

Report on "Safe Listening" Awareness Programme

The programme on "Anemia Mukht Bharat" for the School-Based Integrated Anemia Control Program for Adolescent Girls was launched by Bhaikaka University/ Medical college, Karamsad Gokalpura Road, Anand, Karamsad, Gujarat on 18th -19th December, 2025.

The program was inaugurated by Dr. Suneela Garg, Professor of Excellence in Community Medicine and Professor Emeritus at NAMS, New Delhi. This is a six-month intervention project aimed at the treatment and prevention of anemia among adolescent girls through school-based activities in accordance with the guidelines of Anemia Mukht Bharat.

This intervention will significantly contribute to reducing the burden of anemia among adolescent girls. A number of 200 students were participated in this programme.

Dr. Suneela Garg, Prof. of Excellence, Community Medicine; Prof. Emeritus NAMS has also talked about the burden of Hearing Loss, identification of problems due to unsafe listening practices and recommend safe listening practices among the students and recommended for Public Health awareness programmes to the Institution.

1. Overview of the Global Crisis

- **Rising Statistics:** Currently, 1.5 billion people live with hearing loss, a figure projected to reach 700 million requiring rehabilitation by 2050.
- **Youth at Risk:** Approximately **1.1 billion young people** are at risk of permanent hearing loss due to unsafe recreational listening habits.
- **Pediatric Impact:** Roughly **200 million people**, primarily children, suffer from preventable and treatable middle ear infections.

2. Identifying the Problem: Unsafe Listening

- **Emerging Concern:** Hearing loss is a growing public health issue driven by prolonged exposure to loud sounds from personal audio devices and entertainment venues.
- **Target Demographic:** The focus is on **Adolescents (10-19 years)**, specifically **Gen Z** and **Gen Alpha** (Digital Natives/Screenagers), who face unique challenges like cyber addiction and excessive digital exposure.

- **Auditory Consequences:** Excessive noise leads to cochlear hair cell damage, tinnitus (ringing in ears), hyperacusis, and difficulty hearing in noisy environments.

3. Key Recommendations for Students & Youth

- **The 60/60 Rule:** Listen to personal devices at no more than **60% volume** for no more than **60 minutes** at a time.
- **Technology Choice:** Utilize noise-cancelling or over-ear headphones to block background noise, allowing for lower volume settings.
- **Ear Protection:** Use earplugs at loud venues (concerts/sports) and stay away from direct proximity to loudspeakers.
- **Noise Detox:** Regularly take "hearing breaks" in quiet environments to allow ears to recover from sound exposure.

4. Institutional & Policy Action

- **Public Health Awareness:** It is imperative to sensitize youth through structured awareness programs and evidence-based standards.
- **WHO Standards:** Organizations should adopt WHO global standards for safe listening features in devices and venue management.
- **Monitoring:** Use dedicated apps (including the free WHO app) to track hearing status and sound exposure levels.

The initiative emphasizes that hearing loss is **preventable** through behavioural changes and early professional intervention. Regular hearing checks, particularly on **World Hearing Day (March 3rd)**, are recommended for long-term health.

