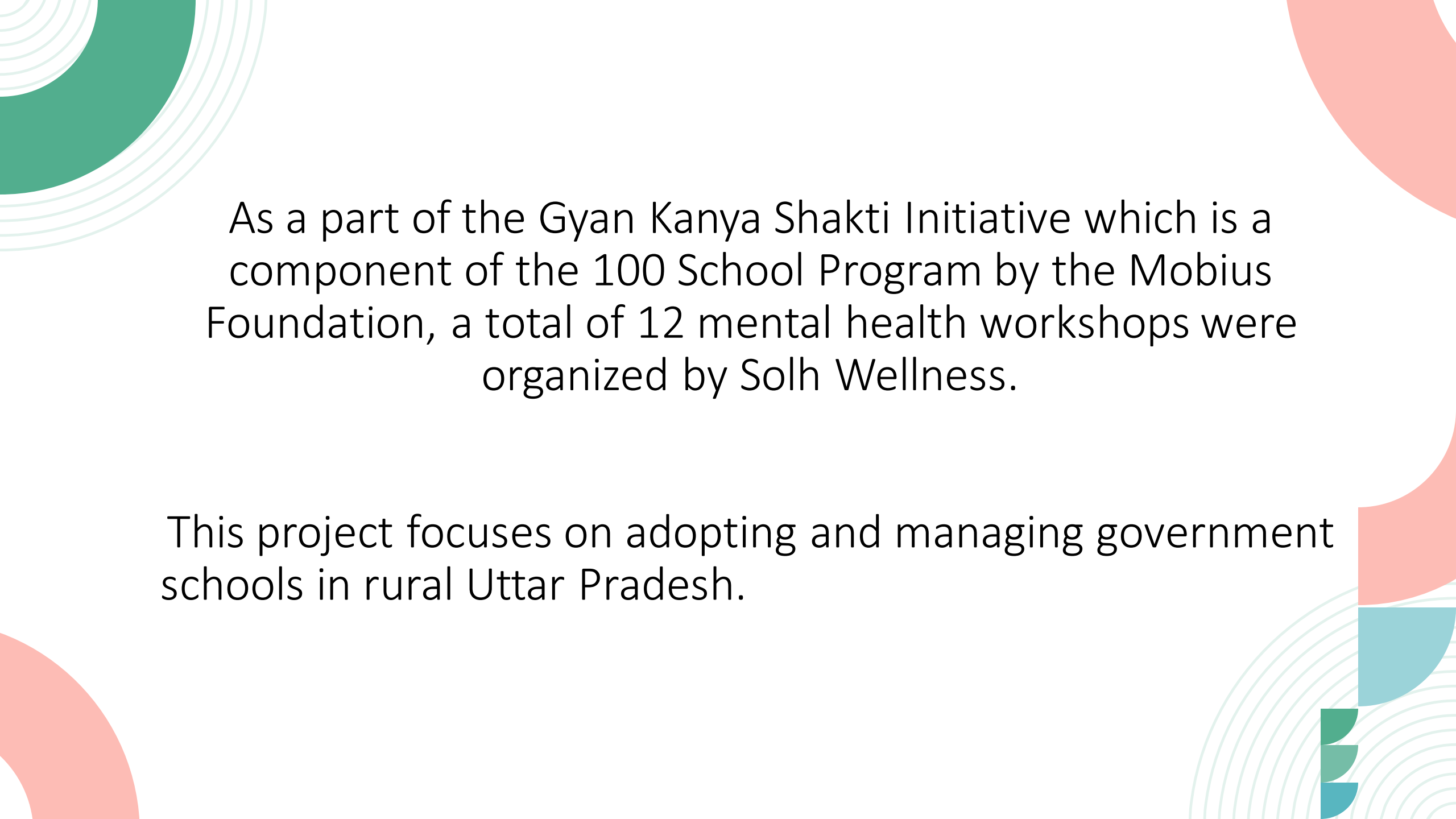


# Solh Wellness– Mental Health Report

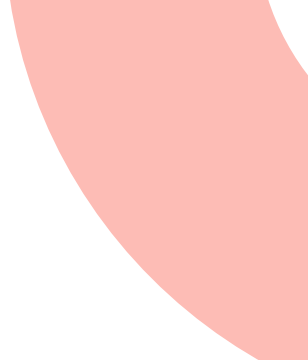

100 School Programs – Mobius Foundation





As a part of the Gyan Kanya Shakti Initiative which is a component of the 100 School Program by the Mobius Foundation, a total of 12 mental health workshops were organized by Solh Wellness.

This project focuses on adopting and managing government schools in rural Uttar Pradesh.



The workshops led by the Solh Wellness team specifically targeted underprivileged schools in the villages of Ghaziabad. The said schools are as follows:

- Composite School Charan Singh Colony
  - Composite School Dundahera
  - Composite School Lathmar Colony
  - Composite School Biharipuria
  - Composite School Sudamapuri
  - Composite School Razapur-2
  - Composite School Pappu Colony
  - Composite School Akbarpur Behrampur
  - Composite School Makanpur
  - KGBV (Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya) Muradnagar
  - KGBV Razapur
  - KGBV Mukimpur
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# Objective

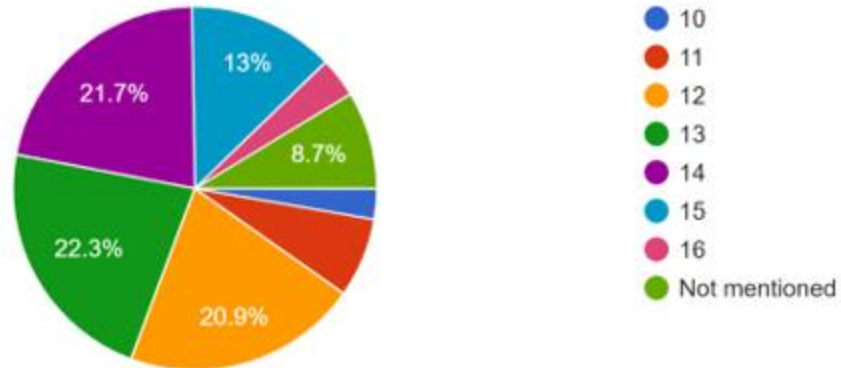
The objective behind the 100 school project is a simple one. It aims at transforming and empowering the lives of underprivileged girls through quality education. By adopting these schools, the foundation aims at creating a nurturing environment that supports the holistic development of girls and brings about a positive change in their lives.

While acknowledging health needs at a base level, it is often the case that the physical and infrastructural needs of students are taken into account and intervened into. However, the mental health needs often get sidelined. **Solh Wellness's collaboration with the Mobius Foundation was an attempt to eliminate this ignorance for the said mental health needs.**

- First, we attempted to introduce the concept of mental health among school students.
- Second, we wished to bring to fore the multiple challenges that the students from the communities go through on a daily basis.
- Third, with the limited time at the hands of the resource persons for these workshops, we attempted to equip students with some simple and easy-to-do tricks and tips that may help with the betterment of their mental health in the long scheme of things.
- Finally, Solh Wellness created a feedback form which included questions assessing the mental health of students as well as their assessment of the workshop.
- A total number of 368 responses from 12 different schools were recorded. The following report is a summarization and analysis of those responses.

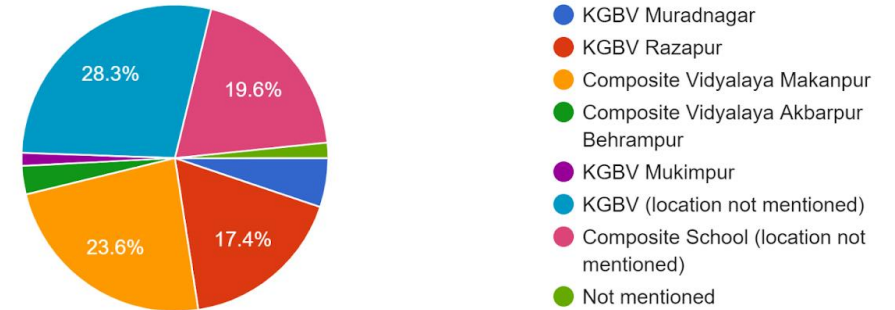
## Age

368 responses



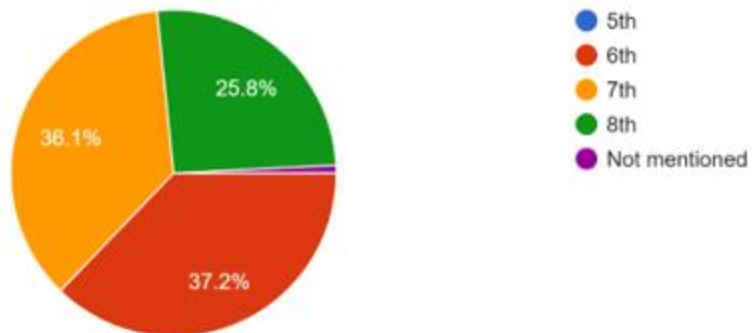
## School

368 responses



## Class

368 responses

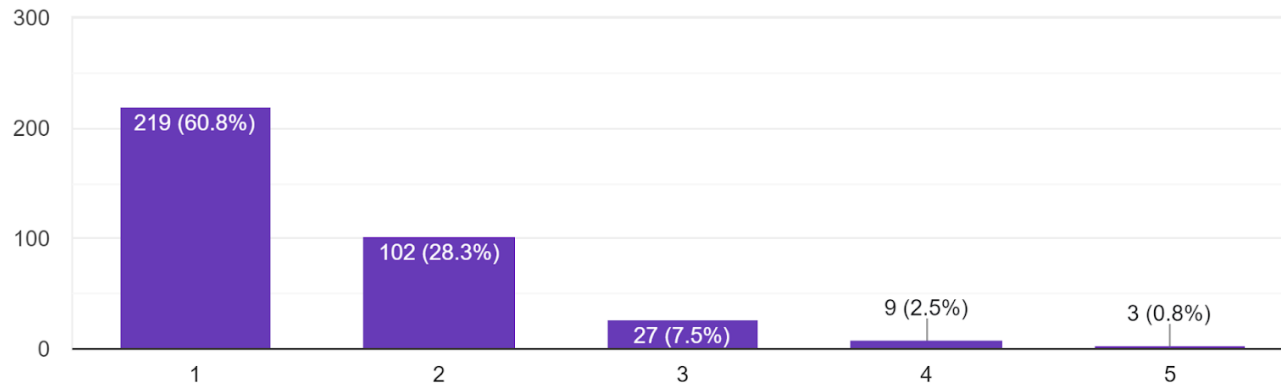


- The target population of our workshops was girls ranging from fifth grade to 8th grade in school.
- Most of the students ranged from 10 to 16 years of age, with the maximum percentage of students being 13 years of age and the least number of students being 16 years of age and above.
- All of the schools that were visited only had until the 8th grade of education. Most students were from the 8th grade.

The analysis below takes into consideration the number and types of assessments taken at a school level.

1. आज आपको कैसा महसूस हो रहा है?

360 responses

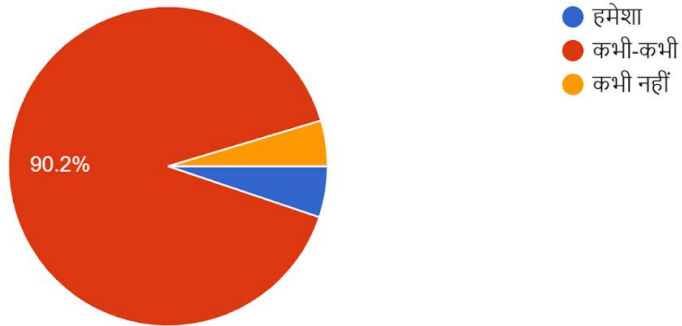


- Initially, an attempt to do a mental status examination of the children was made. The first question being: **How are you feeling today? (Aaj aapko kaisa mehsoos ho raha hai?).** The options ranging from very good (bohot achha) marked “1” to very bad (bohot bura) marked “5”
- 219 out of 360 students suggested a very positive mood, while 3 students reported a very negative mood.** This suggested an overall happy state of mind that day. This could be pertaining to fact that students got a break from regular classes to get into different types of health check ups and workshops. Students had a chance to learn and enjoy in a much less stressful and stringent environment as compared to a traditional classroom and thus the day could have been a day of general fun and overall positive mood. Additionally, this may be because of the given snacks and wellness hampers at the end of the workshops.

The analysis below takes into consideration the number and types of assessments taken at a school level.

2. क्या आप दुःख, तनाव या अकेलापन महसूस करते हैं?

368 responses

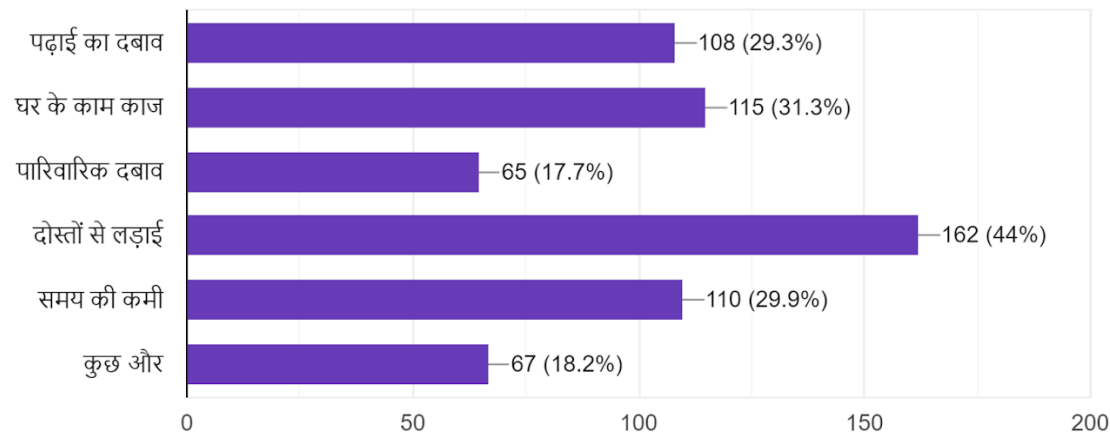


- In response to this question, maximum students chose to avoid answering the answers on the extremes. This is a fair conclusion as it is hard to imagine that a person can only be completely happy or completely sad.
- With this chart, it is evident that students were also aware of their emotional states, which suggests a capacity to understand one's own mood states, thus rejecting the idea that children do not understand mental health.

The analysis below takes into consideration the number and types of assessments taken at an school level.

3. आपको किन कारणों की वजह से परेशानी महसूस होती है? आप एक से अधिक विकल्प चुन सकते हैं:

368 responses



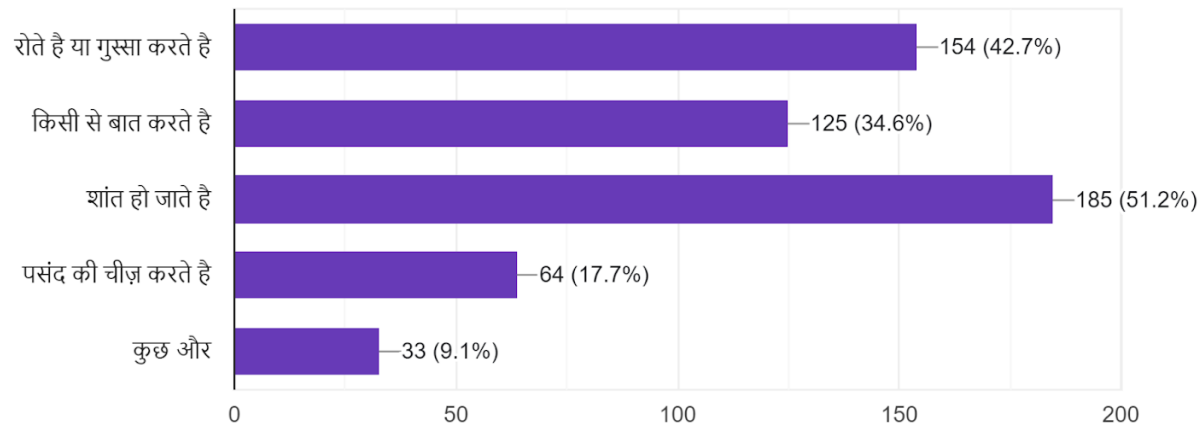
- This graph talks about what kind of concerns and problems elementary students go through. Most students suggested that a rift in their friendship with friends is likely to put them in a bad mood.
- This suggests the importance of friendships in the lives of teenagers. Here, the conversations about social support and bullying become important. In the said communities, much of the responsibility to take care of household chores while the parents go off to work falls on the children, which is reflected in the second highest ranking option “household chores”, study stress comes a close third.



The analysis below takes into consideration the number and types of assessments taken at a school level.

4. जब आप परेशान होते हैं तो आप क्या करते हैं? आप एक से अधिक विकल्प चुन सकते हैं:

361 responses

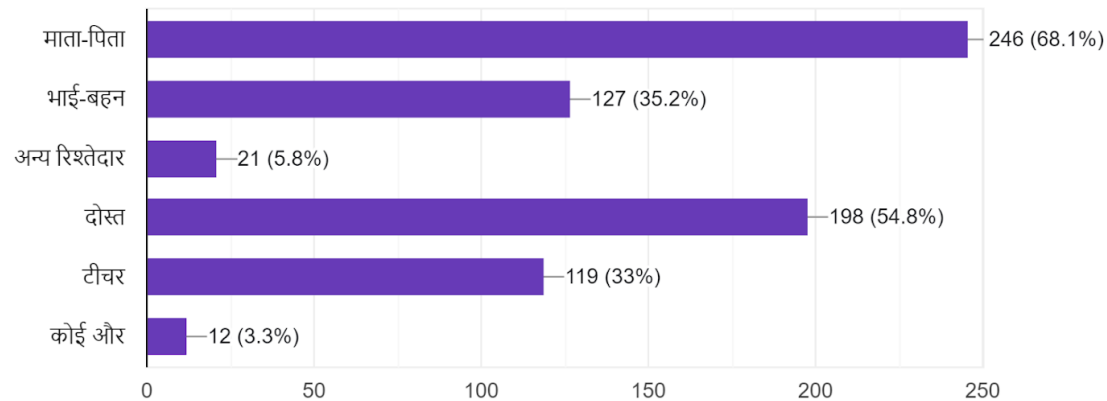


- The answer to this question directly suggests the trend in the mental health awareness of rural communities.
- Most students choose to remain quiet when in distress. This may be because of the underlying stigma attached to mental illnesses, fear of bullying, lack of social and familial support and the helplessness of social situations.
- The second close response is crying or getting angry which are also individual activities, which may also suggest a lack of a constant listening ear. 34 percent of the students suggest that they talk to someone or seek help for their distress. This is explored further in the next question.

The analysis below takes into consideration the number and types of assessments taken at a school level.

5. जब आप परेशान होते हैं, आप किससे मदद मांगते हैं? आप एक से अधिक विकल्प चुन सकते हैं:

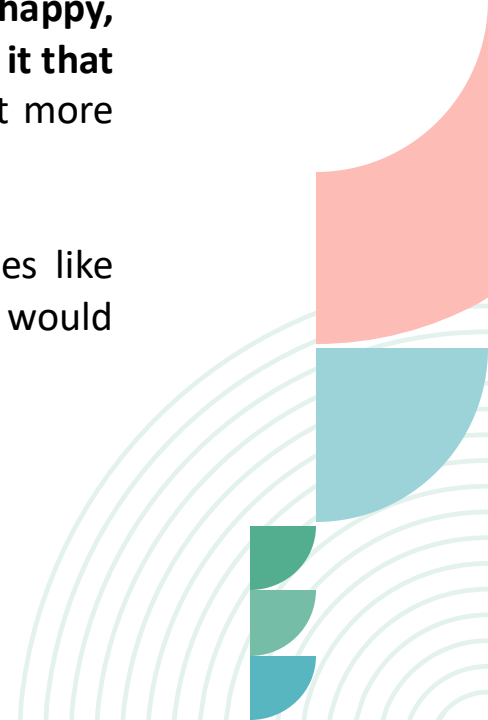

361 responses



- During times of distress, most students reach out to their mother or father since they are the biggest authority in their lives. It may also be pertaining to the fact that students find it easier to reach out to parents for support when other relationships falter.
- A close second are the friends. During this age, friendships become very important to students and thus support is often sought in this relationship.
- However, the instances of bullying which may cause further damage to the mental health of individuals is also at a high during this period.



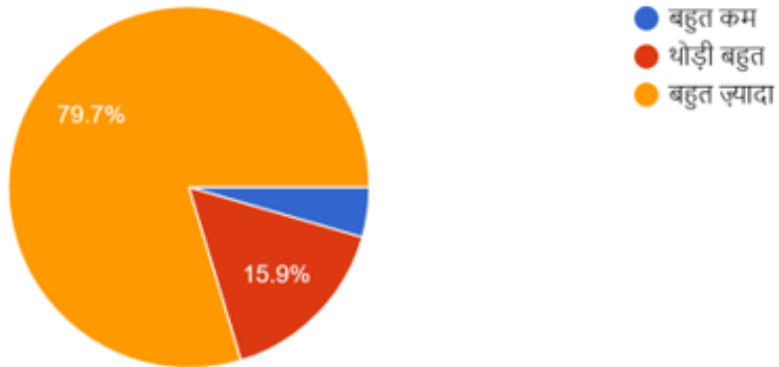
The workshop included the following concepts in a simple flow.

- The workshops started off with a simple explanation of what mental health is, how mental health is different from physical health. We would then proceed to explain to students about emotions, thoughts and behaviors. This would be followed by a simple explanation of how everything that we do is to increase happiness and peace of mind and to reduce loneliness, sadness, and stress.
  - This would be followed by a simple explanation of emotions. **What makes the students feel bad, happy, angry, joyful, frustrated, etc? What is it that students do when they feel these emotions? What is it that they should do when they feel these emotions?** This was done in the form of a game to make it more fun and interactive.
  - Finally, we would talk about how mental health can be made better through everyday practices like eating well, drinking well, promoting empathy, and few first aids for distress. To finish off, we would conduct a meditation session to bring the students together in calmness and peace.
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The following charts are the students' assessment of the workshops done.

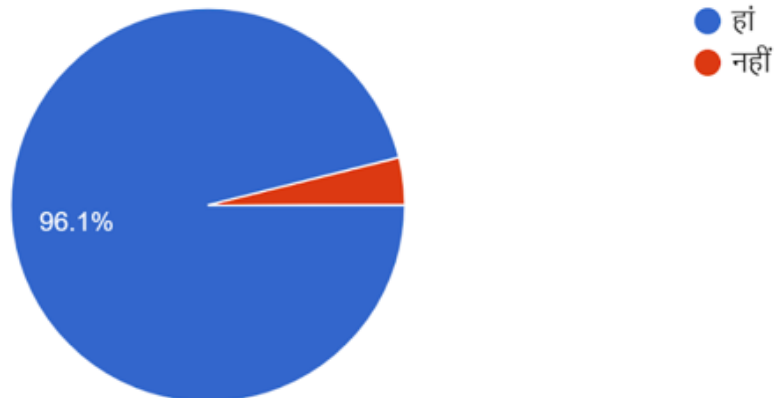
1. आपको यह मानसिक स्वास्थ्य की वर्कशॉप कितनी पसंद आई?

359 responses



2. क्या आपने इस वर्कशॉप से कुछ नया सीखा?

359 responses

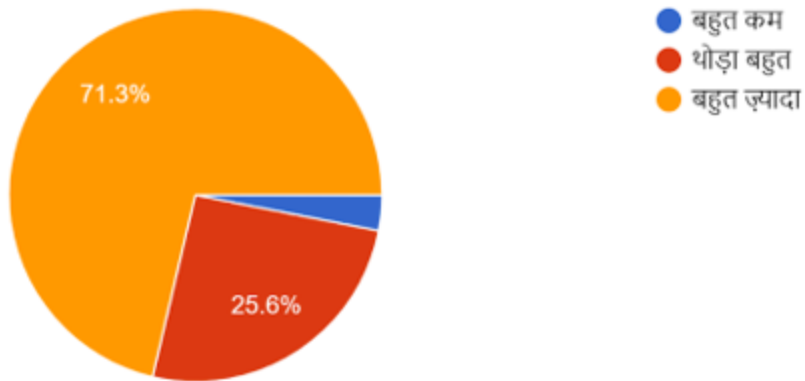


Most students suggested that they enjoyed the workshop, and that they were able to learn something new from the workshop. There was a small percentage of students who suggested that they did not like the workshop and did not learn anything new from the workshop. This may be pertaining to the fact that the concept of mental health was a very novel one and thus uncharted territory, it may have been a strange and difficult task to understand it after just one conversation around it.

The following charts are the students' assessment of the workshops done.

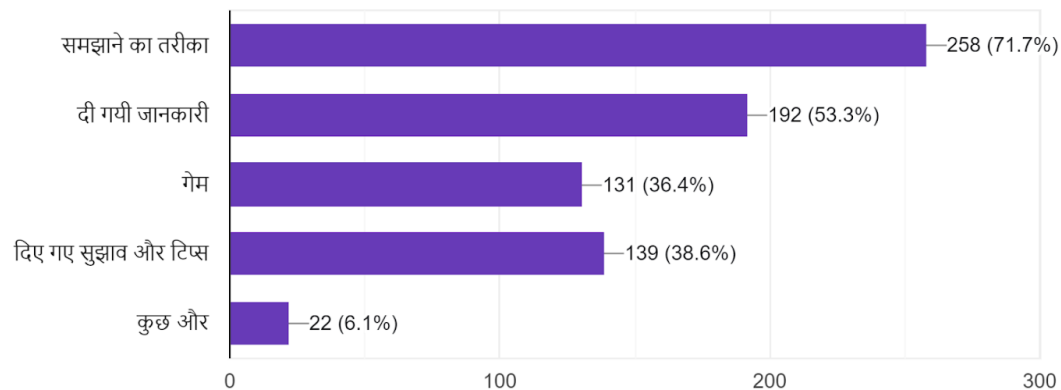
### 3. क्या आपने इस वर्कशॉप के बाद खुशी या शांति का अनुभव किया?

359 responses



### 4. आपको इस वर्कशॉप में इनमें से क्या क्या पसंद आया था? आप एक से अधिक विकल्प चुन सकते हैं:

360 responses

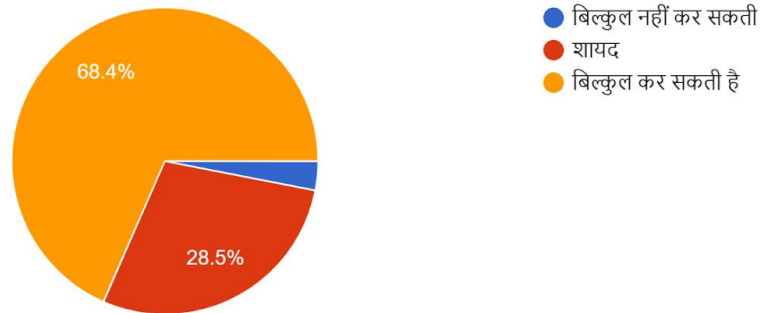


- Students suggested that most of them experienced happiness or peace post the workshop. They seemed to enjoy the way we attempted to explain the concepts, the given information, tips and the games. This suggests an interest in learning and talking about something that they previously didn't get a chance to talk about.
- Since a lot of students also openly spoke off personal struggles and the way they manage it, the overall mood of the group may have been that of relatability and solidarity, thus offering comfort and relief.

The following charts are the students' assessment of the workshops done.

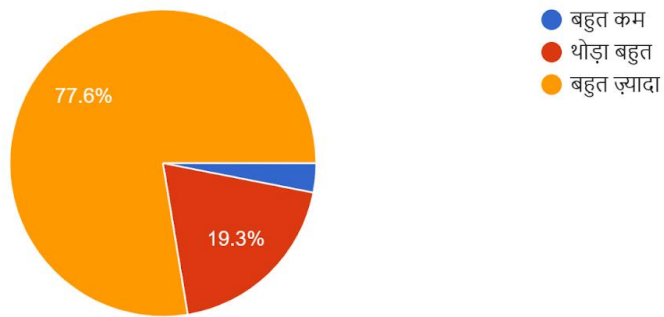
5. क्या आपको लगता है कि इस वर्कशॉप में दी गयी जानकारी आपके तनाव को कम करने में मदद कर सकती है?

358 responses



6. क्या आपको लगता है कि इस वर्कशॉप में बताए गए सुझाव और टिप्स आपके जीवन में काम आएंगे?

357 responses

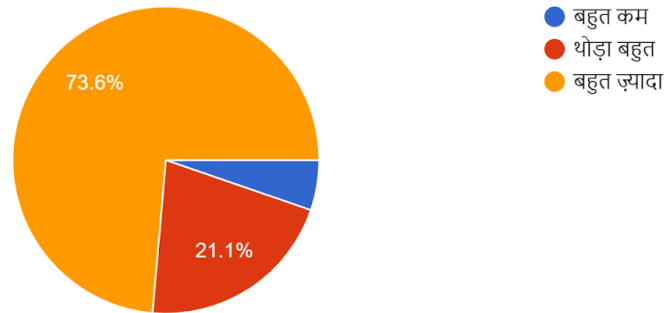


- Most students suggested that the content of the workshops in some way or the other is going to help them in reducing stress, to understand their anxieties and worries, and in bettering their mental health as a whole.
- This may suggest that awareness about mental health is perhaps the most important step in improvement of mental health. If talked about and practiced enough with, for and around children of all ages, the overall happiness and peace quotient is likely to improve.

The following charts are the students' assessment of the workshops done.

7. क्या आपको लगता है कि इस कार्यशाला ने आपको अपनी चिंताओं और परेशानियों को समझने में मदद की है?

360 responses



- On the other hand, a good portion of students displayed skepticism about the workshop being useful in the long run. This is again a fair response to the situation.
- Awareness is a great first step, but not enough to bring about a change. Regular check ins, educational programs, trainings of not just the students, but also other parts of the social environments may be more effective in bringing about long term changes.

## Experiential Account Of The Resource-person(s)

- The resource persons with an educational background in Psychology were chosen for the said workshops considering their mental health expertise. There exists a considerable disparity in the usual medium of instruction in these educational backgrounds and the mostly hindi schooling of the rural schools. Thus, the medium of instruction for the workshops remained simple and comprehensible hindi. It was also important that we simplify all the content as much as we could so an elementary school student could understand what was intended. Coming from different social backgrounds which was evident in the difference of language, clothing and mannerisms, we were met with prying eyes, a sense of curiosity, and childlike wonder.
- Most students were actively participating in the ongoing workshops and keenly said that they understood what was being said and asked during the workshops even though the concept was somewhat alien. They actively engaged in games and activities to make it a fun, fruitful and educational experience for all, including us.
- A lot of times we questioned and modified the content to make it more relatable and comprehensible. It was hard to do one hour of a workshop and then leaving the children on their own, hoping they would remember as much of the tips and tricks that were taught.



# Observations

- It is often said that mental health is a thing for the rich, that people who have met their basic needs of food and shelter have the capacity to have conversations about mental health as a concept and thus access it. While the latter might be somewhat true, the conviction that mental health is a rich person problem can't be further from the truth. While it was a general observation that the technical vocabulary common in the field of psychology and mental health remained unheard in the target population, the understanding of mental health in a general sense was present, and thus, **while the students may not know what the word “prolonged depressive state” meant, they knew what “being sad for a long time” was.** In that sense, the mental health needs of a student from a rural school are equal to (if not more needed) than a student from an urban english-speaking school.
- It was observed that mental health is not an age related concept either. In the less educated part of the society, it is a common conviction that children do not have a lot to worry about in their lives. It is true that play is a big part of students' lives, it cannot be said that children of all ages do not go through the common negative emotional states that an adult might go through. **These include signs of loneliness, symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression in addition to everyday emotions of frustration, anger, irritation. In the target population,** These problems are made worse by the very real risk of bullying and not being heard when seeking help.

# Observations

The problem identified was as follows:

- The lack of mental health awareness and education in the social and educational arenas of the targeted students. Most (if not all) of the students came from severely economically underdeveloped and socially backwards families with their parents (if working) worked minimally paying jobs to fill their stomachs.
- It was informed to us that the motivation for many students to attend school was their mid day meals, and similarly, the motivation to attend the workshops was the packet of juices and snacks that they received at the end.
- It was indeed disheartening to see how alien the lingo around mental health was to the students. However, it was not surprising. In the absence and ignorance of such awareness and the base motivation towards survival, the instances of abuse, bullying, not-hearing to name a few are quite common in the communities.
- Little to no attention is paid about the mental health needs of a child by the teachers too. One of the reasons for this may be the understaffing of teachers in these schools.
- Due to the above mentioned factors, children often end up feeling alone and unsupported in their struggles and choose to remain silent. This is counterproductive to the very objective of our initiative.

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# Observations



## Some Glimpses of our Workshop

# Conclusion

- Additionally, children often learn habits that are beneficial for them when they see it being practiced around them or when there is a reward or punishment attached to it. Thus, awareness to the family and society becomes important for mental health to be a practice.
- Finally, we can say that it was indeed a wonderful step in the right direction, but not nearly enough to bring a change. More and more needs to be done when it comes to mental health as a part of holistic wellness. Regular check-ins and updates need to be made and gathered for a constructive solution for the mental health crisis to be built and applied. Mental health is a continuous and evolving phenomena affecting every aspect of our lives, and it must be treated so. Therefore, We can say that this is just a start and our role in this initiative is not yet finished after these twelve workshops.



Thank You!