



WHAC/7 /2019-20

Nihal Vihar, Pihra gadhi

May 22nd, 2019

WOMEN HYGIENE DRIVE

Continuing its mission to improve the standard of living of the Girls and Women of Nihal Vihar slum , on May 22nd 2019 Oxigen & Sahyog Foundation , conducted an interactive session on “Women Menstrual health and Hygiene” at NGO Nipun Vocational Development center, Nihal Vihar .

The event, that mainly deliberates on self-care, kick-started with 80 girls & women on May 22 and will be followed by more such programmes to create awareness among womenfolk about the use and disposal of sanitary pads.

In 22nd May event, in-charge of the programme from Oxigen CSR team, spoke at length about the benefits of using sanitary pads to avoid many dreadful diseases. She also talked about the social taboos associated with menstruation and how we can overcome them. However, there was hesitation among women to talk about these feminine issues that have a large impact on their health and daily chores. She future stressed on the cleanliness habits and personal hygiene. She briefed women about the proper use and disposal of sanitary pads. She also educated young girls about how they can differentiate between good touch and bad touch.



During the session girls discussed that estimated two in 10 girls misses one to 4 days of school per month, making this one of the highest contributors to girls dropping out of education all together. The reason is because menstruation is still considered a taboo. To protect the ‘minds’ of adolescent girls, some parents prefer not to talk about this “taboo”. Meanwhile, menstruation is an integral aspect of comprehensive sexual education for young people included in curriculum. Unfortunately, it is not the case in India. Due to the damaging taboo surrounding menstruation in India , many girls struggle monthly to manage their periods. The lack of access to sanitary pads has forced most young girls to use unhygienic cloth and often skip school during their periods.



Session also discussed on making reusable sanitary pads, which are washable, eco-friendly and sustainable as they are made with local materials. Among the group two, girls were identified as entrepreneurs, those girls themselves can replicate the solutions to their peers, create a safe space where girls can freely talk about issues affecting their bodies and ask questions without fear or shame. The girls have also

been trained on how to count their menstrual cycle by making menstrual beads or bracelets

During the programme, many young girls complained that they don't easily get sanitary pads as they live in the interiors of Nihal Vihar and if available they are shy to go and purchase this. Mr. Pradeep, the chief coordinator of Nipun, stressed that under the initiative, the organization would provide sanitary pads free of cost where there is non-availability. "We would provide sanitary pads free of cost in areas where the concept of its use is new to people and where there are no shops to sell these pads.



"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 Sapna Srivastava one of the Vocational Instructor at Nipun. It was here she learnt all this and had an opportunity to be a part of MHM drive; she extended warm thanks to Team Oxigen on behalf of Girls and her organization for the session. With this she welcomed girls to ask questions or clear doubts if they have any.

Seema Khurana
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