UNIT 3 POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR THE ADOLESCENTS

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After completing this unit you will be able to:

- explain the need of policy making for youth and adolescents;
- describe the various policies related to youth, education and health; and
- describe the programmes developed by the Govt. of India for the Youth and adolescents.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

As you all know that, the adolescents and the youth are the most vibrant and dynamic segment as well as potentially most valuable human resource of every country. While the adolescent population is fast shrinking with higher dependency ratios in the developed world, India is blessed with 70% of population below the age of 35 years. In the next few decades India will probably have the world’s largest number of young people, and that is why we are called as the youngest nation in the world.

The population between the age of 10-19 years (Adolescents) is approximately 242 million, the largest ever cohort of young people to make a transition to adulthood. The time has never been better to invest in our young people. Efforts,
therefore, need to be made to harness the energy of youngsters to nation building. For focussed development of the adolescents appropriate policy and programmes are required. In this unit we will see the policies and programmes pertaining to productive of youth and adolescents in the country. Government both in Centre and State have taken up various schemes for the development of adolescents in the country.

We will start this unit with a brief introduction on the need and importance of Policy, which will be followed by various policies which has relevance to adolescents' development and, then we will focus on various programmes for the adolescents. At the end of this unit you can work on an assignment and also answer the check your progress questions too, which will help you to have an in-depth knowledge on the subject.

3.2 NEED OF POLICY MAKING

Policy is a practical demonstration and declaration that a country direct/gives for the development of its citizen.

Is a policy required for the development of a section of the society and more specifically for adolescents? Interestingly India does not have a policy for adolescent health and development. Adolescents are treated as a sub-section in youth and the policy pronouncements for youth is taken for the development of adolescents also. By the adoption of National Youth Policy 2003, the youth is redefined as those in the age group of 13-35 and hence the sizable portion of the adolescent population also comes under the youth category. Before going into the details of policies, we will see why a policy is required for the focused development of the adolescents? What is a policy and its need and importance?

We will proceed with examples of national youth policy which specifically represents a gender-inclusive statement that encapsulates the elements of vision, framework and realistic guidelines from which strategies and initiatives can be developed to facilitate meaningful youth participation and development within a country. (Commonwealth Youth Programme, 1996: 11). This is true in the case of adolescent also. Policy would mean the guiding principles for planning and implementation of activities relating to the development whether it may be youth or adolescent. Policy shows the commitment of the nation towards its younger generation.

Drawing on the ideas that have emerged from policy documents, ESCAP has short-listed the potential benefits of a national youth policy as follows which holds good for the adolescents also.

- Defining a nation’s vision for the future of its young women and men
- Raising the national profile of young women and men
- Identifying the needs of the younger generation
- Creating a framework of common goals for collective action and coordination
- For youth development for governmental, non-governmental and youth organizations
- Providing a basis for the equitable distribution of government resources to meet youth needs
Stimulating opportunities to mainstream youth policies into other sectoral policies and programmes

Developing a basis for the strategic planning, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes which impact on the youth population.

As we already mentioned, India does not have a policy for the development of adolescent presently. Where as various policies like National Youth Policy, National Education Policy, Women Policy, Population Policy and National Health Policy has dealt with the issues of adolescent’s which we will discuss briefly.

Activity 1

There is an immediate need of a separate policy targeted for the adolescents as the Govt. does not have one. Discuss in group

Check Your Progress 1

a) Explain what is policy?

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b) Explain the need and importance of Policy?

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3.3 POLICIES

As you have read that policies are the guidelines followed by the government and the private sector in planning and implementing programmes according to the needs and aspirations of its youngsters. A national policy raises the profile and understanding of young people and acts as a blueprint in setting out their status, role, rights and responsibilities in society. In the following section we will discuss about different policies.

3.3.1 Youth

The National Youth Policy, 2003 reiterates the commitment of the entire nation to the composite and all-round development of the young sons and daughters of India. It also seeks to establish an All-India perspective to fulfil their legitimate aspirations so that they because physically and mentally strong of body in successfully accomplishing the challenging tasks of national reconstruction and social changes that lie ahead. The policy redefined the youth as those in the age group of 13-35, which includes adolescent population also.

The basic objective of the policy is to instil in the youth, an abiding awareness and adherence to:

- the secular principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of India;
to develop qualities of citizenship;
- to promote awareness in the fields of Indian history and heritage, arts and culture;
- to provide the youth with proper educational and training opportunities;
- to facilitate access to information in respect of employment opportunities and to other services;
- to facilitate access, to health information and services;
- to sustain and reinforce the spirit of volunteerism;
- to create an international perspective in the youth;
- to develop youth leadership in various socio-economic and cultural spheres;
- to promote a major participatory role for the youth in the protection and preservation of nature.

3.3.2 Education

Now let us see the adolescent specific concerns expressed in the National Policy on Education. Education is the most pivotal concern of the adolescents and the educational policy discusses the education of the children in detail. It aimed to promote national progress, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration. The Policy has outlined the future course of action for developing the infrastructural and quality development of education.

NPE 1986 underlined that education is essentially for all, this is fundamental to our all round development, material and spiritual. In short NPE 1986 accepted that education is a unique investment in the present and future. The National System of Education envisages a common educational system of 10+2+3. It has a national curriculum frame work which contains common core syllabi along with other components. It focuses on Child centred education. By the adoption of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2008, every child of the age of six to fourteen years shall have a right to free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school till completion of elementary education.

The Act also says that no child shall be required to pass any Board examination till completion of elementary education and every child completing his elementary education shall be awarded a certificate, in such form and in such manner, as may be prescribed (Chapter V para 29.1 to 30)

3.3.3 Health

The National Health Policy (NHP) was adopted in the year 2002. The health needs of the country are enormous and the financial resources and managerial capacity available to meet them, even on the most optimistic projections, fall somewhat short. The NHP-2002 has not specifically talked about adolescent health and development issues, where as it has given much thrust to the reproductive sexual health (RCH) issues. The programmes like Adolescent Reproductive Sexual Health are framed on the basis of the policy pronouncement on RCH.

3.3.4 Other Policies

Other than the National Policies discussed earlier, certain other Policy
pronouncement by government also has its implication on the adolescents in the country. Important among them are the National Policy for Empowerment of Women 2001 and National Population Policy 2000.


Among other things NPEW 2001 aims at equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupational health and safety, social security and it aims at strengthening legal systems to elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women, mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process and elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child. It is clear that the policy has taken care of the adolescent girls concern by framing these objectives.

NPEW 2001 emphatically stressed the Rights of the Girl Child. Policy stipulated that all forms of discrimination against the girl child and violation of her rights shall be eliminated by undertaking strong measures both preventive and punitive within and outside the family. There will be special emphasis on the needs of the girl child and earmarking of substantial investments in the areas relating to food and nutrition, health and education, and in vocational education. In implementing programmes for eliminating child labour, there will be a special focus on girl children.


The immediate objective of the NPP 2000 is to address the unmet needs for contraception, health care infrastructure, and health personnel, and to provide integrated service delivery for basic reproductive and child health care.

The Policy specifically discusses adolescent issues. NPP 2000 says that Adolescents represent about a fifth of India’s population. The needs of adolescents, including protection from unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases (STD), have not been specifically addressed in the past.

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**Check Your Progress 2**

a) List the objectives of National Youth Policy?

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b) Explain the key concerns of Youth and Adolescents in India?

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c) Which year the National Policy on Education was first introduced?

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d) List the major components of National Policy of Education?
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e) Explain the areas of focus by the National Policy on Youth for the health of the adolescents?
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3.4 PROGRAMMES

The development of any section of society or target group is based on their policy specifications. Once the policy is accepted, on the basis of the same plan of action, the programmes are prepared and developed. In India, various Ministries and Departments have programmes for the development of Adolescents. The important departments implementing schemes for adolescent development are; Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. You would have read about the various departments in Block 1, Unit 1 – Introduction to Adolescence under Appendix A. In this unit here, we will look into the various programmes.

Diagramatic Presentation

Programmes
MOW&CD

NPAG

MOFW

MOYA & Sports

MHRD

KSY

NHRM

RGAS

SSA

BSY

NAHS

NPYAD

MDMS

Scheme of assistance

IPSC

P&C of JSM

W.W.C in Need Care & Protection

NPEG at EL
3.4.1 Ministry of Women and Child Development

Mahatma Gandhi the father of our Nation said that; educate a woman and the whole family will be educated. Women are considered to be the creators; they are not just giving birth to a child, but are giving life itself, in which case they should be given proper care and accessibilities. At the same time many consider women and children as the vulnerable section of our society. With all these in mind, the planners paid much attention in launching many programs for the women and children. This section will help you to know in detail the umpteen numbers of programmes for women and children.

1) **Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG)**

   To address the problem of under-nutrition among adolescent girls and pregnant women and lactating mothers, the Planning Commission, in the year 2002-03, launched the Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls (NPAG), on a Pilot Project basis in 51 districts in the country. The target Group is adolescent girls (11-19 years) (weight < 35 Kg).

2) **Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY)**

   Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY) seeks to empower adolescent girls, so as to enable them to take charge of their lives. It is viewed as a holistic initiative for the development of adolescent girls. The programme through its interventions aims at bringing about a difference in the lives of the adolescent girls. It seeks to provide them with an opportunity to realize their full potential. This scheme is a redesign of the already existing Adolescent Girls (AG) Scheme being implemented as a component under the centrally sponsored Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme. The broad objectives of the Scheme are to improve the nutritional, health and development status of adolescent girls, promote awareness of health, hygiene, nutrition and family care, link them to opportunities for learning life skills, going back to school, help them gain a better understanding of their social environment and take initiatives to become productive members of the society.

3) **Balika Samriddhi Yojana (BSY)**

   The Balika Samriddhi Yojana covers both rural and urban areas in all districts in India. The Balika Samriddhi Yojana covers girl children in families below the poverty line (BPL) as defined by the Government of India, in rural and urban areas, who are born on or after 15 August, 1997.

   - Objectives of this programme were to change negative family and community attitudes towards the girl child at birth and towards her mother, improve enrolment and retention of girl children in schools, and rise the age at marriage of girls, and finally it aimed in assisting the girl to undertake income generating activities.

4) **Scheme of Assistance to Educational Work for Prevention of Atrocities on Women**

   Women who are nearly half the population suffer from many social and economic disadvantages. Culturally also their roles are ill-defined for public participation. The Government of India has been seriously concerned about the increasing number of incidence being reported in the press and at other forums regarding offences against women especially rape, molestation, dowry
violence, wife-beating, alcoholism, eve-teasing etc. The Mahila Samakhya programme was launched in 1988 in pursuance of the goals of the New Education Policy (1986) and the Programme of Action as a concrete programme for the education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly of women from socially and economically marginalized groups. Provision of educational opportunities for women and girls has been an important part of the national endeavor in the field of education since Independence. Though these endeavours did yield significant results, gender disparities persist, more so in rural areas and among disadvantaged communities.

The problem in this regard, therefore, needs to be considered in a wider social framework, taking into account the various socio-cultural and economic factors to make Indian women more vulnerable to insecurity, exploitation and degradation.

5) **Integrated Programme for Street Child**

This programme aimed at Prevention of destitution and withdrawal of children from a life on the street and their placement into national mainstream.

The main objective was to provide: Provisions for shelter, nutrition, health care, sanitation and hygiene, safe drinking water, education and recreational facilities and protection against abuse and exploitation to destitute and neglected street children.

6) **Scheme of Prevention and Control of Juvenile Social Maladjustment**

During the Seventh Plan period, a major break-through was achieved in the field of legislation of children by the enactment of the Juvenile Justice Act, 1986, which was enforced throughout the country, except J&K State, on 2nd October, 1987. For the first time, a uniform law for the whole country, to cater for the care, protection, development and rehabilitation of both neglected and delinquent children, was enacted and enforced. It calls for a thorough restructuring of the juvenile correctional system so as to make optimum use of the family, community and social organizations. The focus is sought to be shifted from punishment and correction to growth, development and rehabilitation of children in distress.

7) **Scheme for Welfare of Working Children in Need of Care and Protection**

This made provision of opportunities including non-formal education, vocational training, etc, to working children to facilitate their entry/re-entry into mainstream education with a view to prevent their continued or future exploitation.

The programme also lends support to projects in urban areas, not already being covered by the existing schemes of the Ministry of Labour, which provide support for the wholesome development of child workers and potential child workers especially those who have none or ineffective family support, children of migrant. The programme focuses on measures such as [a] facilitating introduction to/return to the mainstream education system as children at study are not children at work, [b] counselling to parents, and heads of families, relatives of the targeted children so as to prevent their exploitation, and [c] give vocational training wherever necessary.
3.4.2 Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

This section will help you to understand the available resources for the people to enjoy better health. Various programs are made for improving the lifestyle of the people with focus on adolescents.

1) National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)

It has been launched with a view to bring about dramatic improvement in the health system and the health status of the people, especially those who live in the rural areas of the country. The Mission seeks to provide universal access to equitable, affordable and quality health care which deals to the needs of the people in reduction of child and maternal deaths as well as population stabilization. To achieve these goals NRHM will:

- Facilitate increased access and utilization of quality health services by all.
- Forge a partnership between the Central, State and the Local Governments.
- Set up a platform for involving the Panchayati Raj institutions and community in the management of primary health programmes and infrastructure.
- Provide an opportunity for promoting equity and social justice.
- Establish a mechanism to provide flexibility to the states and the community to promote local initiatives.
- Develop a framework for promoting inter-sectoral convergence for promotive and preventive health care.
- The objectives of the Mission is to reduce mortality rate in child and mother, universal access to public services for food and nutrition, sanitation and hygiene and universal access to public health care services.

2) National Adolescent Health Strategy, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare:

The overall objectives of the proposed National Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health ARSH Strategy under Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) II are to:

- make the health services adolescent friendly by changing the mindset of the service providers and the environment of the health facility;
- reduce nutritional anaemia and improve nutritional status;
- meet unmet contraceptive needs;
- reduce adolescent pregnancies;
- provide special care for adolescent pregnancies and unwed adolescent pregnant mothers;
- reduce number of adolescent maternal deaths;
- reduce incidence of RTIs and STIs;
- reduce proportion of HIV incidence in 10-19 years age group;
- meet adolescent psycho social needs through counselling; and
- build referral linkages with hospitals.
3.4.3 Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MHRD)

The Youth and Adolescents for the purpose of the scheme would be as defined in the extant National Youth Policy. In other words, the expression ‘youth’ would cover persons belonging to the age group of 13 to 35 years and ‘adolescent’ would cover persons in the age group of 10-19 years under the scheme.

1) **The Rajiv Gandhi Adventure Scheme** is being launched with the objective of consolidating and standardizing the adventure activities for youth being undertaken by various agencies / institutions with the financial assistance provided by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports.

2) **National Programme for Youth Adolescent Development (NPYAD)**

   The Short term objectives of the scheme are:
   
   a) Provide opportunity for holistic development of youth including adolescents for realisation of their fullest potential;
   
   b) Develop leadership qualities and personality development of youth and to channelise their energy towards socio-economic development and growth of the nation;
   
   c) Promote national integration, strengthen secular and eclectic outlook through creative expressions by youth;
   
   d) Foster the spirit of adventure, risk taking, teamwork, and the capacity of ready and vital response to challenging situations and of endurance among youth;
   
   e) Acknowledge adolescents as a distinct sub-group among youth and address their distinct needs and at the same time provide positive stimulation and congenial environment for their all-round development; and
   
   f) To encourage research and publication and to promote technical resource support including development of information and database on issues concerning youth and adolescents.

3) **Development and Empowerment of Adolescents**

   Life Skills Education, Counselling, Career Guidance and Residential Camps are the major activities visualized under this programme. The target groups are both in-school and out of school adolescents.

3.4.4 Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD)

Thus this department focuses on the development and utilisation of the available human resources in the country. The major schemes of the Ministry which has direct impact on the adolescents are:

1) **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA):**

   It is Government of India’s flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner.

   The programme seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through
provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants.

2) **Mid-Day Meal Scheme**

With a view to enhancing enrolment, retention and attendance and simultaneously providing nutritional benefits to school students, the National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education (NP-NSPE) was launched.

3) **National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Education**

(NPEGEL)

The National Programme for Education of Girls at Elementary Level (NPEGEL) is a focussed intervention of Government of India, to reach the “Hardest to Reach” girls, especially those not in school.

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<td>b) What is MHRD?</td>
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<td>d) Write the programmes under the Ministry of Women &amp; Child Development?</td>
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<td>e) Explain National Adolescent Health Strategies and its objectives?</td>
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3.5 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt about:

Policy, its meaning and the need and importance of it. You also got an awareness regarding various policies available for the adolescents and National Policies on education, health and for youth. After going through the unit you have also learnt the Meaning of programme and various programmes available under:

(a) Ministry of Women and Child Development
(b) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
(c) Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports Development
(d) Ministry of Human Resource Development
(e) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

At the end you may appreciate the efforts of government of India for youth and adolescents.

3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

a) The term “policy” as defined in the dictionary means “an agreed position and/ or course of general plan of action to be followed by government, party or individuals”. A policy is typically described as a deliberate plan of action to guide decisions and achieve rational outcome(s). It is a guide that establishes the parameters for decision making and action.

b) Policy is a practical demonstration and declaration of the priority and directions that a country intends to give to the development of its young women and men. A national youth policy specifically represents a gender-inclusive statement that encapsulates the elements of vision, framework and realistic guidelines from which strategies and initiatives can be developed to facilitate meaningful youth participation and development within a country. (Commonwealth Youth Programme, 1996: 11). This is true in the case of adolescent also. Policy would mean the guiding principles for planning and implementation of activities relating to the development whether it may be youth or adolescent. Policy shows the commitment of the nation towards its younger generation. It is a guideline for the government and the private sector in planning and implementing programmes according to the needs and aspirations of its youngsters.

A national policy raises the profile and understanding of young people and acts as a blueprint in setting out their status, role, rights and responsibilities in society.

Check Your Progress 2

a) Objectives of the National Youth Policy are:

- To instill in the youth, at large, an abiding awareness of, and adherence
to, the secular principles and values enshrined in the Constitution of India, with unswerving commitment to Patriotism, National Security, National Integration, Non-violence and Social Justice;

- To develop Qualities of Citizenship and dedication to Community Service amongst all sections of the youth;
- To promote awareness, amongst the youth, in the fields of Indian history and heritage, arts and culture;
- To provide the youth with proper educational and training opportunities and to facilitate access to information in respect of employment opportunities and to other services, including entrepreneurial guidance and financial credit;
- To facilitate access, for all sections of the youth, to health information and services and to promote a social environment which strongly inhibits the use of drugs and other forms of substance abuse, wards off disease (like HIV/AIDS), ensures measures for de-addiction and mainstreaming of the affected persons and enhances the availability of sports and recreational facilities as constructive outlets for the abundant energy of the youth;
- To sustain and reinforce the spirit of volunteerism amongst the youth in order to build up individual character and generate a sense of commitment to the goals of developmental programmes;
- To create an international perspective in the youth and to involve them in promoting peace and understanding and the establishment of a just global economic order;
- To develop youth leadership in various socio-economic and cultural spheres and to encourage the involvement of Non-Governmental Organizations, Co-operatives and Non-formal groups of young people; and
- To promote a major participatory role for the youth in the protection and preservation of nature, including natural resources, to channelise their abundant energies in community service so as to improve the environment and foster a scientific, inquisitive reasoning and rational attitude in the younger generation and to encourage the youth to undertake such travel excursions as would better acquaint them with cultural harmony, amidst diversity, in India, and overseas.


d) The major components of National Policy of Education are:

(a) Conformity with the values enshrined in the Constitution; (b) All round development of the child; (c) Building up child’s knowledge, potentiality and
Adolescence - An Overview

talent; (d) Development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent; (e) Learning through activities, discovery and exploration in a child friendly and child-centred manner; (f) Medium of instructions shall, as far as practicable, be in child’s mother tongue; (g) Making the child free of fear, trauma and anxiety and helping the child to express views freely; and (h) Comprehensive and continuous evaluation of child understands of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same. The Act also says that no child shall be required to pass any Board examination till completion of elementary education and every child completing his elementary education shall be awarded a certificate, in such form and in such manner, as may be prescribed (Chapter V 29.1to 30)

e) The areas of focus of NYP-2003, in so far as health of the adolescent is concerned, are: a) General Health, b) Mental Health, c) Spiritual Health, d) AIDS, Sexually Transmitted Diseases, Substance Abuse and Population Education.

Check Your Progress 3

a) The important departments implementing schemes for adolescent development are; Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports, Ministry of Women and Child Development, Ministry of Human Resource Development and Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment also has certain schemes focussing on the adolescents of the country.

b) MHRD is Ministry of Human Resource Development.

c) Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India’s flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right.

d) They are: (a) National program for education of girls at elementary education (NPEGEL), (b) Nutritional program for adolescent girls (NPAG), (c) Kishori Shakti Yojana (KSY), (d) Scheme for prevention of trafficking & rescue, rehabilitation and reintegretion of victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation-Ujjawala, (e) Balika Samriddhi Yojana (BSY), (f) Mahila Samakhya Programme (MSP).

e) National Adolescent Health Strategies are:

The Reproductive and Child Health Programme (RCH) entered into phase II on April 1 2005 for a period of 5 years. The major objectives of RCH II are to reduce IMR, under-five MR, MMR, TFR, and RTI/STI burden, and to promote adolescent health. The RCH II Adolescent Reproductive and Sexual Health (ARSH) Strategy aims at meeting the health and psychosocial needs of adolescents, including communication activities and capacity building of service providers.

The overall objectives of the proposed National ARSH Strategy under RCH II are to:

- make the health services adolescent friendly by changing the mindset of the service providers and the environment of the health facility;
reduce nutritional anaemia and improve nutritional status;
meet unmet contraceptive needs;
reduce adolescent pregnancies;
provide special care for adolescent pregnancies and unwed adolescent pregnant mothers;
reduce number of adolescent maternal deaths;
reduce incidence of RTIs and STIs;
reduce proportion of HIV incidence in 10-19 years age group;
meet adolescent psycho social needs through counselling; and
build referral linkages with hospitals.

3.8 REFERENCES


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