

“Promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health” in Cuddalore area



Rationale and Objective of the project

Menstruation and menstrual practices are still clouded by taboos and socio-cultural restrictions resulting in adolescent girls remaining ignorant of the scientific facts and hygienic health practices. Hygiene-related practices of women during menstruation are of considerable importance, as it has a health impact in terms of increased vulnerability to reproductive tract infections. The prevailing high price of sanitary napkins also force young women to go back to the age-old unhygienic practice of using cloth or rags which result in urinary infection, reproductive tract infection, fungal infection, irritation and rashes. Besides dumping of these non-biodegradable napkins in open garbage & water bodies will certainly affect the environment and cause adverse affect on small mammals - rodents (rat) to larger mammals (cow) by consuming them.

With the above background, ASSEFA Health Care Services in support with ASSEFA, Alessandria, Italy initiated this project **“Promotion of Sexual and reproductive health”** in the Cuddalore area with the primary objective is to inform, educate and sensitize menstrual hygiene among the young girls and thereby promoting reproductive health.

Project activities & Beneficiaries

This project ensures menstrual hygiene among the women through training on *facts of menstruation, menstrual hygiene, physiological implications, significance of menstruation, development of secondary sexual characteristics, and proper disposal of used sanitary napkins* with the distribution of eco-friendly napkins along with soaps and training materials. The project also taught to prepare home-made cotton napkins & benefits in using them. The project so far has supported nearly 594 young women of age groups between 11yrs to 24 years.

Menstrual hygiene, a very important risk factor for reproductive tract infections, is a vital aspect of health education for adolescent girls. The school teachers/ health worker are playing a very important role in transmitting this vital message of correct menstrual hygiene among young women.

To Take Forward.....

As eco-sanitary pads are costly and due to busy life style, time does not permit to make sanitary pads at home, the young women tend to switch back to synthetic pads or any cheaper material available at that time. Hence with this view, the project is planning to take this project to next level by establishing a small production unit (sanitary pad making machine) in the project area, providing employment to local women and providing cotton napkins at affordable cost.