

## **Role of National Service Scheme in the Prevention of HIV/AIDS among Adolescents**

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### **Abstract**

National Service Scheme, under the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports Govt. of India, popularly known as NSS was launched in Gandhiji's Birth Centenary Year 1969, in 37 Universities involving 40,000 students with primary focus on the development of personality of students through community service. Today, NSS has more than 3.2 million student volunteers on its roll spread over 298 Universities and 42 (+2) Senior Secondary Councils and Directorate of Vocational Education all over the country. From its inception, more than 3.75 crores students from Universities, Colleges and Institutions of higher learning have benefited from the NSS activities, as student volunteers.

The main objectives of National Service Scheme (NSS) are :

- i. Understand the community in which they work
- ii. Understand themselves in relation to their community
- iii. Identify the needs and problems of the community and involve them in problem-solving
- iv. Develop among themselves a sense of social and civic responsibility
- v. Utilise their knowledge in finding practical solutions to individual and community problems
- vi. Develop competence required for group-living and sharing of responsibilities
- vii. Gain skills in mobilising community participation
- viii. Acquire Leadership Qualities And Democratic Attitudes
- ix. Develop capacity to meet emergencies and natural disasters and
- x. Practise national integration and social harmony

(b) Health, Family Welfare and Nutrition Programme of NSS:

- i. Programme of mass immunization;
- ii. Working with people in nutrition programmes with the help of Home Science and medical college students;
- iii. Provision of safe and clean drinking water;
- iv. Integrated child development programmes;
- v. Health education, AIDS Awareness and preliminary health care.
- vi. Population education and family welfare programme;
- vii. Life style education centres and counseling centres.

NSS volunteer undertake various activities in campus, adopted villages and slumps for community service. Duration of these service is 120 hours ie. 20 hours for orientation of NSS volunteers, 30 hours for campus work and 70 hours for community service. In regular NSS programmes students undertake various activities in the college campuses, adopted villages, cities and slums during weekends. Adoption of a village or an area is a meaningful programme in NSS.

HIV or AIDS is a major threat for humanity in the world especially in developing countries. Globally millions of people are suffering from this disease. Adolescents of developing countries have partial knowledge about HIV/AIDS. Almost all developing countries face the same dilemma.

The global HIV/AIDS situation for adolescents is deadly serious, and the need for a stronger, focused response is urgent. Young people are particularly vulnerable to HIV infection because of risky sexual behavior and substance use, because they lack access to accurate and personalized HIV information and prevention services, and for a host of other social and economic reasons. An estimated 11.8 million young people aged 15-24 are living with HIV/AIDS. Moreover, about half of the 6,000 new infections each day occur among young people. It is estimated that about half of all people who have had HIV were infected when they were between the ages of 15 and 24, and nearly one third of those currently living with HIV/AIDS are between 15 and 24. If current trends continue, it is expected that the number of young people infected with HIV/AIDS could increase to 21.5 million by 2010. UNFPA has made youth and HIV its priorities in the context of international goals and commitments related to adolescent sexual and reproductive health. UNFPA is particularly well positioned to respond to the HIV epidemic among youths because of its decades of experience in: integrating population and family-life education in schools and in non-formal education settings; facilitating the shift towards gender-sensitive reproductive health education; building broad-based partnerships on reproductive health; negotiating controversial issues with government and key stakeholders from a respectful and culturally sensitive standpoint; advocating for public commitment, policies and legislation that support reproductive rights and gender equality; and supporting countries to improve the quality and accessibility of youth-friendly reproductive health services.

Addressing the prevention needs of people living with HIV is a critical challenge for the health sector. Expanding access to HIV testing and antiretroviral therapy will increase the number of people living with HIV who can benefit from comprehensive HIV prevention, treatment and care services in the health sector. Most people living with HIV will remain sexually active. Health providers should respect their right to do so and support them and their partners in preventing further HIV transmission, including through the provision of condoms. For some, knowledge about their HIV infection may not prompt a change in behavior to reduce further HIV transmission, and additional support may be needed.

Effective strategies for preventing HIV/AIDS transmission—sexual, blood borne, and mother-to-child. However, fewer than one in five people at high risk for HIV currently have access to effective prevention.<sup>1</sup> According to an analysis by unaids and the World Health Organization, expanded access to proven prevention strategies could avert half of the 62 million new HIV infections projected to occur between 2005 and 2015.<sup>2</sup> Another analysis found that in sub-Saharan Africa alone, expanded prevention could avert 55% of the 53 million new infections projected to occur in the region between 2003 and 2020. There is no single solution—no “magic bullet”—to prevent HIV. The most effective prevention programs are those that use a combination of strategies to achieve maximum impact.<sup>4</sup> Following are descriptions of the major strategies that, when used in combination, are effective for preventing sexual, blood borne, and mother-to-child HIV transmission.

## **1. Conclusion**

Through the conclusion that the ‘Role of National Service Scheme in the prevention of HIV /AIDS among Adolescents’ . which plays an very important role in present scenario, overall it focuses on community needs, health, family welfare and Nutrition programmes and finds the practical solution for these problems, in community itself. Thus it develops sharing of responsibilities and group living.

## **References**

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