Empowerment of girls to face the social challenges ....

**Self Awareness**
Do we know ourselves well, how can we know ourselves better, for building own strengths, for getting able to face any eventually, for making informed choices and right decisions, let us empower ourselves.

**Communication and Relationships**
What is meant by communication, how can we improve it, what effect does it have on relationships, how can it help us in getting happy and strong.

**Menstruation and Hygiene**
How important is Hygiene during menstruation. How to be aware of our physical, mental and emotional changes during this period to take good care of our health?

**Choices and Decisions**
We can prove that we are responsible people by becoming more alert and watchful while making various choices and decisions.

**Self Esteem and Self defense**
How can we increase our confidence and self esteem and how can we be more alert about our own safety considering all kinds of threats around us?

**Friendship and Temptations**
How important friends and friendship are in life, what kind of dangers are we like to face in life; there is a possibility of failing prey to temptations. How can we keep away from such threats?

**Dialogue with parents**
For creating awareness about children’s needs, for creating trust with daughters, for creating a healthy relation between daughters and parents.

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Translation:

**Girigiri to face the social challenges ....

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Self-Awareness

It's very important to know self
- To know our abilities and to grow them
- To know our weaknesses
- To reduce our weaknesses
- To make positive changes and improvements

Knowing self, knowing own needs helps to make right decisions.

But we know very less about ourselves. And we all can definitely increase our self-awareness.

-Making a habit of asking questions about self to self.

Which questions?
- Physical, emotional and social aspects of ourselves
- Our roles in daily life, experiences and observations

Every day we saw ourselves in the mirror and make our face look better...similarly we can look into our mind and think over it...

Communication & Relationships

Good communication skills and healthy conversations are essential for our progress and healthy relationships.
- Different experiences & background
- Different influences, information & knowledge we have
- Thoughts and point of views
- Likes/dislikes, emotions and generation gap
- Mistakes in talking, mistakes in interpreting other’s talk, and mere misunderstanding

Because of all these reasons there could be differences in opinion but there is not any completely wrong or completely right opinion, if we understand this then we start respecting opinions of others. By not getting into misunderstandings, not spoiling relationships, by having healthy communication, we can move towards happy and successful life.
Self-Esteem & Self-Defense

Each one of us has some or the other ability.

- Most of the time we are unaware of our qualities. When we are working on our self-awareness if we recognize our strengths, potentials, and qualities then only our confidence will increase.
- Then we will have respect for ourselves
- We will be able to accept other things of ourselves contentedly.
- If anyone underestimate us, it will not harm our self-esteem.

We can protect our self-esteem

Sinking self-esteem has many side-effects ranging from small lost, non-use of own qualities, increased irritability, frequently arguing, having bitterness in mind, failure with no reason, constantly feeling sad and depressed, feeling lonely, may fall victim to temptations, or getting cheated by someone for temptations, addiction, or may engage in self-harming behavior.

When we are confident and have recognition of self-esteem then only we will be able to take proper care of ourselves, can take steps to keep ourselves safe. Objective of self-defense is not to teach lessons to others and win but to safeguard ourselves. By keeping anger and fear in control we will be able to make immediate and right decision for our protection. For self-defense our mental and emotional stability gives us more strength than the physical power.

Choices & Decisions

We have to make many important decisions in our lives.

- What and how much study
- Choosing career
- Daily time management
- Use of media & technology
- Choosing life partner

To make such important decisions or even while making small decisions, we have to make right choice out of many options.

While making these decisions everybody wants freedom. But to get this freedom we should be able to use it rightly and responsibly. Confidently, responsibly, thoughtfully making decisions, being able to tell the reason behind any decision made, not hiding our decisions or activities from others, all this help us to gain trust of others, especially of our elders. And then only they will involve us in the process of decision making or give us freedom to make decisions.

Habit of being able to make choices and making decisions thoughtfully is useful for us for throughout our lives.
Information about Menstruation:

Most of girls get their menstruation around age of 11-14 yrs. With some girls it starts at age of 15 or 16. Usually we get menstrual cycle every month, means after every 28-30 days. It may be infrequent initially. Some girls may get it after every 15-20 days; some may get it after every 2 months. It may take some months or a year to regularize. Starting of menstruation and after age of 45-50 slowly becoming infrequent and then stopping is a natural process. But if every girl got all this information before or at times of starting of her menstruation will be helpful for her to develop good habits and thus she will be able to deal with it happily and in a healthy way to next 30-35 years.

Most of the time in our culture girls are not allowed to go out, go in the kitchen or in the temple or not allowed to exercise, or play during menstruation. But this tradition doesn’t have any scientific base for this. Menstruation is a natural process and so it is not prohibited anywhere.

During menstruation bleeding takes place for 3-7 days. Body ache, swelling on legs, headache, dizziness, lower backache, heavy bleeding, frequent eating or not eating, feeling uneasy, increased irritability, feeling low, feeling fearful, confused, over excitement, mood swings, stress, etc. are common symptoms during menstruation. If proper hygiene is not maintained during menstruation then it can cause infection.

Here are some important points to be noted to deal with all these:

Hygiene during menstruation:

- Bath with hot water during menstruation. Clean gentiles and area around gentile with warm water and soap.
- To absorb blood use cotton cloth or sanitary pad. Change the cloth or sanitary pad after every 4-6 hours.
- If using cotton cloth, then prepare cloth strips that require for 3-7 days. Wash this cloth strips before using it and after every use with water and soap and dry it in the sun. Use these cloth strips for 3 months and burn it after.
- If using sanitary pads then after using it wrap it neatly in newspaper and then throw it in the dustbin.
- After changing cloth strip or sanitary pad or after each defecation wash hands with soap.
Other care to be taken during menstruation:

- Even though you do not have a habit of taking food on time regularly, now make it a habit to take food on time and regularly.
- Due to the changes of puberty you may tend to not having food because not having mood, or not feeling hungry or because of abdominal pain, but if you develop this habit then it can make menstruation more troublesome or painful and may affect your health permanently.
- Make a habit of having homemade food, happily with your family, regularly.
- It is essential for every girl and woman to have balanced and nutritional diet.
- It is important to either exercise regularly or play outdoor games. With habit of nutritional diet make this also a habit for a healthy life.
- It is not necessary to avoid outdoor play or exercise during menstruation due to abdominal pain or bleeding. Sitting on one place, taking complete rest or sleeping is not required during menstruation. Following routine, doing routine work, going to school or college, even during menstruation is good for us.
- If you have heavy bleeding or severe abdominal pain then you need rest. Telling elders of your family without feeling shy or fearful and consulting a doctor is necessary.
- If you have any doubt, query, about all this then talk freely to your elder, whom you trust. It will help to solve many of your doubt/questions.

Things to do by schools

- Girls should have separate and enough toilets in the school and should have soap and plenty of water there for use.
- Sanitary pads should be made available for the girls for emergency use.
- Through the scheme for nutritional diet, good quality sprouts should be secured at larger quantity.
- Regular monitoring should be there for the iron and calcium tablets distributing to the children. Expiry date of these tablets should be verified before distribution.
- Counselling cell for girls to talk or discuss about their problems or issues they are facing in puberty and menstruation should be there. And for that appoint a teacher who is friendly with children, who has experience in sexual and reproductive health. So, girls can take guidance from this person for their difficulties.
- Information about all these topics should be given to children on regular basis. Books and films or programs on these topics should be made available for children.
Friendship & Temptations

Friends are very important in life. Friendship means enjoyment, belongingness, support, understanding, arguments, mopings, obstinacy, help, and pure happiness. Making friends is easy but making close friends should be done carefully.

There are some measures of deciding close friends. Our close friends could be with whom we can have conversation, who can understand us, who has good temperament, who doesn’t insist us to make wrong choices and decisions, who gave us good advices, and some more. Those boys and girls, whom we know very well and those who have all these things could be our good friends.

There is no need to hide good friendship from parents. If we introduce our friends to our parents, elders, and teachers then they can also observe them and guide us accordingly. Even a girlfriend can misguide us. Some friends could instigate us to watch some unwanted things on FB, What’s app, movie, advertisements, and internet. We should not fall victim to temptations just for enjoyment, we should always aware about the consequences of such temptations.

It costs a lot for some mistakes and we may require more time to recover from it. We can enjoy our lives without putting us in any trouble, and it can be done if we keep ourselves alert about our surroundings, touch and even about people we know.
• Now it is essential for us to know/understand our children very well: their strengths, likes-dislikes, hobbies, their needs, emotions and their friends
• To know all this, we have to spend some quality time with our children
• It is essential to give them space, to trust them, and to respect their self-esteem
• Giving them space and freeness at the home is essential, so they will not lie to us or hide anything from us
• And we have to be ready to discuss or to deal with on any tender or serious topic/issue if and whenever required

If we stand in a support with our children they can do miracles.

Once our daughters enter in pubescent age, it has been observed that the distance between parent and the daughter increased and parent’s worry for her future also. At this time many parents get confused about what to do in such circumstances. It is required as a parent to keep few things in mind about the menstrual health and hygiene of their daughter.

• It is essential to give right and enough information about menstruation to girls, when they have their menstrual cycle started or about to start. We can guide them about hygiene during menstruation, care that must be taken, regular exercise, nutritional diet, mental, emotional, physical changes that are taking place, and for this first we have to get information or take her to the consultant. We are there to support her mentally, emotionally; we must be able to build this trust in them.
• To make our daughters healthy, we must pay attention to their diet, especially during menstruation. We can give them things that are easily available in that season, like green leafy vegetables (e.g. spinach), fruits, salads, sprouts, beetroot, jaggary, dates, milk, curd, buttermilk, pulses, chapatti, bhakari, etc.
• Most of the time, if our daughter is supposed to have her periods during festival then we tend to give her medicines to postpone it. But these medicines may increase their trouble during menstruation and if these tablets are taken frequently then it may have long term side effects on her body. So, it is advised to avoid taking such tablets.

If girls, schools and parents came together to work and support our daughters in this completely changing/growing age of them then they will feel supported, will be happy, healthy and empowered for their future.
**Broader Objectives of the Program:**

- Building trust in girls about their potentials
- Helping girls to accept the surrounding and motivating them to develop positive point of view and grow
- Helping them to prevent themselves from fears about real and imagined dangers
- Developing confidence in girls to make important decisions of their lives rationally

**Specialties of this workshop:**

- Entertaining presentation
- Lots of games and sessions through small activities
- Use of audio-visual methods
- Sessions through discussions and group discussions
- Friendly atmosphere
- No lecture, no preaching and no one way communication

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**Background of the Smart Girl program and about Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana**

*Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana* worked through “Empowerment of Girl” all over the country. “Smart Girl” program is a multidimensional program developed by *Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana* in 2008. Since that time, Smart Girl program is being implemented in Maharashtra & all over the country effectively. Trainers of Bharatiya Jain Sanghatana with cooperation of various social organizations, private/government schools and colleges conducted Smart Girl Workshops all over the country in which lakhs of girls participated. This program is guiding adolescent girls to find answers to their questions they are facing at familial and social level.