

Interactive presentation or paper presentation:

**“Where the Shoe pinches” – An Undergraduate
Peer Education Program on Sexuality and Life skills**

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Abstract

Context: Youth turn to their peers rather than adults for knowledge and guidance especially in areas relating to sexuality and reproductive health. Their sources of information are often unreliable.

Intervention: Peer Education Program

Enfold Trust, working in the field of Sexuality education since 2002, has interacted with over 30,000 students. We conducted a peer education program (PEP) in an urban English-speaking undergraduate college in Bangalore from Aug - Dec 2010.

Forty-eight 2nd year undergraduate student volunteers, (Peer Educators, PE) attended 24 hours of classes on sexuality, life skills, and personal safety along with sessions in smaller groups with trained Enfold mentors. They then took sessions on selected topics for their peers after 50 hours of input.

Research:

The program was evaluated through questionnaires and focused group discussions with the PEs, mentors, and the students for whom PEs had taken sessions.

Analysis:

The PEs reported an increase in knowledge base from 4.3 to 8.6 and an increase in confidence levels from 4.2 to 8.8 on a scale of 10. They found pregnancy, abortion, contraception, and sexual misconceptions interesting and felt that personal safety, communication, and

self-awareness were useful. They remembered best the topics that they themselves had to take for their peers.

Analysis of random feedback from 134 students who had attended sessions conducted by the PEs: 87% felt that peers taking the sessions made them more effective. 88% found the sessions relevant. 93% felt they had learnt something new. 63% said that the sessions had changed their attitude and beliefs

Mentors found the experience rewarding, though time-consuming.

Conclusion:

Peer education appears to be a successful intervention to increase authentic knowledge among the youth and bring about a change in their attitudes and beliefs. Long-term studies are needed to gauge its effectiveness in altering youth behaviour.