



Outreach programme on “Empowering Children, Empowering Communities”

under the auspices of “APNA BHARAT JAGTA BENGAL”

Organized by

Centre for Life Long Learning, [SVS-NSOU]

Venue: Nari-O-Shishu Kalyan Kendra, Howrah

Date: 29th November 2024, Friday

Programme Report

Background:

Child rights are fundamental human rights that guarantee every child the opportunity to grow and develop to their full potential. In India, child rights are enshrined in the Constitution and protected by various laws and policies. However, despite these legal protections, many children in India continue to face a range of challenges, including poverty, discrimination, violence, and exploitation. To address these challenges and promote child rights awareness, under the auspices of “Apna Bharat Jagta Bengal”, the outreach program aimed to educate and empower community-children, parents, teachers, and leaders about child rights and their responsibilities in protecting children.

Objectives:

- ✚ To raise awareness about child rights among children, parents, teachers, and community leaders.
- ✚ To promote a safe and nurturing environment for children.
- ✚ To advocate for the implementation of child rights laws and policies.

Subject: To promote child rights within the community-Education, Health & safety

Participants: Around 90 Community people, viz., parents, care-givers, teachers, students, and staff members of the organization.

NSOU Representatives: Prof. Anirban Ghosh, Director, SoVS, NSOU; Dr. Kasturi Sinha Ghosh, Asst. Prof., Social Work & Dr. Papiya Upadhyay, Asst. Prof., Education.

Welcome address was delivered by Smt. Rahima Khatun, Secretary, Nari-o-Shishu Kalyan Kendra, Bauria, Howrah. Other members of the organization joined with fervour and enthusiasm. The NSOU representatives received warm felicitation.

Introducing the theme: Professor Anirban Ghosh briefly spoke on the theme of the outreach programme and activities to be carried out.



Sessional activities:

Event Strategy: Focus Group Discussion (FGD), Hands-on and Role-play through skit
 Theme 1: To promote child rights within the community w.r.t Education

FGD: There were six groups, each consisting of 10-12 participants for conducting the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) to promote child rights and protection in the community through encouraging respectful dialogue and reflective thinking. The discussion statements/topics were-What are the features and significance of Right To Education (RTE) Act 2009? What are the promises made by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 which were not mentioned in RTE Act 2009. The groups came up with interesting thoughts and presented their views by reflecting on the pertinence and significance of child right to education.

Hands-on Activities: “Posters”: The participants created posters that visually represented their views on educational policies-RTE Act 2009 & NEP 2020. Each group came up with a slogan to convey their messages. The session was coordinated and facilitated by *Dr. Papiya Upadhyay*
 Output of the session: Empowering community people with firstly the information and understanding of The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009 as a landmark legislation in India that guarantees the right to free and compulsory education for all children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. It was enacted under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. Secondly putting into knowledge that the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 is a comprehensive framework that aims to transform India's education system. It places significant emphasis on child education, particularly in the early years, holistic education, play-based learning and universal access.

Outcome of the session: Jotting down thoughts triggered awareness and paved sensitization of child rights w.r.t education. Also scripting mind map of policy features *vis a vis* contextualisation.



Theme-2: To understand the level of awareness about Child Rights amongst the participants
 The second session was facilitated by Dr Kasturi Sinha Ghosh .Dr Sinha Ghosh organized an brainstorming session with the participants. The participants were mostly within 18 years of age,and are going to school or college. The brainstorming session was conducted with the intention to know their understanding about the rights of the children and how they are actually

treated by their parents and others in their community. Followed by this an impromptu skit was presented by the participants to project how the rights of the children are often violated.

Outcome of the session: The participants while discussing about their concept about the rights of children, shared certain myths that exist in their community, like the rights of a girl child is different from that of a boy child. They were of the view that it should be ensured that boys must have their right to education, however girls must have the right to lead a safe and secured life. Therefore their idea about the rights of children were based on the gender identity. The skit that was presented depicted that rights of a child is often violated due to ignorance, patriarchal norms and traditional believe.

Theme-3: To develop strategies to promote Child Rights in the community

Dr Kasturi Sinha Ghosh conducted a session particularly with the professionals who were involved actively in the field work as well as the parents in the discussion. She briefed the participants about the four major rights of the children, i.e Right to Survival, development, protection and participation, and how they are often violated. The participants shared their experiences and a few problems were identified like-

- There are cases of early marriages
- Tendency of school drop out
- Reluctance to pursue higher education
- Lack of involvement of the fathers in child rearing process.

Outcome of the session:

It was proposed that parents meeting instead of mothers meeting should be conducted at least once a month so that both the parents must be aware of the needs as well as the legitimate rights of their children.

- Health check ups must be organized on a regular basis .
- Counselling session may be organized to deal with mental health issues especially of adolescent children
- Children may be given cultural therapy to improve their psycho social behavior.

Snippets of the event:



-----Report prepared by: Dr. Kasturi Sinha Ghosh & Dr. Papiya Upadhyay