

# School Health Programme is Essential for Developing the Habits of Personal Hygiene and Creating Awareness Regarding Morbidities among School Children

## Abstract

Personal Hygiene is one of the essential key factors for attaining healthy life style. Maintaining personal hygiene helps to improve the quality of living manifolds. Lack of personal hygiene creates a serious health problem. School going children have inadequate knowledge of personal hygiene and this unawareness cause morbidities and sometimes even death. In this paper, we focus on the benefits of school health programme in creating awareness regarding personal hygiene and related morbidities among school children.

**Keywords:** Hygiene, Morbidities, School Health Programme, Awareness, Diseases.

## Introduction

Hygiene plays a vital role in leading a healthy and a happy life. Hygiene is a set of routine practices to lead a healthy life style. According to WHO, "Hygiene refers to conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases". Hygiene is a concept related to cleanliness and health. Personal hygiene is the set of routine practices that is performed for one's own cleanliness. Good personal hygiene declines the rate of morbidities among the school children. Poor personal hygiene is one of the greatest threats to mankind. Poor personal hygiene causes serious public health problem. The poor personal hygiene among students is due to lack of awareness of health benefits of personal hygiene. Poor personal hygiene causes diarrhea, fever, skin diseases, intestinal infections, dental or oral problems etc. To create the awareness among students, school health programmes are initiated. School health programme is a program which focuses on the holistic development of a child, i.e., their physical appearance, nutrition, mental health, dental health, etc. It is said that, "Prevention is better than cure", school health program also work with this objective. It prevents the spread of diseases and promotes the health and well being of students through creating awareness regarding Personal hygiene and health benefits.

## Personal Hygiene

Personal hygiene is the activities that are performed to attain cleanliness. From ancient times, personal hygiene has been given prime importance. In Hinduism, personal hygiene is considered as "Nitya Karmas" and it has to be performed regularly. In Islamic culture, personal hygiene is done through "Wuzu" and "Ghusl" before the daily prayers. Similarly, much evidence were discovered which shows personal hygiene is considered important and essential in different civilizations. Personal hygiene is the habit of cleaning all external parts, i.e., face, nose, eyes, ears, teeth, throat, hairs, skin, fingers, nails and feet. It includes all the good habits such as washing hands before and after meal and after visiting toilet, taking bath, brushing teeth, combing hairs, trimming nails, wear neat and tidy clothes etc. All these good habits should be learnt from childhood itself. The mortality rate of children is high which is due to lack of personal hygiene. Lack of personal hygiene causes severe problems such as infections, diarrhea, dental problems etc. So, the child should be made aware about the personal hygiene and advantages related to it.



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It is the duty of parents and school teacher to inculcate the habits of personal cleanliness in children. Student who do not take bath regularly and even those who do not brush their teeth regularly are at poor level of maintaining personal hygiene. It is the duty of teacher to check students more often about their personal hygiene.

#### School Health Programme

School health programme is a specialized programme that focuses on the overall development of school age children. It should consist of eleven components, viz. Mental Health, Relationships, Physical growth and development, Nutrition, Self-care, Dental health, Active living, Injury prevention and safety, Drugs education, consumer health and Environment health. All these components are kept in mind before creating any type of school health program. The main objectives of school health programme are:

1. To develop a healthy environment for children.
2. To create awareness about personal hygiene.
3. To develop the healthy attitude and healthy behavior of the student

School health programme acts as a medium to create awareness about personal hygiene and healthy environment. School health program would benefits 22 crore students in 1288750 schools all over India.

#### Method and Material

Students should be aware of the issues of personal hygiene and for this, students should be taught about the benefits of personal hygiene and related issues. To check the knowledge and awareness regarding personal hygiene and its benefits, a method of cross-sectional observations study was opted. Government high School situated at Baila, Mandi, Distt. Poonch, J&K, India was taken under consideration for the study. It takes duration of one month. Students in grades 1<sup>st</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> were taken under supervision for the study. A pre-designed, pre-tested and structured questionnaire was prepared.

The first step includes permission from school authority. In next step on a pre-assigned day, a school visit was done along with questionnaires, which was pre-designed and pre-tested. The questionnaires includes the questions related to personal hygiene such as taking bath regularly, trimming hairs, washing hands before and after meal, wearing clean clothes, washing hands after visiting toilet, brushing teeth, and combing hairs and morbidities such as fever, cold, cough, oral /dental problems, diarrhea and head lice. The students were also examined by their respective class teachers and data was collected and then we made them aware regarding personal hygiene and benefits, and again the survey was held after fifteen days.

#### Result

Table 1 shows about the awareness and practices of personal hygiene before school health programme. Table 2 shows about the practices of personal hygiene after school health programme and Table 3 shows about the morbidities related to poor personal hygiene.

**Table 1**

#### Distribution of Students According to Correct Awareness and Practice Related to Personal Hygiene before School Health Programme

Total no. of students =160

Number of Boys = 97

Number of Girls = 63

Perimeters of Personal Hygiene	Practice	Awareness
Taking bath regularly	53	93
Brushing Teeth	61	119
Combing hair	47	75
Trimming nails	63	100
Wearing clean clothes	57	120
Washing hands before meal	79	104
Washing hands after meal	53	96
Washing hands after visiting toilet	112	137

**Table 2**

#### Distribution of Students According to Correct Practices Related to Personal Hygiene after School Health Programme

Perimeters of personal hygiene	Practices
Taking bath regularly	93
Brushing teeth	112
Combing hairs	100
Wearing clean clothes	127
Washing hands before meal	103
Washing hand after meal	97
Washing hand after visiting toilet	117
Trimming nails	105

**Table 3**

#### Distribution of Students According To Morbidities Related To Poor Personal Hygiene. It Is the Data Collected In the First Fifteen Days

Morbidities	Number of students
Fever	43
Cold	62
Cough	19
Dental Problems	65
Diarrhea	15
Head Lice	20

#### Conclusion

From the above study, it is clear that more than fifty percent of students are unaware of the concept of personal hygiene regardless of the fact that it is one of basic and important aspect of an individual's life. The government took the initiative to create awareness and launched many school health programmes and campaign. Due to all these efforts many students came to know about personal hygiene, benefits of good personal hygiene and morbidities related to poor personal hygiene.

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