



# Safe and Unsafe Touch Workshop Report



**SHREEJA INDIA**

5th April 2022

## **Introduction**

Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching behaviors. Non-touching behaviors can include voyeurism (trying to look at a child's naked body), exhibitionism, or exposing the child to pornography. Children of all ages, races, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds may experience sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse affects both girls and boys in all kinds of neighborhoods and communities. Every child needs to be taught that their body belongs to them and they have a right to protect it. With this in mind that most of the children may not even be knowing when they are abused, harassed Shreeja India conducted 'Safe and unsafe workshop'

## **Rationale**

We constantly hear the news of children especially girls getting raped and often the perpetrator is someone known to the survivor. A recent horrifying case of a 11-year-old girl was allegedly repeatedly raped and sexually abused by her father, brother, grandfather, and distant uncle over the last five years has been revealed. In the tribal communities many parents feel that it is unpleasant and uncomfortable to talk about sexual abuse and harassments as they think it will strip away their innocence. But the only way to ensure children's safety is to create awareness about this topic. We felt that sensitization workshop should be conducted in order to teach Shreeja Girls what is safe and unsafe touch. The different parts of body, what to do if someone touches them inappropriately. And with whom can they share any unpleasant incidents that they might face.

## **Goals of the workshop**

1. To engage with Shreeja Children on a serious topic like safe and unsafe touch
2. To educate and raise awareness on the private parts of a child's body and what safe and unsafe touch is
3. To engage them to start having important conversations like these with their teachers at the centre and their parents to prevent future abuse.

**Target group:** Shreeja Girls and boys 8-12 years

**Location:** Rajnagar facility, Birbhum

**Duration:** 90 minutes

## **Nature of workshop:**

1. A pre-workshop questionnaire was given to know if they know anything about the topic "Safe and unsafe touch"
2. A presentation was given by the program team teaching them
  - The indicators of sexual abuse and harassment

- That they have ownership over their bodies.
- What they must do if they experience unsafe touch
- Gender differences in sexual abuse and harassment
- The impact social media on sexual health behaviors.
- Laws that protect children from child abuse.

3. To reinforce the information a video by ChildLine was shown to the children.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VkY0xqtw6W8>

4. Post-workshop questionnaire was given to quantify the knowledge they gained from the workshop.

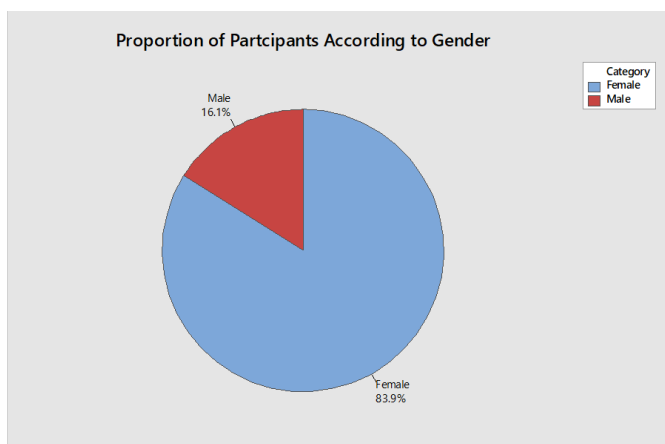
**Date:** 27<sup>th</sup> February 2022

### **Details of the workshop**

Shreeja India steps towards making Shreeja children safe, ‘Safe and unsafe touch’ workshop was conducted in the Rajnagar Facility. The workshop was conducted by the program team with the objective to sensitize and equip children about child abuse and harassments and how they can deal with it in future. The interactive workshop also focused on the critical need to empower young children to disclose any abuse, harassment, or fear they may have to the chosen adults in the school or centre, such as teachers and other adults with whom the students feel safe.

The workshop started with a pre-workshop questionnaire if at all they know what is safe and unsafe touch.

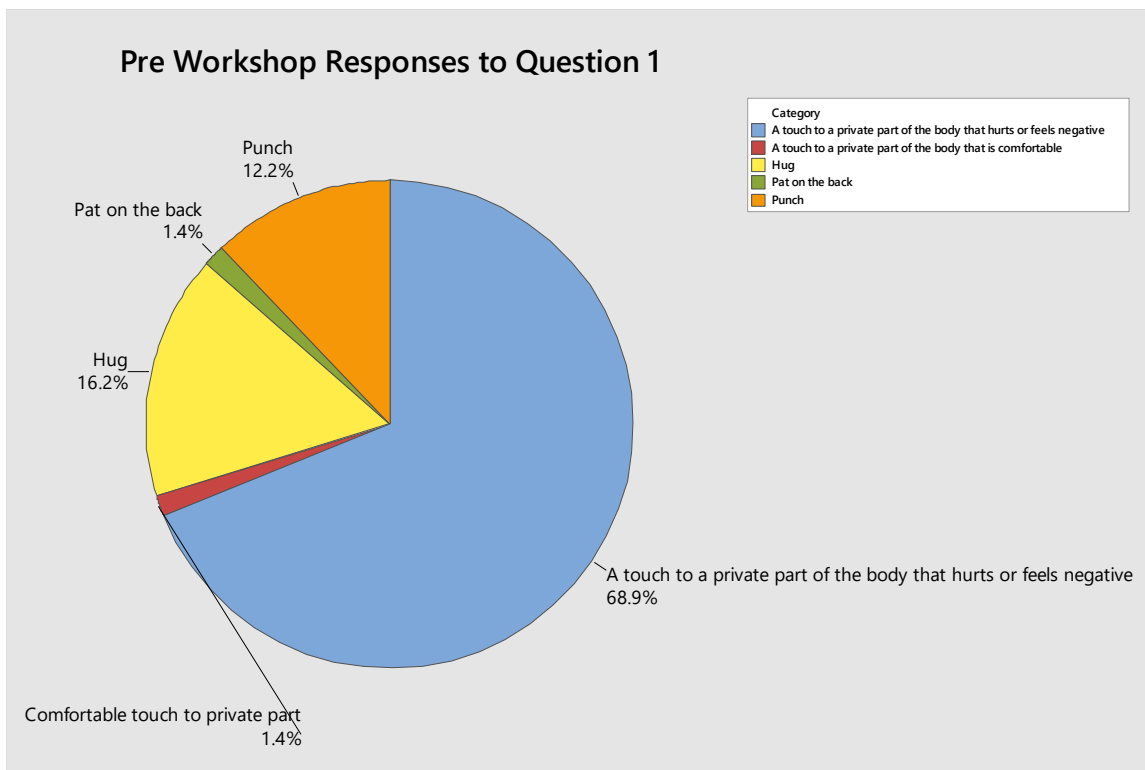
Our workshop had 56 participants- mostly girls. Of them, 9 participants were boys and the rest were girls.



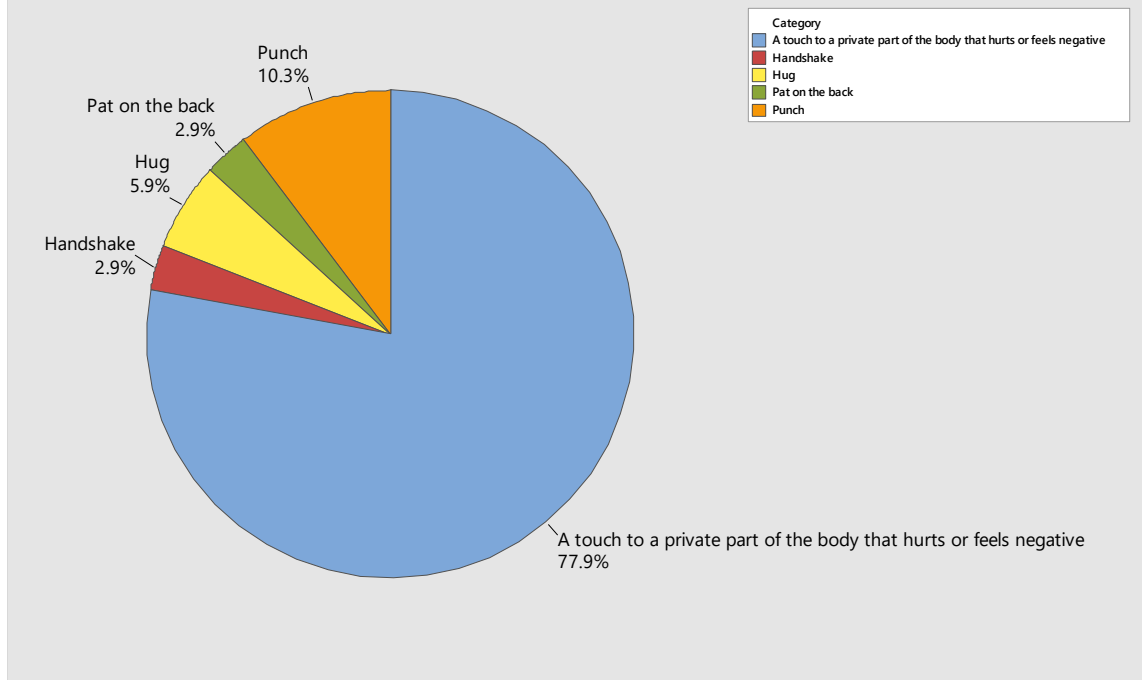
## Analysis

The participants were given a few options to this question from which they were supposed to tick the right option. The options were as follows-

1. A touch to a private part of the body which feels negative
2. A touch to a private part of the body which feels comfortable
3. Hug
4. Pat on the back
5. Punch



## Post-Workshop Responses to Question 1

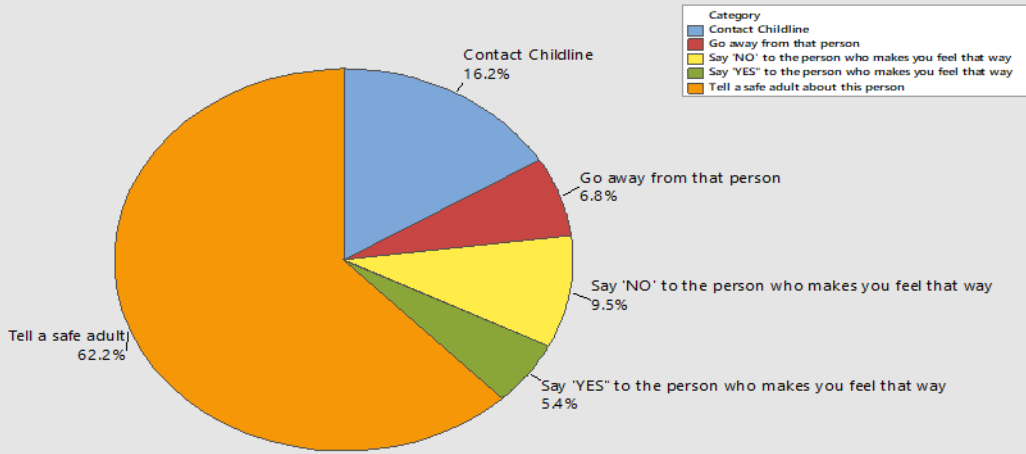


The charts show a significant increase in the proportion of participants correctly interpreting an “unsafe touch” as “a touch to a private part of the body that hurts or feels negative”, which can be attributed as one of the positive impacts of the workshop. We also observe that the slight proportion of participants who misinterpreted a “unsafe touch” as “a touch to a private part of the body that feels comfortable”, reduced to 0 post workshop.

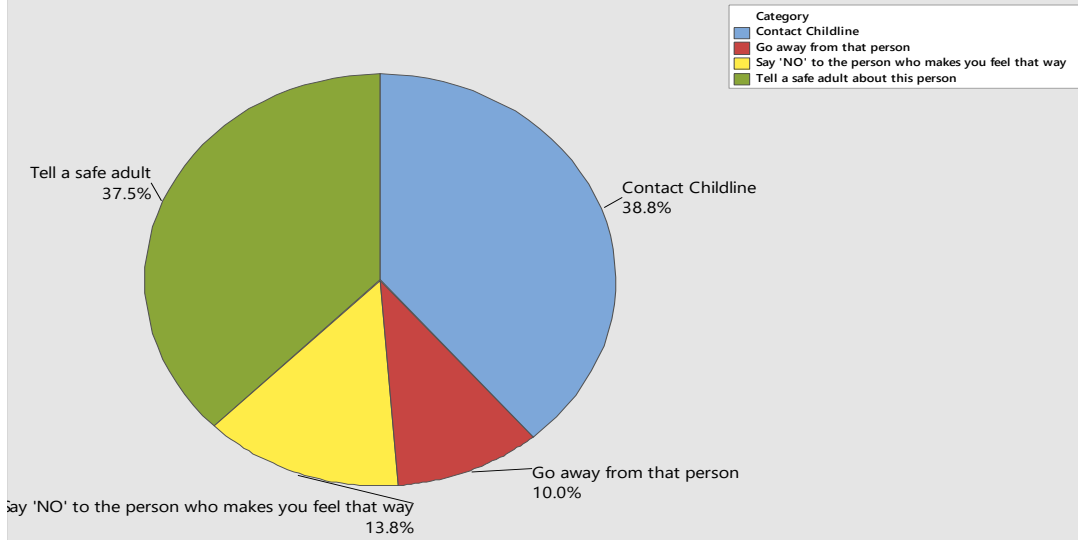
When asked *what they should do if they experience an unsafe touch?* the responses to this question were mainly subjective. The following chart shows the proportion of different responses before and after the workshop.

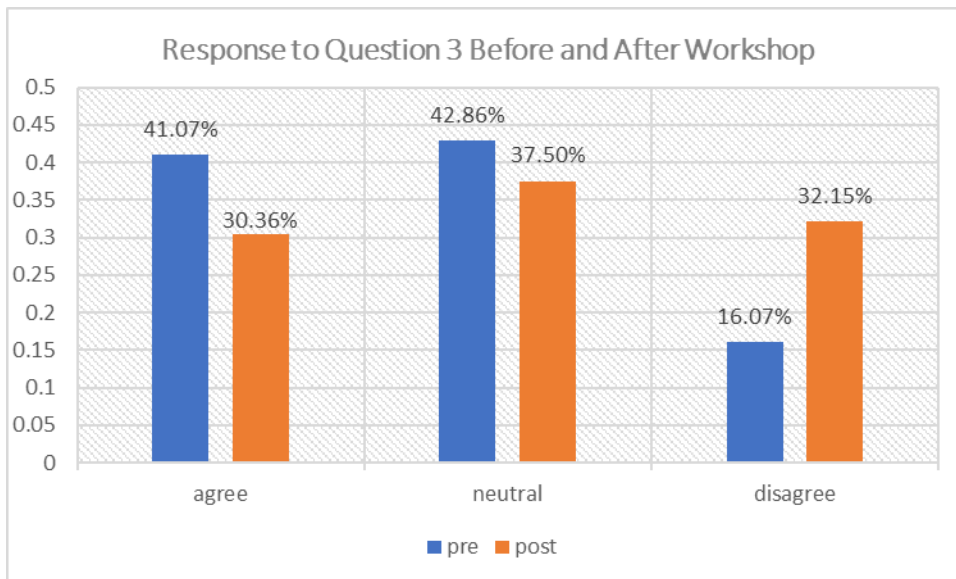
From the two charts that there has been a good increase in the responses “Contact Childline” post the workshop. This is an indication that the workshop has been a success in making the participants aware of the child helpline services that are available to help them in such cases.

### Pre-Workshop Response to Question 2



### Post-Workshop Response to Question 2





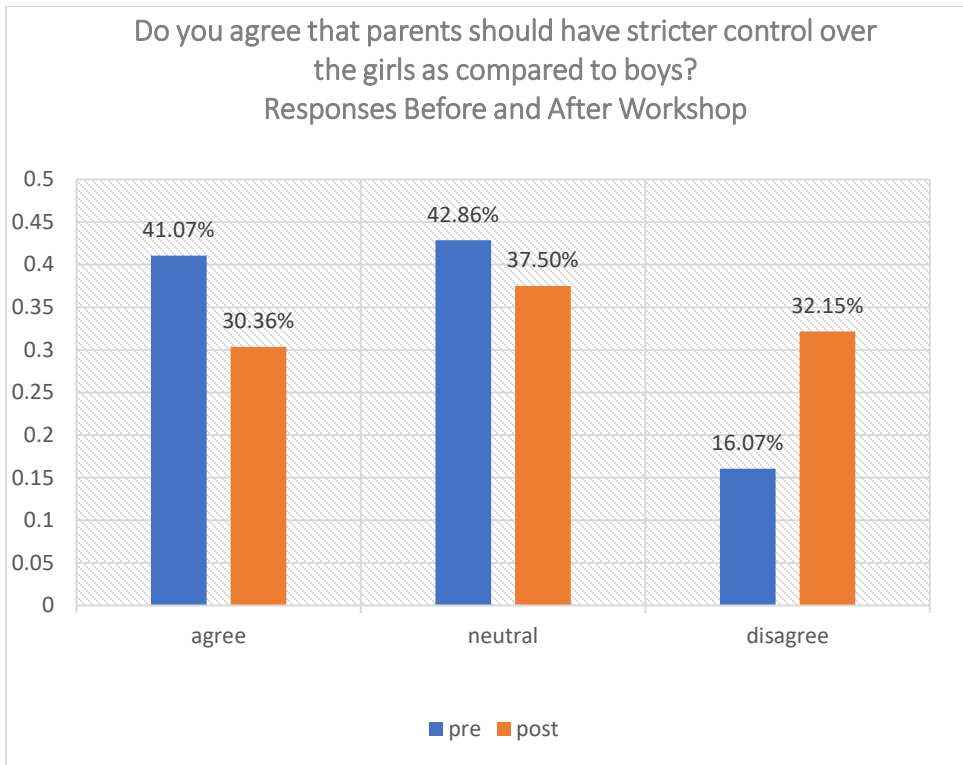
## Gender double standard

The perception that society holds a view of evaluating women and men differently for similar behaviors (a double standard) appears to be widespread in the research literature. This implies that society holds different standards for what behaviors are appropriate for men and these differ from the behaviors that are viewed as appropriate for women. Perceptions that individuals have as to what is appropriate behavior for men and women are shaped by social norms.

Typically, women are judged more negatively for engaging in various types of sexual behaviors and men are viewed more positively for participation in the same sexual activities. Consequently, men are allowed greater sexual freedom and agency. The specific behaviors that invoke judgement against women have shifted over time. Young girls do not have enough knowledge about consent to sex. When asked *“Do you agree that parents should have stricter control over the girls as compared to boys?”*

The answer to this question were of 3 categories- “Agree”, “Neutral” and “Disagree”. The following bar chart shows the change in the responses before and after the workshop.

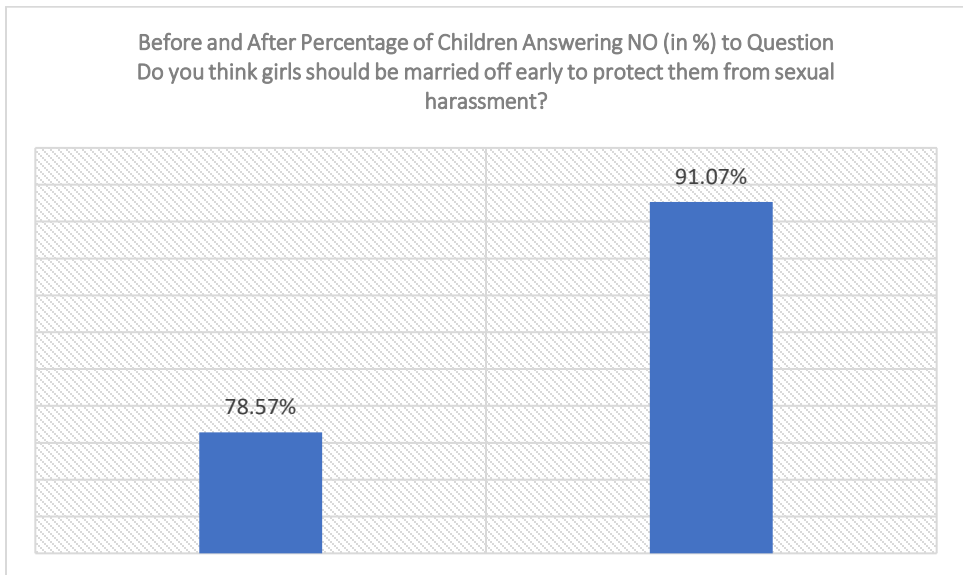
The bar chart shows that after the workshop, there has been an observed increase in “agree”, an observed decrease in “neutral”, but there have been almost no changes in the “neutral” responses.



Double-standards place women at greater risk than men if it influences their preventative health behaviors, which helps protect against unwanted pregnancies and STIs. This workshop showed how it is essential to promote awareness and develop educational interventions to prevent the stereotypes and the sexual double standards which may prevail in society that could provide barriers to engaging in healthy behaviors.

The respondents were also asked if *girls should be married off early to protect them from sexual harassment?*

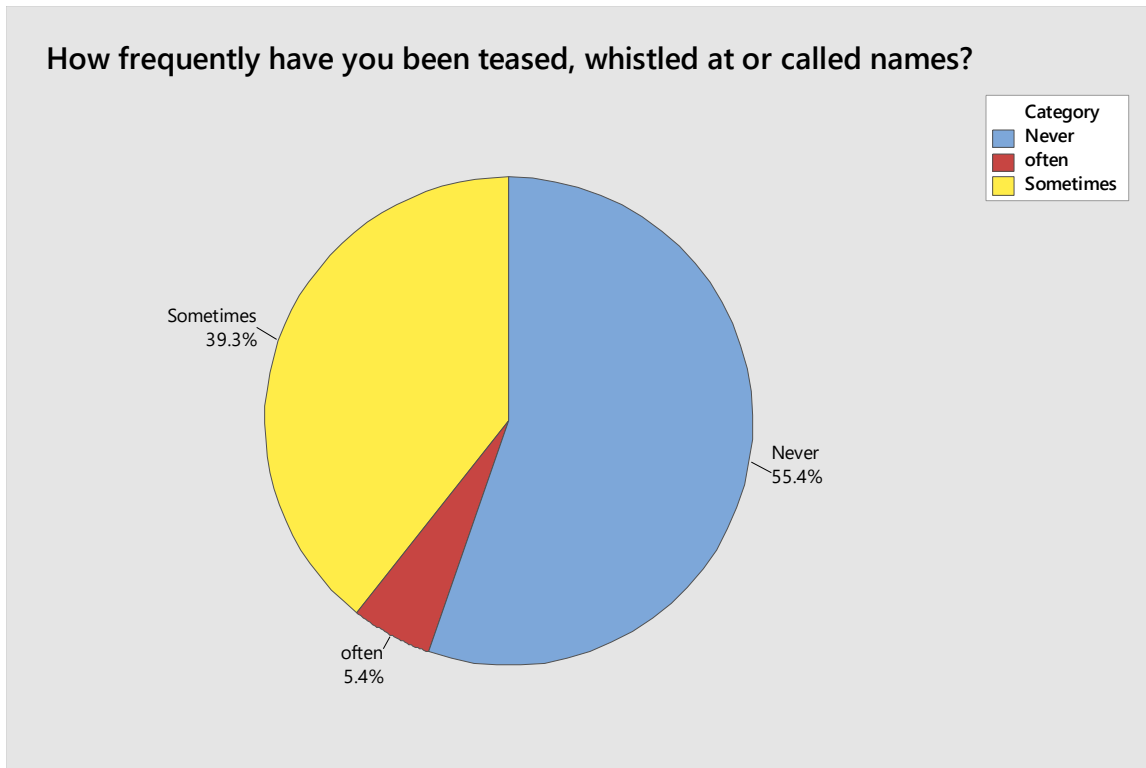
The following bar-chart gives the change in proportion of children answering ‘NO’ to this question. The bar chart shows an increase in the observed percentage.



When asked “*How frequently have you been teased, whistled at or called names?*”



The responses to this question were of three categories, “sometimes”, “often” and “never”. The responses are represented in the following chart-



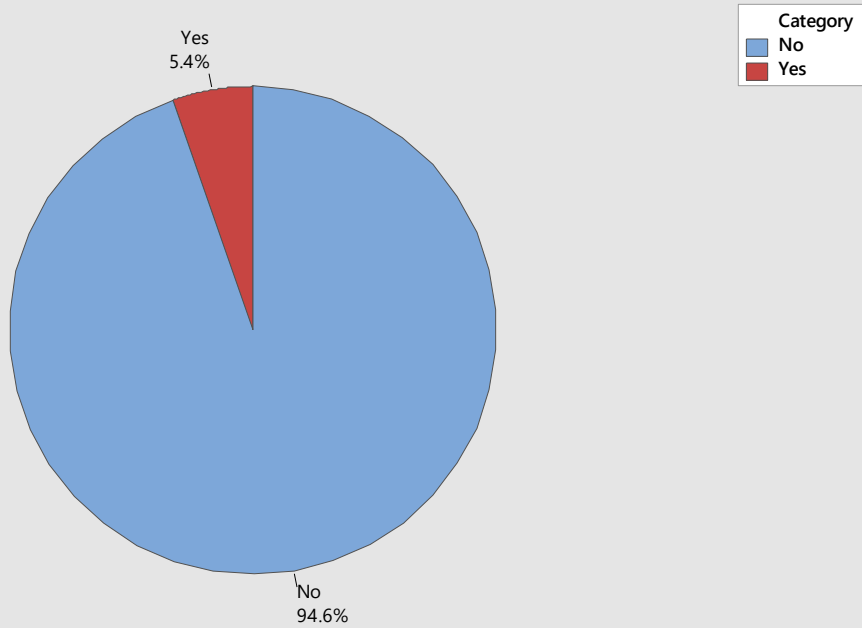
The above chart shows that most of the participants do not have an experience of being teased or whistled at, however there is a considerably huge proportion of participants who have sometimes experienced this.

When asked “*Have you experienced any incident which might have threatened your safety?*”

The response to this question were subjective, which were later coded to “Yes” or “No” for the sake of the analysis.

The responses to this question are represented through the following chart-

Have you experienced any incident which might have threatened your safety?

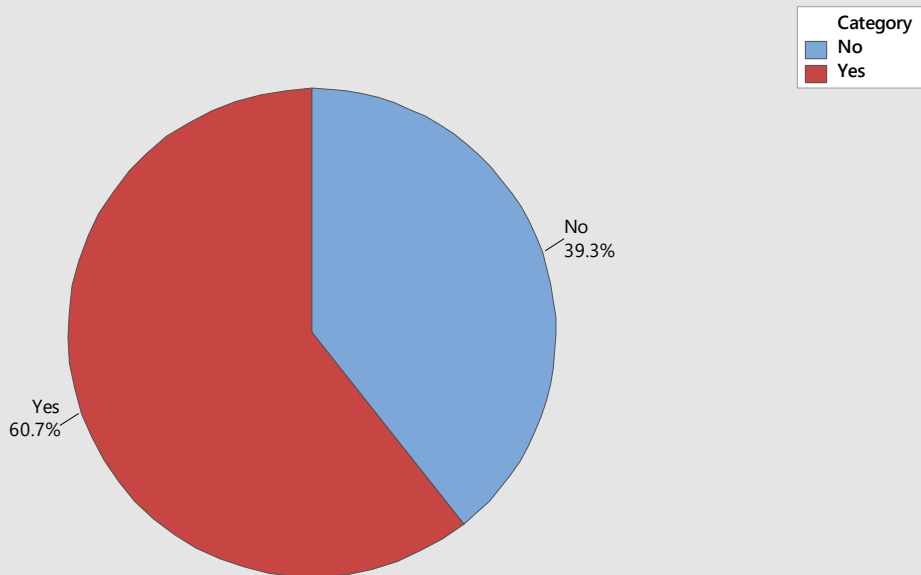


The chart shows that most of the participants have not experienced an incident which threatens their security. Very few participants have answered “yes” to this question.

We also asked if *they feel safe while commuting to the centre (after/before practice)?*

The response to this question is of Yes/No category. The proportion of the responses are represented by the following chart-

Do you feel safe while commuting to the centre (after/before practice)?



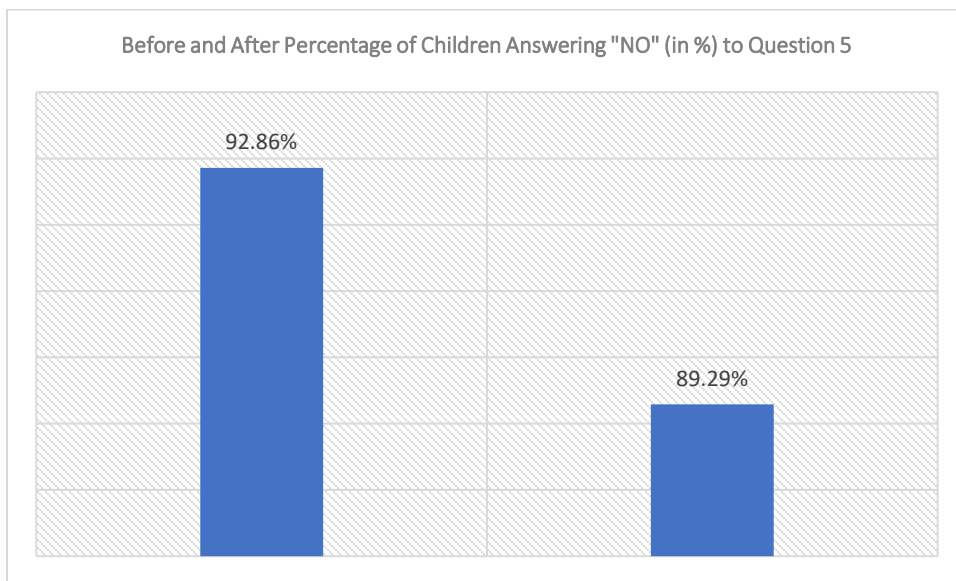
The chart shows that most of the participants feel safe while coming to or going back home from the centre, but there is a significant proportion of participants who do not.

All the table above shows that tribal children often find it difficult to talk about sexual abuse because they don't know the words to use, if children learn the exact [anatomical] words for private body parts, they will know the right words to be used. Besides, it will also help them know it is okay to talk about those body parts Most of the time, targets are very young, below 6-10 years. They are too young to understand the difference between right and wrong.

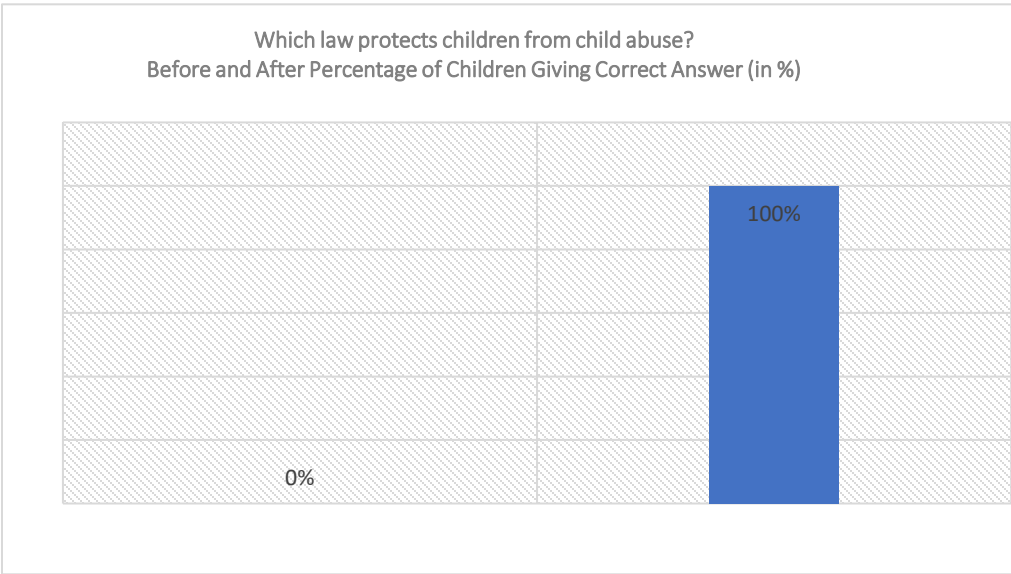
### **Influence of social media**

Indeed, social media is a promising channel to deliver health information, including health promotion and disease prevention messages. However, others suggest that Internet and social media platforms might also have negative health consequences due to a false belief of privacy leading to more provocative behavior and discussion around drinking, sex, violence, suicide ideation, and bullying, coupled with less parental monitoring. Facebook is one such social platform where you connect with new people. Therefore, we talked about *internet safety* with the children When asked “*When you make friends on Facebook would you show your private pictures and contacts with them?*” 89% of the respondents said ‘NO’.

The following bar chart represents the change in responses to this particular question before and after the workshop. The bar chart shows a slight decrease in ‘NO’ responses after the workshop.



The workshop also had discussions on the laws that protect children from child abuse. They were not aware of the laws before the workshop. The question “*Which law protects children from child abuse?*” was asked before and after the workshop. None of the participants, including boys and girls did not know the answer before the workshop, however after the workshop all participants could answer the question correctly.



Clearly the workshop has been a complete success in informing the participants about the laws against child abuse.

**Conclusion**

Significant numbers of tribal children have experienced neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse is a complex issue. While there are many options for prevention, there are some important tasks to be done to underpin this activity. In India, 53.2% children experience sexual abuse. In a study done by The Ministry of Women and Child Development, Government of India, it was found that one in five participants do not feel safe because of the fear of being sexually abused. What’s worse is, families of abused children do not come forward to report the abuse. Every child needs to be taught that their body belongs to them and they have a right to protect it. With this workshop we will be a conducting a series of other workshop to delve deeper into the understanding of Sexual abuse and harassment.

-----



## References:

1. Choudhry, V., Dayal, R., Pillai, D., Kalokhe, A. S., Beier, K., & Patel, V. (2018). Child sexual abuse in India: A systematic review. *PloS one*, 13(10), e0205086. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205086>
2. Landry, M., Turner, M., Vyas, A., & Wood, S. (2017). Social Media and Sexual Behavior Among Adolescents: Is there a link?. *JMIR public health and surveillance*, 3(2), e28. <https://doi.org/10.2196/publichealth.7149>
3. <https://www.nctsn.org/what-is-child-trauma/trauma-types/sexual-abuse/>

