menstruation is going to change very slowly because of our deeply ingrained cultural taboos," she adds.

"Discussing and educating people – men, women, girls and boys – about menstrual hygiene and dismissing taboos associated with it, in a patriarchal society, are things that scare a lot of people. We would be lying if we say we weren't scared," says CSR activist. "We were. But we were adamant to change the menstrual health situation in India. And we are happy say that the change is happening."

Women Hygiene awareness session is a safe space for women to talk about everything related to menstruation, to be able to learn from one another's experiences and to help each other.

Seema Khurana

CSR Lead & Activist

