

# SafeZone

Guiding Children To Safety

AUGUST | Vol. 01 | 2023

## FROM THE COO'S DESK

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural edition of our free newsletter dedicated to the critical topic of children's safety and survival as an integral part of school education. I am delighted and deeply honoured to be a part of this important initiative that places the well-being and protection of our future generations as a top priority.

The importance of ensuring the safety and survival skills of children in the mental and physical space has gained prominence in educational discussions. As parents and educators, it is not only our responsibility to impart knowledge but also to create a secure environment that nurtures the holistic development of every child. Equipping students with essential safety and survival skills should be a fundamental aspect of education.

Within this newsletter, we have carefully curated a collection of articles, insights, and resources that delve into various aspects of children's safety and survival. Our dedicated team of experts, educators, and industry professionals have worked tirelessly to bring this newsletter to life and our goal is to empower parents, educators, and students themselves with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate potentially hazardous situations and protect themselves and others.

We firmly believe that children's safety and survival education is not just a precautionary measure, but a means of fostering resilience, crisis management skills, self-confidence, and empowerment in order to make informed decisions in challenging circumstances.

It is our collective responsibility to ensure that our society is a safe place for our children, where they can learn, grow, and flourish without fear and this can only be possible by prioritizing children's safety and survival within the framework of school education.

Together, let us commit ourselves to the cause of children's safety and survival through school education. I invite you to join us on this important journey, explore the valuable content within these pages, and I hope that this newsletter serves as a source of inspiration, guidance, and empowerment for everyone involved in the education, parenting, and welfare of our children.

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SafeZone salutes youth who inspire an entire generation.



**RANJIT KUMAR**  
Chief Operating Officer

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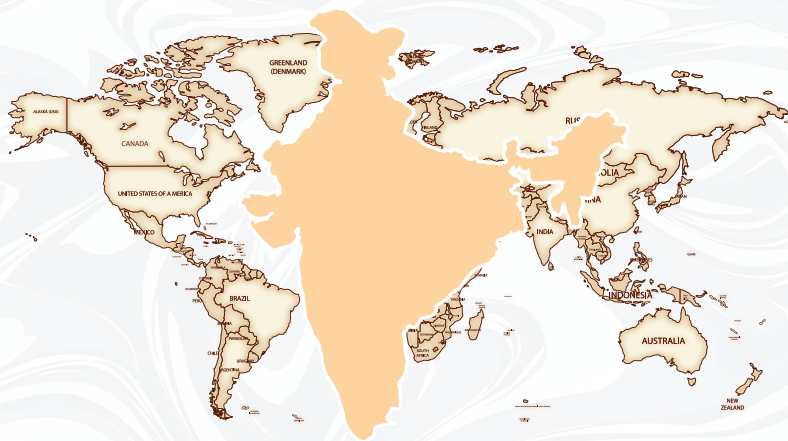
**"Never doubt** that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can **change the world**. Indeed, it is **the only thing that ever has.**"

-Margaret Mead

## SOCIAL PULSE

Quick insights on current trends impacting children & youth.

# CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE SCENARIO



Indian children (0-18 yrs) constitute approximately 20% of the World Population.



In 97.1 per cent of the reported cases of child sexual abuse, the offender was someone known to the child or in a position of trust & responsibility.



In almost all form of sexual abuse, the number of boys who have faced abuse were equal to the number of girls who have faced abuse.

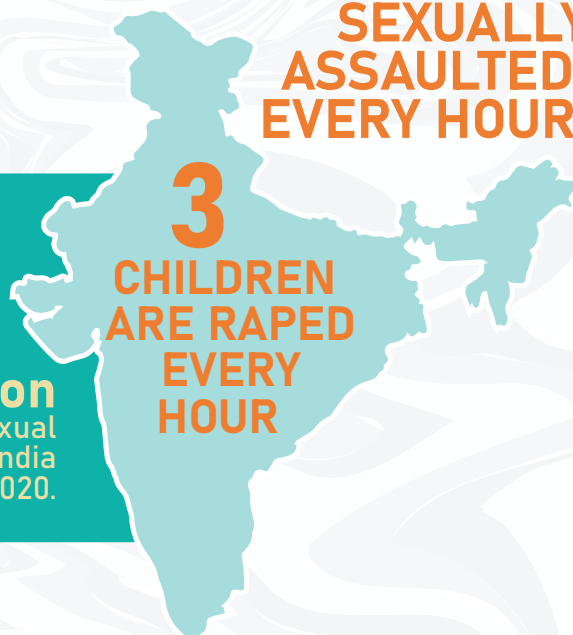
**IN INDIA,  
3 CHILDREN ARE  
RAPED EVERY  
HOUR AND  
5 CHILDREN ARE  
SEXUALLY  
ASSAULTED  
EVERY HOUR.**



In 13 major states of India the Child Sexual Abuse prevalence was as high as **53%**



Approximately **2.4 million** instances of online child sexual abuse were reported in India from 2017 to 2020.



### CHILDLINE HELPLINE



Childline1098 is a 24/7 National Helpline. Email : [dial1098@childlineindia.org.in](mailto:dial1098@childlineindia.org.in). Initiative by the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Source : Indian Express 2023/ Lead India/Ministry of Woman & Child Welfare/ Interpol/NDTV/NCRB 2021



## IN FOCUS: EXPERT FEATURE

-Dr. Ranjini Krishnaswamy,  
India National Award Winner

### The importance of First Aid & CPR education in schools.

I am not a medical doctor nor is this article meant to be written from the medical point of view. But having been the Head of a school for almost quarter of a century, I have come across several situations in schools which need basic safety skills, first aid and even CPR at times.

In the realm of education, the focus extends far beyond academic achievements. One crucial aspect that must not be overlooked is equipping students with life-saving skills.

First Aid and CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation) training in schools for the staff and even senior students plays a pivotal role in ensuring the safety and well-being of students, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to respond effectively in emergency situations.



### Critical Situations & Quick Response

Accidents and medical emergencies can occur at any time, including during school hours. By providing First Aid and CPR training, schools empower students to take immediate action in critical situations till such time a responsible adult takes charge. The ability to evaluate injuries, regulate bleeding, perform CPR, and provide basic life support can be the difference between life and death.

### Preparedness Mindset:

First Aid and CPR training incorporates a mindset of preparedness for students. Students learn to identify potential hazards, respond quickly, and take necessary precautions to prevent accidents. By integrating this training into the curriculum, schools promote a proactive approach to safety that extends beyond the four walls of a classroom.



**Dr. Ranjini Krishnaswamy** is an accomplished education professional with over 40 years of experience. She is a multiple academic award winner, which also includes the prestigious **NATIONAL AWARD for Teachers /**

**Principals** from the Government of India. With expertise in curriculum development, school administration, and English language instruction, she has made significant contributions as a principal, teacher trainer, and author. Currently, she serves as the Director-Education for the Dosti Group Foundation and is also in the Expert Panel Advisory Board of the CSS PROGRAM. She can be reached at [jinikay@gmail.com](mailto:jinikay@gmail.com)

### Confidence and Leadership Skills:

Learning First Aid and CPR builds students' confidence and enhances their leadership skills. When faced with an emergency, students who have received this training can remain calm, take charge, and guide others in providing necessary aid. These skills contribute to their personal growth, fostering self-assurance and a sense of responsibility.

### Empathy & Compassion:

First Aid and CPR education cultivate empathy and compassion in students. They develop a genuine concern for the wellbeing of others, understanding the importance of providing immediate assistance during emergencies. These qualities extend beyond the school environment, shaping students into caring and responsible individuals.

### Practical Skills for Life :

First Aid and CPR training provide students with practical skills that they can carry with them throughout their lives. Accidents can happen anywhere, and the ability to respond effectively can make a significant impact. Whether at home, in public spaces, or in future careers, students who have acquired these skills are better prepared to handle emergency situations.



### IN CONCLUSION ...

Incorporating First Aid and CPR training into school education is a crucial step towards fostering a safe and responsible community. By equipping students with life-saving skills, schools empower them to be proactive, confident, and compassionate individuals. The importance of First Aid and CPR in school education cannot be overstated, as it prepares students to be prepared and capable of responding to emergencies with competence and care.

This is of particular importance in the present scenario where students often indulge in acts of bravado not realizing the consequences. Camps and field trips are the norm today as opposed to earlier days and hence the importance of educating students to be prepared for any eventuality.



# EXPERT INSIGHTS - INTERVIEW

## KEY INSIGHTS REGARDING EXAM STRESS

Exclusive Interview With  
Ms. Natasha Mehta, Consulting Psychologist



### Q WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY FACTORS OF EXAM STRESS AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS?

**A** Exam stress among school students can stem from a range of factors that are unique to their individual situations. Academic expectations place significant pressure on students, driven by the expectations of parents, teachers, and even themselves. Poor time management aggravates stress, leading to last-minute cramming and feelings of unpreparedness. Performance anxiety, fuelled by the fear of judgment and evaluation, contributes to heightened stress and self-doubt. Additionally, the long-term implications of exams, such as college admissions and future career prospects, create additional stressors. Furthermore, students living in insecure environments marked by unstable family dynamics, such as domestic violence, abuse, neglect, or disruptions, experience heightened emotional distress and exam stress. As a psychologist and a school counsellor, it is crucial to identify and address these primary factors collaboratively with students and parents, supporting them in managing stress, fostering resilience, and promoting healthier approaches to exams.

### Q CAN YOU PROVIDE AN OVERVIEW OF THE COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF EXAM STRESS THAT STUDENTS OFTEN EXHIBIT?

**A** Exam stress manifests in various ways, and it is crucial to recognize common signs and symptoms in students. Increased anxiety, difficulty concentrating, and restlessness are notable indicators. Sleep and appetite changes, such as insomnia or overeating may also occur. Physical symptoms like headaches and stomach aches can arise, along with emotional changes like irritability and mood swings. Procrastination, declining academic performance, and withdrawals from previously enjoyed social activities are also notable factors. Educators, counsellors, and parents should be attentive to these signs and provide a safe space for students to express their

concerns without fear of judgment. By identifying these indicators, we can then offer the appropriate direction to help students effectively manage their exam stress and promote overall well-being.

### Q ARE THERE ANY LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES OR RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH EXCESSIVE EXAM STRESS?

**A** Yes definitely! Excessive exam stress can indeed have long-term consequences and risks for students. Physically, it can lead to increased fatigue, sleep disturbances, even long-term health issues like digestive problems and deregulated nervous systems.

Mentally, excessive exam stress can contribute to heightened anxiety, depression, burnout, and reduced self-esteem, and substance abuse. It can negatively impair cognitive functioning and memory.

Moreover, a long-term exposure to high stress can lead to a sense of fear or negativity towards learning and life, a decreased sense of motivation, as well as a diminished sense of enjoyment in education.

It is important to address excessive exam distress and provide students with appropriate support and coping strategies. By doing so, we can help mitigate the potential long-term consequences, promote their overall well-being, and ensure a healthier approach to exams and academic success.





## Q WHAT ARE SOME EFFECTIVE APPROACHES THAT YOU RECOMMEND FOR STUDENTS TO MANAGE AND COPE WITH EXAM STRESS?

**A** First and foremost is the importance of effective time management techniques that I suggest to children and parents. This helps in setting achievable goals, and incorporating regular breaks in order to prevent burnout. Additionally, it is extremely important to promote relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises and mindfulness. As a Yoga professional, I strongly recommend it.

Prioritizing overall well-being is crucial, which involves fostering healthy habits like nutritious eating, sufficient sleep, and regular exercise. Furthermore, it is necessary to create an open and supportive environment where students feel comfortable sharing their concerns and seek help.

In terms of academic preparation, I encourage simple tools for staying better organized such as mnemonics, effective note-taking methods, as well as implementing effective revision strategies. These approaches enhance students' readiness and bolster their confidence.

Moreover, we must ensure children are given space to understand that academic performance and worldly achievements alone do not determine their worth. Encouraging positive hobbies, spending quality time with loved ones, and practicing self-compassion foster a healthy mindset, ability to regulate their nervous systems, and reduce unnecessary performance stress.

Employing these strategies helps promote a holistic approach that can empower students to manage exam stress effectively and cultivate their overall well-being.

## INTELLIGENT & DETAILED IMPLEMENTATION-BASED LEARNING PLANS ON...

- ▶ Wellness Techniques to always stay in control.
- ▶ Coping With Exam Stress.
- ▶ Nutrition Awareness & Implementation.
- ▶ Understanding Body Language & Signals.
- ▶ Bully Awareness & Prevention Techniques (ONLINE & OFFLINE).
- ▶ Assertive Personality Development Methodologies.
- ▶ Mindfulness.
- ▶ Understanding Reasonable Force.
- ▶ Sexual Abuse Awareness & Prevention Techniques.
- ▶ Substance Abuse Awareness & Prevention Techniques.
- ▶ Physical Survival & Exit Strategy Techniques.
- ▶ Crisis Management Survival Techniques.

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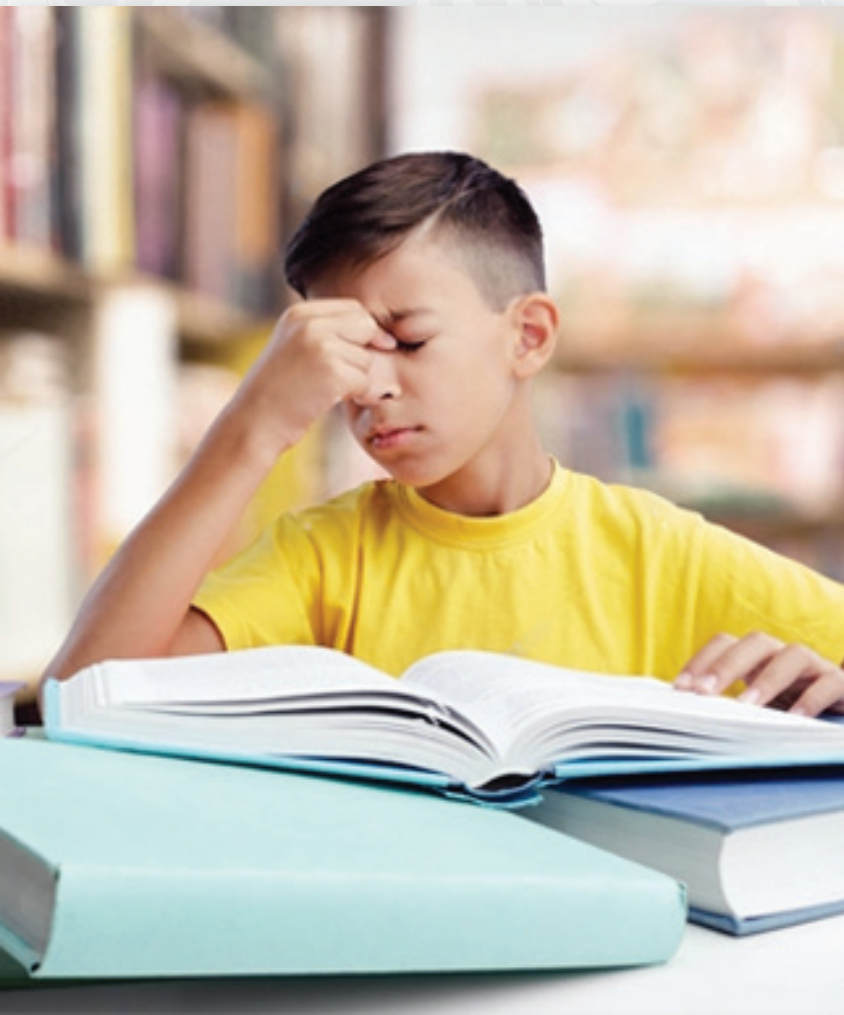


## Q WHAT ROLE SHOULD PARENTS PLAY IN SUPPORTING THEIR CHILDREN DURING STRESSFUL EXAM PERIODS?

**A** That is something very important to focus on! Parents and home environments play pivotal roles, especially during exam times. The home environment needs to be driven by open-minded conscious communication. Routine development, offerings of unconditional love, and acceptance have lasting impacts. Listening attentively to children's concerns and providing emotional support goes a long way.

However, that does not mean that as parents we are vulnerable to one's need to approach such situations in a loving, mature yet firm manner by establishing healthy boundaries and effective study habits. Encourage breaks and sufficient rest to develop a balanced and conducive attitude towards studies and exams. It is of paramount importance that parents avoid getting carried away by pressuring themselves and further displacing that behaviour or energy onto the children. Shifting the emphasis towards celebrating sincere effort and progress instead of solely fixating on outcomes helps to relieve pressure. Parents can support overall by modelling a balanced lifestyle. Routines should have time for healthy nutrition, regular exercise, and adequate sleep as key factors.

Due to various reasons, sometimes parents do struggle to cope up with the challenges of exam stress faced by their children. During such times, parents must bring it upon themselves to reach out for professional help such as school counsellors, child nutritionists, therapists, or psychiatrists. At the end of the day, they must understand that it is the well-being of the child that matters above all else.







## Q HOW CAN SCHOOLS AND PARENTS WORK TOGETHER TO ENSURE THAT STUDENT'S MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING IS PRIORITIZED, EVEN IN HIGH-PRESSURE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENTS?

**A** A very important question! Collaboration between schools and parents is crucial to prioritize students' mental and emotional well-being. Students today face not just high-pressure in academics, but also in social ecosystems. Open communication channels should always be established between educators, counsellors, and parents for sharing concerns and best practices. Schools can provide a platform where parents are educated and sensitized towards mental health and wellbeing concepts. The schools must also weave progressive Social Emotional Learning (SEL) programs into the curriculum. These programs should emphasise on Education for Life.

Schools and parents can set goals, provide support and celebrate achievements beyond academics together. This holistic approach will ensure that students thrive academically while maintaining their overall health and happiness.



**Ms. Natasha Mehta** is the Counselling Centre Head at S.M.SHETTY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, Wellness Psychologist at NITIE(IIM, Mumbai), Manah Wellness, and Great Place To Work. She consults from her clinic space in Andheri and online. She has 13+ years of experience working with clinical conditions in children and adults. She is an accomplished Yoga and Trauma therapist, trained REBT, CBT Therapist and works extensively on Social Emotional Learning modules. She takes pride in combining western and eastern psychological approaches to address the whole mind, not just the vulnerable parts of an individual. She can be contacted at:

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# KNOWLEDGE HUB

## EMERGENCE OF THE METAVERSE: CHALLENGES FOR THE YOUTH

- RANJIT KUMAR

The concept of the metaverse has sparked widespread fascination, offering young people an immersive digital realm for exploration, education, and entertainment. However, this virtual reality landscape also poses risks that demand our attention. Safeguarding the youth from potential dangers within the metaverse is crucial to ensure their safety and well-being especially when the education sector has now become the second largest industry investing into Metaverse technology.

The global metaverse market is expected to grow to over \$900 billion by 2030. Although still very early, around 400 million people are users of the

metaverse. Of those, 80% of metaverse users are younger than 16.

The metaverse represents a captivating digital frontier, where individuals can engage with one another and digital constructs in real-time. Embracing virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality, it invites users to venture into boundless virtual worlds, create personalized avatars, partake in events, and partake in a myriad of activities. While the metaverse holds tremendous potential and can create immense positive change with the right guidance, it is essential to recognize the concerns it poses, particularly for the younger generation.

### HAZARDS TO YOUTH :

**Online Predators and Exploitation:** The open and interactive nature of the metaverse makes young users susceptible to online predators, cyberbullying, and grooming for exploitation. Moreover, the absence of legislation for sexual offenses within the Metaverse poses significant challenges and risks.

**Psychological Impacts:** Spending excessive time in the metaverse may lead to detrimental effects on mental health, including addiction, social isolation, and a decline in real-life interactions.

**Financial Exploitation and Debt:** The allure of Metaverse's virtual economy can lead to impulsive buying, financial exploitation, and debt among young users without fully comprehending the long-term ramifications.

**Privacy and Security:** The metaverse's collection of vast amounts of personal data raises apprehensions about privacy breaches, identity theft, and unwarranted surveillance.

In an era where the metaverse continues to flourish, it is imperative to acknowledge and mitigate potential hazards for young individuals. By fostering digital awareness education in schools, educating parents, implementing robust safety and legal measures, and encouraging collaboration among stakeholders, we can strive to create a metaverse that offers a secure and enriching environment for youth to explore its vast potential while ensuring their protection.

Wishful thinking? Not really! Remember ... every great achievement starts with a decision to try along with the confidence and self-belief to act.



**Ranjit Kumar** is the COO of WAYNE MACDONALD'S CHILDREN SAFETY & SURVIVAL PROGRAM. With international entrepreneurial experience of over 25 years in education, communications, healthcare, and retail, he is a multiple industry award winner and is an honoured member of The International Who's Who of Professionals, USA. His views have been sought & solicited in leading international publications. He can be contacted at: [ranjit.kumar@pgi-corp.com](mailto:ranjit.kumar@pgi-corp.com)

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# SafeZone TIPS



## CHILDREN SUBSTANCE ABUSE – WARNING SIGNS.

- Studies have shown that among adolescents seeking treatment for substance use in India, around 65% had symptoms of depression.
- Studies have also shown that among school-going children who associated with the bullying experience and consequent depression, around 25% reported using drugs or alcohol.





# INSPIRATIONS

SafeZone salutes youth who inspire an entire generation.

## YOUNG INSPIRATIONS :



## Our Role Model for this edition is young Kabir Singh Suryavanshi.

Kabir Singh Suryavanshi was diagnosed with autism when he was just two years old. Doctors advised his family not to expect him to learn like other children.

However, Kabir defied those expectations.

While attending a mainstream school and studying under the general category, Kabir Singh faced many challenges on his educational journey. However, with single - minded focus and with the excellent support of a counsellor, therapist, and his devoted mother, he overcame these obstacles and in the CBSE Class 10 board exam, Kabir was amongst the highest scorers with an impressive 96% marks.

We, at SafeZone and the CSS School Program salute this young trailblazer and wish him all the success and happiness in life.



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The CSS PROGRAM introduces the **A.I.Q CONCEPT** through its innovative learning plans.

# A.I.Q

**A**wareness **I**mplementation **Q**uotient

“The Level of **CONVERSION** of our **AWARENESS** towards **CONTINUOUSLY IMPLEMENTING** it as a **SUB-CONSCIOUS HABIT.**”

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FIRST  
WE MAKE  
OUR HABITS  
THEN  
OUR HABITS  
MAKE  
US





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