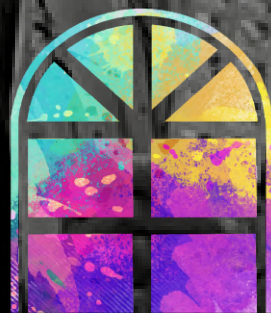


PROJECT

PERIOD ADDA

27.9.2021

**DHAPDHAPI 2,
BARUIPUR,
WEST BENGAL**



**RANGEEN
KHIDKI**

INTRODUCTION



Rangeen Khidki Foundation's Period Adda Program is a Holistic Menstrual Health Education Program which supports communities and organizations in developing menstrual health and advocacy based interventions, so that young adults are able to make informed choices that concern their own body.

We were invited by Dhapdhapi Gram Panchayat and Health Center on the 27th of September, 2021 to conduct the training programme with 73 girls. Dhapdhapi-ii is a village in Baruipur Block in 24 Parganas South District of West Bengal State, India. It was an honour to collaborate with the local government and reach these girls who have very little access to resources and general infrastructure for managing their menstruation hygienically. It is with the help of local government initiatives such as this that we can bring about change in the lives of thousands of adolescents and ensure safe menstrual hygiene practices.

TRAINING SESSIONS

The program was conducted in collaboration with Dhapdhapi Gram Panchayat and Local Health Center. A total of two sessions were conducted on the 27th of September, 2021 in the Baruipur Block in 24 Parganas South District of West Bengal State, India. Both the sessions were conducted in the same location, the panchayat building, next to the Dhapdhapi High School. We trained a total of 73 adolescent girls through an interactive learning session. The first session was conducted for a group of 27 girls and the second session for a group of 46 girls. Both the sessions were conducted by menstrual health facilitators from Rangeen Khidki, at the end of which a set of cloth pads were distributed to the girls who opted for it.



The structural processings of both the sessions were similar and broken into eight broad areas or parts. The discussions, interaction and explanation started with the idea of puberty and bodily changes surrounding puberty. Our facilitators prompted questions which engaged the groups to think about the kind of changes that take place in both male or a female bodies when they hit pubescence. Menstruation was one of the changes that came up through the discussion which moved the conversation into the second part of the explanation, whereby our facilitators talked about the different parts of the Female Reproductive System and their respective functions. The third part of the explanation revolved around the biological process of menstruation, how it happens and why it happens. The girls had a lot of questions during this part as most of the information was new to most of the girls.

After having a detailed discussion and revision of the processes and functioning of menstruation as a biological phenomenon, the session made its way to the fourth part, which explained the appearance and normalcy of white discharge and how to identify a probable infection in the area. It was also mentioned that in case such a situation arises, they need to consult a doctor at the earliest so as to avoid the spread of the possible infection. The fifth part of the explanation was interactive and the facilitators discussed period tracking and menstrual cycles. The girls actively participated in trying to calculate and track their own cycles. The session then moved onto the sixth area of discussion about nutrition and the need to lead a healthy and balanced diet as menstruators. The need for exercise and blood circulation were also mentioned. Part seven of the discussion revolved around the introduction of sustainable menstrual hygiene products. Our facilitators first talked about the usage of cloth and then mentioned what sanitary napkins and tampons are made out of.

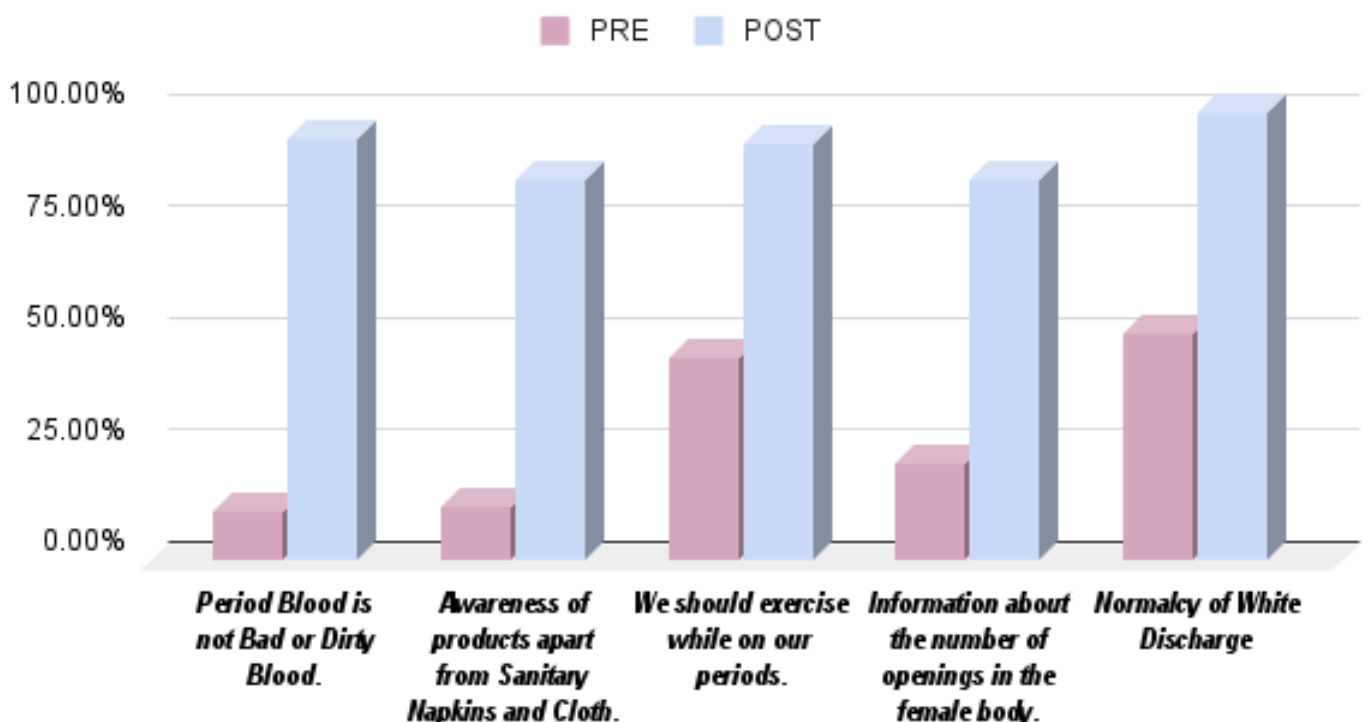
The explanation then moved onto cloth pads and menstrual cups. Both the products were displayed and passed around the groups for the girls to get a closer look. The functioning, usage, cost and effectiveness of both these products were explained in detail. On asking whether the girls would like to use either of the sustainable menstrual products, most of them responded positively. Lastly, the conversation ended with a discussion on period taboos, their origin, history and relevance in the current society.



OVERALL OUTPUT OF THE TRAINING

Q. NO	STATEMENT	PRE	POST
1.	<i>Period Blood is not Bad or Dirty Blood.</i>	10.9%	94.5%
2.	<i>Awareness of products apart from Sanitary Napkins and Cloth.</i>	12.3%	84.9%
3.	<i>We should exercise while on our periods.</i>	45.2%	93.2%
4.	<i>Information about the number of openings in the female body.</i>	21.9%	84.9%
5.	<i>Normalcy of White Discharge</i>	50.9%	100%

Knowledge Level





DISTRIBUTION

After the sessions were concluded for both the groups, a set cloth pad kits were distributed to them. Each kit had 3 cloth pads, an instruction manual and an information pamphlet. A total of 50 sets of cloth pad kits were distributed to both the groups combined.

CHALLENGES

Owing to the stigma and shame that surrounds the topic of menstruation, some of the girls took a lot of time to open up and hesitated to interact openly. The infrastructural limitations will continue to remain a challenge for these girls and affect access to safe and clean menstrual hygiene practices. Most of them said that they do not have access to private washrooms which becomes a major problem for them on the days that they are menstruating.

A major challenge that was faced while conducting the sessions was the limited area and space crunch of the location where they were being conducted. The group of girls had to sit very close to each other throughout the session which made some of them uncomfortable. Another major challenge that occurred was an increased on spot participation for the sessions. We were prepared for a total of 50 adolescents and the participation number increased to 73 girls after the first session which resulted in a shortage of distribution kits. However, the local health officer offered to provide medicines to the remaining 23 girls and the problem was resolved.

CONCLUSION

We are grateful to our donor *Eco Femme* for providing us with the cloth pad kits and supporting us with this distribution drive. We would also like to thank our donors for continuously believing in our work and supporting us. As a result of this program we can now expect these girls to experience menstruation as a natural physiological phenomenon instead of shame.