

Keeping Children Healthy & Safe During The Outbreak

A Sportz Village Foundation Position Paper



ENSURING BETTER HEALTH, HYGIENE AND SAFETY THROUGH SPORTS EDUCATION

Background

Over the past few months, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced nations & communities across the globe to reevaluate the existing norms of social behaviors and economic activities.

Among others, the education sector has also been majorly impacted by the pandemic and is currently exploring means to adapt to the situation. It is estimated that more than 1.5 billion students of all ages around the world have been affected by the abrupt closure of schools and educational institutions. Children from vulnerable communities are particularly affected because of a sudden loss of livelihood among family members as well as the inaccessibility of digital platforms to continue learning.

The continuing lockdowns have confined children within the four walls of their homes for long periods of time – without access to any physical activity or sport – making them highly vulnerable to physical & emotional health related issues.

In our last paper in this series: '*Getting children active during the outbreak*', we offered a framework for offering a physical activity program to children through a multi-modal (online/ offline/ physical) and blended (delivered at their homes, communities and schools) structure.

In that paper, we also contended that educators and development specialists need to integrate the notion of preventive health & personal hygiene within any sports education program offered to children during the outbreak. This integration will enable children to adopt the necessary social behaviors & personal hygiene to stay safe and continue to enjoy higher health & fitness levels through physical activity¹.

In this document, we offer a framework for integrating health & personal hygiene related outcomes with sports education programs delivered in a multi-modal and blended manner. The integrated module will help children & adolescents not only engage with physical activity in a safe & sustainable manner, but also become change-agents for raising awareness about health and personal hygiene in their communities.

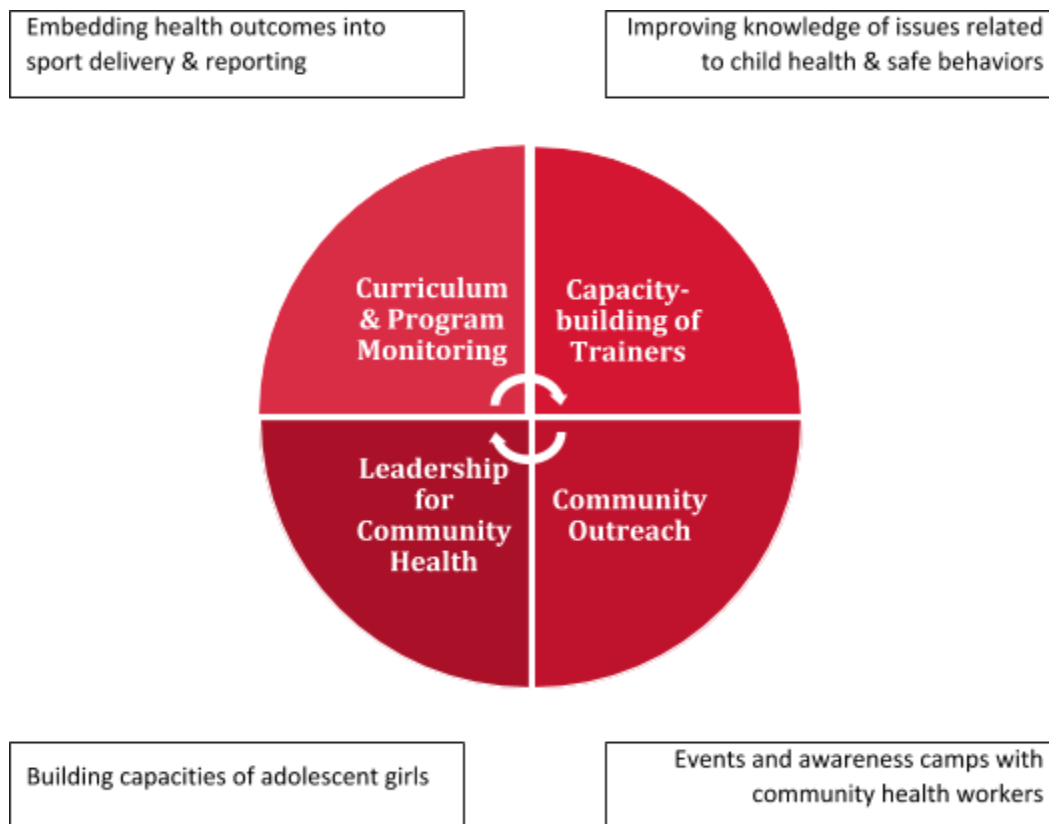
Re-imagining Sports Education:

Physical health & mental well-being is one of the key outcomes from any sport & physical activity program designed to run in the schools or communities. The World Health Organization² has also brought out a [Global Action Plan on Physical Activity](#) 2018-2030 which clearly brings out the multiple health, social and economic benefits of regular physical activity and how that can contribute towards achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

While the value of regular physical activity has long been established, the current crisis has prompted us to recommend key changes in the way we deliver the physical activity programs for sustaining the health benefits for children & adolescents through safe behaviors.

The following artifacts capture the key design principles for delivering health & hygiene related outcomes through physical activity & sports programs:

ARTIFACT 1: KEY FOCUS AREAS



ARTIFACT 2: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Curriculum & Program Monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Sports education curriculum modified for online/offline delivery at home or community (during lockdown) or no/low contact drills/games in smaller groups in community or schools (post-lockdown)2. Integration of Health & Hygiene related education³ into the curriculum in age-specific formats – delivered in digital/print formats (during lockdown) or in-person by trainer (post-lockdown)3. Equal focus on learning outcomes related to health & personal hygiene awareness during assessments and monitoring
Capacity Building of Trainers (topics covered)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Delivery of online/offline curriculum (during lockdown) as well as no/low-contact programs on-ground (post lockdown) – to include protocols related to communication and sanitation2. Overview of health and WASH-related issues pertaining to child development3. Skills and methods related to child- rights based programming (CRBP) to create awareness among children
Leadership for Community Health*	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identifying adolescent girl volunteers for promoting health related awareness in the community2. Focused training on leadership, health and community participation through periodic camps spread across the year3. Opportunities for apprenticeship as trainers as well as volunteering in any field-action projects initiated in collaboration with school/community
Community Outreach	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Building collaboration with local community health / ASHA workers or other health partners2. Promoting health related awareness through digital and print campaigns3. Scheduling awareness camps for children/ parents related to community health and WASH

** This program is designed to run as part of Sportz Village Foundations’s “Youth Development Program” - with the vision of providing equal opportunities to girls by enabling them to become independent and self-reliant, continue their education, delay prospects of early marriage, and improve their overall health & access to socio-economic capital.*

Collaborating for improved health & well-being of children & communities:

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a wake-up call for public-spirited individuals and organizations to support the needs of millions of children from communities who have been adversely affected by the situation. We believe that sport & physical activity – in the current situation – can play a vital role in ensuring better physical & emotional health for these children. Integrating preventive health & personal hygiene education as part of sports education is a critical first step. However, further collaborations in the areas of education, health, nutrition, livelihoods and infrastructure will be required between public and private bodies⁴ for a comprehensive transformation. It is going to be arduous, but the effort is going to be worth it.



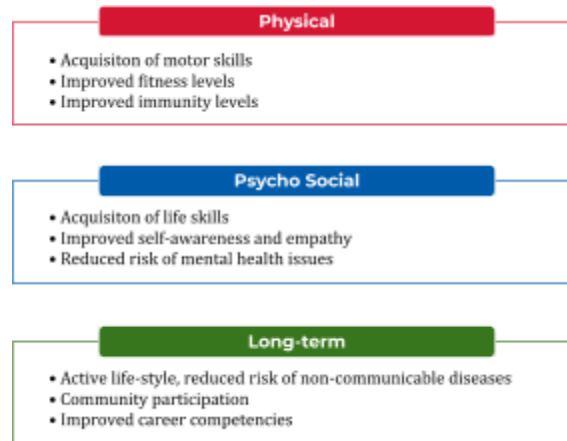
ENDNOTES:

Sports Education¹

Regular physical activity contributes to multiple aspects of growth and development of a child. It is important across all ages and serves various functions for effective physical, mental and moral development. At a school level, this can be ensured by quality physical education programs delivered by trainers.

Sports Education or Physical Education (PE) refers to the process of supporting children to explore their physical competence by teaching skills and knowledge that enables them to perform a wide range of movements, actions or drills. Structured PE or sport programs supplement other educational initiatives in schools leading to better overall outcomes for children. In the long-term, this not only has an enduring positive effect on individuals but also enhances their ability to participate in community events or adopt an active lifestyle.

Some of the key benefits of physical education is illustrated in the artifact below:



World Health Organization (WHO) Charter for Physical Education²



Mapping of Health Outcomes to Sports Education³

Our physical education curriculum is based on the Grade-Level Outcomes laid down by SHAPE (Society of Health and Physical Education) America. It is designed to meet the long-term health and physical literacy of the participating children. We have mapped health-related outcomes that are appropriate to the development levels of a child. We will equip our trainers to realize these outcomes through activities as well as direct interaction with children.

Class	Sample PE Related Outcome (locomotor)	Health Related Outcome
Nursery to Class 1	Performs jumping and landing actions with balance	Becomes aware of the various body parts
Class 2	Demonstrates 2 of the 5 critical elements for jumping and landing	Becomes aware of the function of various body parts
Class 3	Jumps and lands in the horizontal and vertical planes using a mature pattern	Identifies that physical activity is inter-dependent on good health
Class 4	Uses spring-and-step takeoffs and landings specific to gymnastics	Practices basic hygiene behaviors like hand-washing
Class 5	Combines jumping and landing patterns with loco-motor and manipulative skills	Becomes aware of the importance of good eating habits and its benefits
Class 6	Varies application of force during dance or gymnastic activities	Becomes aware of importance of clean drinking water and sanitation practices
Class 7	Identifies and applies Newton's laws of motion to various activities	Becomes aware of the meaning of deficiencies and the role of key nutrients
Class 8	Describes and applies mechanical advantage(s) in movement patterns.	Becomes aware of concepts related to sexual and reproductive health
Class 9	Demonstrates competency in dance forms used in cultural and social occasions	Understands the rationale of immunization and other disease prevention protocols
Class 10	Demonstrates competency in choreographing a dance or by giving a performance.	Has learnt the practical skills required for community health work

Collaboration between Public & Private Bodies⁴

Co-ordination with Government: We recognize that effective implementation of these programs cannot happen in isolation and it depends on good coordination with the government actors at the micro and macro level. We believe the government can play a pro-active role in using the crisis to strengthen the public education system and address the needs of the children holistically. We have identified four aspects of state intervention that can not only improve the quality of experience provided in schools but can also ensure that our programs have an enduring impact on children.



The points below provide an overview of the measures that can be taken by the government to improve the public education system so that such efforts can be effectively supplemented by civil-society organizations.

	Phase	
	During Lockdown	Post Lockdown
Food & Nutrition	Distribution of ration under mid-day meal program Usage of school kitchens to prepare hot-meals Distribution of additional proteins and micro-nutrients (as available)	Public-Private Partnership to enhance quality of nutrition in all schools Training teachers to deliver nutrition awareness programs
Health & Safety	Awareness programs for children in vernacular language Disinfection of schools used as quarantine centers Guidelines for coordination with public health systems and workers	Protocols for attendance in staggered batches Distribution of health and safety kits Training teachers to deliver COVID-19 and other health-related awareness programs
Infrastructure Upgrade	Leveraging MGNREGA to repair school buildings in poor or dilapidated condition Ensuring functional toilets and washrooms in all schools Creating alternate/outdoor learning spaces	Ensuring strict adherence to disinfection protocols Ensuring regular maintenance of infrastructure and alternate learning spaces
Learning Outcomes	Training programs for teachers on usage of ICT and digital devices Piloting demo classes through radio, TV and mobile devices Re-planning of yearly schedule and lesson mapping	Evaluating the extent of drop in attendance or learning levels Conducting classes based on prescribed distancing norms Active experimentation with digital learning methods

About Sportz Village

Sportz Village Foundation (SVF) is India's largest sports education organization. SVF uses sport to drive change in disadvantaged children & youth – by improving their health, education and empowerment-related outcomes. SVF's programs currently run in over 1300 schools in 250 locations in the country, covering over 700,000 children and adolescents. SVF is also on the panel of NSDC, CII, NITI Aayog, Khelo India and several state governments as a strategic partner and advisor for sports education.

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