

**LIFE SKILLS FOR HANDLING PSYCHO-SOCIAL PROBLEMS OF ADOLESCENTS****Dr. Sangita Nandkumar Shirode***Associate Professor,**S.N.D.T. College of Education, Pune***Introduction :**

21<sup>st</sup> Century is an age of Technology and Tremendous Competition. In this age every individual has to face conflict, competition, stress in every walk of life.

Adolescence stage is crucial stage of life. In this stage tremendous changes are occurred among individual. Social and emotional changes are part of child's journey to adulthood. To help them in their develop grown-up emotions and social skills it is essential to inculcate life skills among each adolescent.

**Life skills :** World Health Organization has defined life skills as “The abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of every day life”.

WHO has given the list of 10 life skills, is as follows :

i) Self awareness ii) Empathy iii) Problem Solving iv) Decision Making v) Effective Communication vi) Interpersonal Relation vii) Creative Thinking viii) Critical thinking ix) Coping with Emotions x) Coping with stress

This study implicates that why to inculcate life skills amongst adolescents while handling their psycho-social problems and what measures are arranged by school to impart life skills training to them.

**Title:** A survey study of activities of secondary schools from Poona city for inculcating life skills regarding psycho-social problems of adolescents.

**Objectives :**

- i) To decide the priority of life skills regarding psycho-social problems of adolescents.
- ii) To mention the importance of each life skill according to psycho-social problem of adolescent.
- iii) To survey the activities of secondary schools from Poona city for inculcating life skill regarding psycho-social problems of adolescents.
- iv) To suggest various activities for inculcating each life skill.

**Research Methodology :** Survey method

**Research Tool :** Check list, interview

**Data Collection :** for Objective 1, 2 & 4

Researcher analyzed each life skill and found that for betterment of life all life skills are important but while handling psycho-social problems of adolescents it is must to inculcate following five life skills among them.

i) Self awareness ii) Coping with emotion iii) coping with stress iv) Effective communication and v) Interpersonal relation

### Importance of Each life skills while handling psycho-social problems of adolescents

Below table shows that particular psycho-social problems of adolescents and life skill required to handle that specific problems

Psycho-social problems during adolescent	Need of inculcating Appropriate life skill
Self identity : ‘Who am I’ and ‘what I have to be?’	Self Awareness, Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship
Mood swings due to hormonal changes	Coping with emotions and coping with stress
Guilt of feeling opposite sex attraction	Coping with emotions and coping with stress
Poor mental health and Risk taking behavior	Coping with emotions and coping with stress
Conflicts and more arguments with parents	Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship
Antisocial behavior: Substance misuse :Unable to control emotions (as brain is still learning how to control emotions)	Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship
Unable to express emotions due to peer pressure	Effective communication and Interpersonal relationship

### Why to inculcate Self awareness skill

**Meaning : Self-awareness** includes our recognition of ourselves, of our character, of our strengths and weaknesses, desires and dislikes. Developing self-awareness can help us to recognize when we are stressed or feel under pressure. It is also often a prerequisite for effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy for others.

Erickson has developed psycho-social theory of development. In this theory he has mentioned problems facing by individual in every developmental stage. In adolescent stage adolescents are facing problem of Fidelity: **Identity vs. Role Confusion** (Adolescence, 13-19 years) To introduce them their self identity it is essential to develop self awareness skill amongst them.

Adolescence is a transition period from childhood to adulthood. Students from this stage are very much confused about their role. Students in this stage are not adult and not child so they are confused about their maturity, about their role, about their existence in the society and in family too. Sometime someone says them ‘you are grown up now’ but same person at another situation says ‘you are not so grown up

now'. So there is crises in their mind about their existence. Time to time Existential Question arises in their mind: Who Am I and What Can I Be? They need self identity. There are various ways to express self identity. So to introduce them how to express self identity it is essential to develop self awareness skill amongst them.

Also one crises in their mind is about career choice. Most of the time society is taking decision for their career , forcing them to choose particular career without considering their capabilities. To aware them about their own capabilities , their strengths and for true self discovery it is essential to inculcate self awareness skill.

To develop self identity it is essential to inculcate self awareness skill amongst them. Following activities will help to develop self awareness.

- i) To aware them their capabilities arrange various competitions.
- ii) Arrange program of self talk 'Who Am I and What Can I Be? '
- iii) Give chance of anchoring
- iv) Ask to see TV program about interview of Great People
- v) Let to hear them various talks of Great Personalities through radio or tape recorder
- vi) Arrange talk of great people in the school
- vii) With the help of SWOT analysis technique ask to identify own strengths and weaknesses.

According to Erikson, when an adolescent has balanced both perspectives of "What have I got?" and "What am I going to do with it?" he or she has established their identity. So to aware students ' what they have' it is essential to develop self awareness skill.

#### **Why to inculcate Coping with stress skill –**

**Meaning : Coping with stress** is about recognizing the sources of stress in our lives, recognizing how this affects us, and acting in ways that help to control our levels of stress. This may mean that we take action to reduce the sources of stress, for example, by making changes to our physical environment or lifestyle. Or it may mean learning how to relax, so that tensions created by unavoidable stress do not give rise to health problems.

Adolescents are facing many problems in this age. Following table shows physical changes are occurred in this stage.

	Boys	Girls
<b>Hair Growth</b>	Around the penis, under the arms, and at the face, legs and chest areas	Around the vagina and under the arms
<b>Acne &amp; body dour</b>	Skin gets oilier and acne may occur; perspiration increases and may cause body dour	
<b>Shapes and sizes</b>	Height, weight and muscles increase; shoulders broaden	Height, weight and width of hips increase; fat at the abdominal, buttock and thigh areas increases.
<b>Unique changes</b>	Penis and testes enlarge and lengthen; erections and ejaculations occur more frequently; voice cracks	Breasts develop; menstruation occurs

Due to physical changes they are confused and there is a stress of change spread throughout their mind. To relax them through this stress it is essential to develop Coping with stress skill.

In this stage students face various problems of anxiety. Anxiety about getting admission in the proper academic course, stress of getting appropriate marks in the exam, also there is a fear of unsuccessful in the exam, burden of study and also burden of expectations of parents. Due to unbearable stress some time they choose the option of suicide and finished their life. So it is essential to train them how to manage the various stress and how to release it.

To learn them how to relax, how to manage stress it is very essential to give training of coping with stress. Training of coping with stress helps to learn sources of relaxation, so that tensions created by unavoidable stress do not give rise to health problems.

Following activities will help them to reduce their stress.

- i) Scientific Lecture /talk of 'Know your body' by health professional
- ii) Arrange AIDS awareness program
- iii) Arrange cultural program
- iv) In school assembly daily give few minutes for yoga and meditation program
- v) In time table every day last lecture should be of Physical training (P.T.)
- vii) Arrange excursion , visits

viii) Concentrate on hobby

### **Why to inculcate Coping with emotions skill**

**Meaning : Coping with emotions** involves recognising emotions in ourselves and others, being aware of how emotions influence behaviour, and being able to respond to emotions appropriately. Intense emotions, like anger or sorrow can have negative impact on our health if we do not react appropriately.

Researcher felt that for handling psycho-social problems of adolescent stage it is essential to inculcate this life skill.

In adolescent stage bodily changes occurred , due to bodily changes students become over sensitive about physical appearance. Also hormonal changes are occurred in the body. Due to hormonal changes and shifting level of hormones in the body adolescents mood swing in a short span of time. Sometime they feel happy and within short time they feel irritated. Sometime they feel confident within few time they feel depressed. They lose their temper very quickly.

Also due to hormonal changes they feel to love with opposite sex, that feeling may create guiltiness among them. They have many questions about sex in their mind but due to social pressure they can't share their queries . Due to same pressure there is also up and down in their emotions. These feelings are so normal and there is nothing to feel guilty. To give assurance or to give relief about their feelings it is essential to learn them how to cope with emotions.

Research shows that in adolescent stage teenagers are at increased risk of poor [mental health](#) and antisocial behavior. To restrict their antisocial behavior and to bring them on qualitative track of life it is essential to learn them how to cope with their emotions.

In this stage due to nature of brain development teenagers are likely to seek out new experiences and engage in more risk taking behavior such as substance misuse. Also they are still developing control over their impulses. So it is necessary to learn them how to control their impulses though it is brain's requirement and divert them towards positive act. This could possible by inculcating this skill.

Due to stronger emotional responses and changes in motivation adolescents face difficulties of balancing emotions and behavior. It affects child's health later in life and can have long-term effects.

Through this skill it is essential to develop how to manage stronger emotional responses, and how to balance emotions and behavior. For betterment of life in the society it is must essential to develop this skill amongst them.

Following are the positive ways of dealing with difficult emotions.

- i) Students always learn from observing relationships where there is respect, and empathy so be a role model for forming and maintaining positive relationships with your students ..
- ii) Introduce them positive ways of resolving conflict.

- iii) Develop proper communication skill
- iv) **Listen** students' feelings.
- v) Arrange talk of health professional about Physical changes, sex and sexuality
- vi) Focus on the non-physical things . Engage them with their interests, hobbies.
- vii) Arrange social work program such as NSS, NCC, Scout-Girl Guide–these activities help to suppress negative emotions .
- viii) Talk with your students.
- viii) Arrange to see some movies like as '10<sup>th</sup> F'(Regional language 'Marathi' movie), through that movie they could understand for betterment of life need to control emotions.

### **Why to inculcate effective communication skill**

**Meaning : Effective communication** means that we are able to express ourselves, both verbally and non-verbally, in ways that are appropriate to our cultures and situations. This means being able to express opinions and desires, but also needs and fears. And it may mean being able to ask for advice and help in a time of need.

In this stage adolescent show strong feelings and intense emotions at different times. Moods might seem unpredictable. These **emotional ups and downs** can lead to increased conflict. Child's brain is still learning how to control and express emotions in a grown-up way. So it is essential to learn them how to express emotions through proper way. One of the proper way to express emotion is effective communication . So it is essential to learn them effective communication skill.

We are already aware about the stress of adolescent students. One of the best way to release their stress is 'Listen to your child'. For sharing and expressing their stress it is need to develop proper communication skill.

In this stage they spend their most of the time with peers, in school or in society. They learn many things from society by observing, by communicating, by asking queries. Due to brain development they become curious, lot of questions arose in their mind but due to peer pressure they feel guilt how to ask queries. To release that burden and to release that guilt from their mind it is essential to teach them proper communication skill.

Effective communication gives them Self Identity. Following activities will develop effective communication skill

- i) Aware them about various modes of communication
- ii) Ask to hear some audio cassettes
- iii) Ask to visit informally various people from society and ask them about their profession
- iv) In cultural program or at any function ask them to perform role of anchoring

- v) Conduct elocution competition, essay competition.
- vi) Ask to perform drama, one act play.
- vii) Ask to take interview of experts or Great people in formal way.
- viii) Arrange various games, which help to understand importance of proper communication
- ix) Arrange language training program

### **Why to inculcate Interpersonal relationship skill**

**Meaning : Interpersonal relationship** skill help us to relate in positive ways with the people we interact with. This may mean being able to make and keep friendly relationships, which can be of great importance to our mental and social well-being. It may mean keep good relations with family members, which are an important source of social support.

Adolescence is always a crucial stage of life, adolescent want independence, they struggle for self identity but at the same time experience bad moods, have conflicts with their parents and more arguments with parents. They want independence at the same time they want support from parents. Time to time have arguments with parents at the same time require love from parents. So their relationships with family and peers will undergo dramatic changes and shifts. Interpersonal relationship skill help them to develop positive and strong relationships with both family and friends . For healthy social and emotional development it is essential to inculcate this skill among adolescent.

In this age they spent most of the time with their peers. They learn lot of things from peers. Interpersonal relationship help them positive ways to interact with their friends and how to maintain this relationship till longer.

Following activities will help to inculcate Interpersonal relationship

- i) Ask to share problems with parents and teachers without hesitating.
- ii) Give responsibility of excursions or visits. Ask to make plan for it. It includes place decision, vehicle arrangement, stay arrangement, lunch and dinner arrangement etc. Such activity helps to develop effective interpersonal skill among them.
- iii) Ask to collect information of various places from the society like as bank, library, science institute etc.
- iv) Give them chance to learn by co-operative method
- v) Ask to talk with various professionals.

Effective Interpersonal skill inculcates confidence, daring, positive attitude and assurance amongst them. It helps to develop all round .

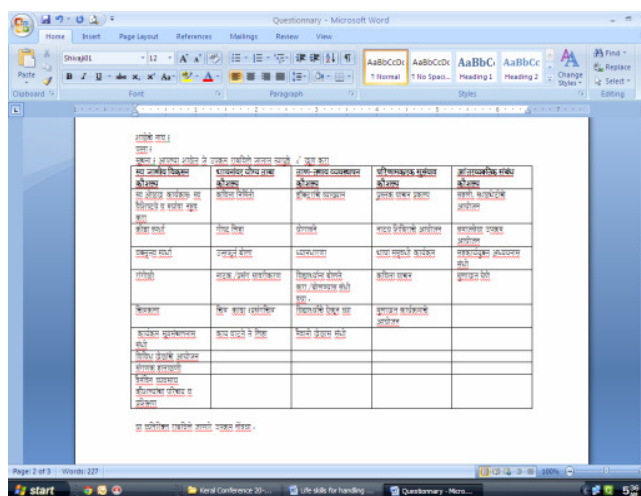
### **Data collection and analysis for objective 3:**

After understanding importance of life skill in adolescence, researcher has decided to survey the schools



from Poona City regarding activities implemented by school for inculcating life skills among their students. Data collection tool 'check list' was used for survey. Also researcher discussed with supervisor of each school regarding programs and regarding their training.

Randomly researcher chose twenty five schools from Poona city and collected information from those schools. Researcher provided check list of activities appropriate for each life skill and asked to tick which activities are arranged by school for inculcation of life skills. Provided check list is as follows. ( Check list is in Marathi script so taken screen shot of it). Researcher also asked to note other conducted or planned activities apart from the check list.



Also she discussed with supervisor of each school regarding problems of adolescents and programs arranged by school. She asked them about their training of life skill.

### Conclusions :

- Life skills are very important for betterment of life.
- During adolescent stage it is essential to inculcate following life skills to face psycho-social problems :  
i) Self awareness ii) Coping with emotion iii) coping with stress iv) Effective communication and v) Interpersonal relation
- All life skills are interrelated though it is found that most of the activities of schools were related to 'Self Awareness' and mere for others.
- Schools are not very serious regarding inculcation of life skills.
- Teachers need training of inculcation of life skills.
- Teachers supposed their role is only to evaluate the text content from text book according to life skills.
- Due to social and emotional changes child is forming an independent identity. Above life skills help them to develop his personality so every parent, teacher have to play a big role in helping their develop grown-up emotions and social skills.



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