



EDUCATING LIFE SKILLS TO ADOLESCENTS

Dr. Anita Sharma & Prof. Dr. Harish Singh

Maharaja Surajmal Institute, C-4, Janakpuri, New Delhi

ABSTRACT

Life Skills are socio-psychological abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal with demands and challenges of everyday life. They can be loosely grouped into cognitive, intra-personal and inter-personal. They are real, topical, sensitive, often controversial and ethical and are needed for Democracy to develop. It makes us aware, informed, concerned, articulate, active and capable. These skills improve academic achievement, reduction in risky behaviour, employment outcome and work force readiness. The most important life skills are problem solving skills and decision making skills. The key issues which affect learning of adolescents are lack of Concentration, Examination stress, Home sickness and Loneliness, Language problem, Procrastination, Good night sleep and Study skills. Life skills can be learnt in different phases of life, student life, and internship or during job. This paper is a descriptive paper as it discusses key issues which affect learning of adolescents and the skills needed to lower this stress.

Keywords: Life skills, skills, examination and problem solving

Introduction

Life Skills are socio-psychological abilities for adaptive and positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal with demands and challenges of everyday life. They can be loosely grouped into cognitive, intra-personal and inter-personal. They are real, topical, sensitive, often controversial and ethical and are needed for Democracy to develop. It makes us aware, informed,

concerned, articulate, active and capable. These skills improves academic achievement, reduction in risky behaviour, employment outcome and work force readiness .The Inter- Personal Skills comprises of Cooperation, Compromise, Using Constructive Criticism, Building Trust, Communicating, Coordinating in Team, Empathy, Using Emotional Intelligence while Intra-Personal & Cognitive Skill consist of Mental Health, Budgeting or Financial Management, Manners or Etiquettes, Organization skill, Cleanliness and Hygiene, Coping with Failure, Time Management, Stress Management, Critical Thinking, Creative thinking, Problem solving, Decision Making, Assertive skill, Self directed engaged learning.

The most important life skills are problem solving skills and decision making skills.

Problem Solving Skills- When we talk about problem solving then it is very important to inculcate right attitude for Problem Solving which can be done in the following manner-

1. Be open minded-actual problem may be different, cause may be different, assumption may be different, well thought of solution or plan may have to be given up
2. Be inquisitive – Look for things that stand -out, pattern
3. Ask the right question
4. Slow down
5. Don't be lazy
6. Don't panic
7. Make sure we are solving the right problem
8. Problem Solving is about how we approach the problem.
9. This skill is needed throughout life
10. This empowers-To sort out conflict, be independent, Achieve challenging goals, decision making skill
11. More than intelligence problem solving is about how to find solution to unseen issue

12. Process- Seek information from source, Analyze, appraise and reconcile the inferences from data
13. While problem solving we are either fixing broken one i.e. improving or complete new idea

Decision- Making Decision making is a process which uses critical thinking and creative thinking. Critical thinking is ability to analyze the information and experiences in an objective manner and creative thinking is novel way of seeing things. It needs fluency, flexibility and originality and deliberation. Various steps to decision –making are

1. List the choices
2. Think about pros and cons
3. Assess the likelihood of consequences happening
4. Comparing the consequences
5. Decide and act
6. Evaluate the consequences expected and unexpected

Objectives

- Discusses key issues which affect learning of adolescents
- Study examination stress skills needed
- The skills needed to lower this stress.

Key issues which affect learning of adolescents

The key issues which affect learning of adolescents are lack of Concentration, Examination stress, Home sickness and Loneliness, Language problem, Procrastination, Good night sleep and Study skills. The causes for these are Anxiety/Stress, Lower self esteem, Poor time management, Substance abuse and Poor nutrition. Anxiety/ Stress is body's reaction to a challenge. The human body responds by activating the nervous system and specific hormones, like adrenaline and cortisol are released in blood stream. Solving problem is considered evidence of intelligence, insisting on being dealt with fairly or respectfully is evident of self esteem. When we evaluate ourselves harshly, it results in descent in self

esteem. A lower self esteem will result in Making bad choices, Suffer/ hurt feeling, Take burden of guilt, Self blame, Self punishment, Treat mistreat as deserved etc. We can recover from lower self esteem by defining ourselves broadly, evaluating ourselves objectively and appreciating one's value.

Examination Stress Skills needed Now we can discuss about the skills needed while dealing with Examination Stress- Mental Discipline. The examination stress can be relieved by following the below mentioned steps:

- Know what is expected
- Conditions similar to test room- Context dependent memory (e.g. quiet room as exam hall) and State dependent memory (e.g. having caffeine and body clock)
- Manage your time wisely- Break study time into chunks over longer period of period
- Know where you study best- light, environment, Alternate place
- Take frequent breaks- optimal time 45 minutes
- Stay hydrated-400mg caffeine for adults and 100 mg for teens
- Reward your achievement- 5 min call to a friend or some jokes after 45 minutes of studying
- Aerobic exercises or Yoga
- Get enough sleep
- Have no stimulants
- Recognize test anxiety
 - Cramps
 - Dry mouth
 - Nausea
 - Head ache
 - Rapid heart beat
 - Restless thought
 - Mental black out
 - Trouble concentrating
- Dealing
 - Breathe
 - Expand and contract your muscles

-Take a break

Study skills

Study skills or academic skills are approaches applied to learning. They are critical to academic success and acquiring learning throughout life. They boost person's ability to study, retain and recall information

Kinds of study skills

Rote learning: Act of memorization is a deliberate mental process undertaken in order to store in memory for later recall of items such as experiences, names, appointment, telephone numbers, facts, maps and other visual, auditory or tactical information .Typically this will include reading over and over notes or text books and rewriting notes. This is traditional and most practiced approach in our education system-Parrot fashion of learning

- Reading and Listening: John Dewey has argued that student need to learn critical thinking-questioning and weighing up evidence as they learn, This can be done during lecture or when reading
- A method- REAP
 - **Read:** Reading a section to discern the idea.
 - **Encode:** Paraphrasing the idea from the author's perspective to the student's own words.
 - **Annotate:** Annotating the section with critical understanding and other relevant notes.
 - **Ponder:** To ponder about what they read through thinking, discussing with others and reading related materials. Thus it allows possibility of elaboration

Annotating and Encoding helps the student reprocess the content into concise and coherent knowledge. Précis annotation, Organizing question annotation, Intentional annotation and Probe annotation are some of the methods used.

PQRST: A method used to focus on key information when studying from books uncritically. This method prioritizes the information in a way that relates directly to how they will be asked to use that information in an exam

- **Preview:** The student looks at the topic to be learned by glancing over the major headings or the points in the syllabus.
- **Question:** The student formulates questions to be answered following a thorough examination of the topic(s).
- **Read:** The student reads through the related material, focusing on the information that best relates to the questions formulated earlier.
- **Summary:** The student summarizes the topic, bringing his or her own understanding into the process. They may keep notes in writing, spider diagrams, flow diagrams, labeled diagrams, or even voice recordings.
- **Test:** The student answers the questions drafted earlier, avoiding adding any questions that might distract or change the subject

Studies shows that an average of % score increase was recorded by those who were using PQRST, which was significant

Using Flashcard: Flashcards are visual cues on cards. These can be used for revision. Students often make their own flashcards, or more detailed **index cards** – cards designed for filing, on which short summaries are written.

Visual imagery: Some learners are thought to have a visual style, and will benefit greatly from taking information from their studies which are often heavily verbal, and using visual technique to help encode and retain it in memory. Some memory techniques make use of visual memory, for example visualising key information in real physical locations e.g. around a room.

Diagrams are often underrated tools. They can be used to bring all the information together and provide practice reorganizing what has been learnt.

Keywords: Summary methods vary depending on the topic, but most involve condensing the large amount of information from a course or book into shorter notes. Often, these notes are then condensed further into key facts usually organized in a tree structure

Mind Maps: It can be an effective way of linking concepts together. They can be useful for planning essays and essay type responses in exams. These tools can give a visual summary of a topic covered.

Study environment: Studying can also be more effective if one changes their environment while studying. For example: the first time studying the material, one can study in a bedroom, the second time one can study outside, and the final time one can study in a coffee shop. The thinking behind this is that as when an individual changes their environment the brain associates different aspects of the learning and gives a stronger hold and additional brain pathways with which to access the information. In this context environment can mean many things; from location, to sounds, to smells, to other stimuli including foods. Carey says “a simple change in venue improved retrieval strength (memory) by 40 percent.” Another change in the environment can be background music; According to Carey “background music weaves itself subconsciously into the fabric of stored memory.” This “distraction” in the background helps to create more vivid memories with the studied material

Conclusion

Adolescents are most neglected in our country. Otherwise, how can we explain increase in number of youngsters taking to substance abuse, sexual violence, suicides, increases in HIV and AIDS? Life skills come to rescue the one who has learnt and practiced it. Life skills can be learnt in different phases of life, student life, and internship or during job.

References

- Bharath Srikala, K V Kishore Kumar (2010). Empowering Adolescents with Life Skills Education in Schools – School Mental Health Program: Does it Work? in Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 52 (4), 344- 349.
- Kalinga Institute of Social Sciences (KISS), 2013. A Report on Training of Nodal Teachers on Life Skills based Sexual and Reproductive Health, KISS, Bhuvanesar. <http://kiss-lseandarsh.org/report2.pdf> Accessed on 20-4-2016

- Madhu Singh (2003): Understanding Life Skills, 2004/ED/EFA/MRT/PI/69, UNESCO Institute of Education, Hamburg. http://portal.unesco.org/education/es/file_download.php/32f065862b89709d9c0575839f1d959cUnderstanding+life+skills..doc Accessed on 25-4-2016
- Malhotra Savita, Adarsh Kohli, Mehak Kapoor, Basant Pradhan (2009). Incidence of Childhood Psychiatric Disorders in Indian Journal of Psychiatry, 51 (2), 101-107
- Mangrulkar L, et.al (2001). Life Skills Approach to Child and Adolescent Healthy Human Development, Pan American Health Organization, Washington D.C.
- Mize, Jacquelyn & Abell, Ellen (2009): Encouraging Social Skills in Young Children: Tips Teachers Can Share with Parents, www.humsci.auburn.edu/parent/socialskills.html Accessed on 20-4-2016
- NACO, (2015). Facilitators Guide on Adolescence Education programme-Life Skills Development, NACO, <http://naco.gov.in/upload/NACOinAction/Facilitators%20Guide.pdf> Accessed on 20-4-2016
- NCERT, (1999). Adolescents Education in Schools: Package of Basic Materials, New Delhi.
- Pujar L L, Hunshal S C, & Bailur K B (2014), Impact of Intervention on Life Skill Development among Adolescent Girls, Karnataka Journal of Agricultural Science, 27 (1): (93-94)
- <https://www.whiteswanfoundation.org/.../the-importance-of-teaching-your-adolescent>
- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3025161/>
- <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1126842.pdf>
- www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol.%2021%20Issue7/.../M2107059299.pdf
- www.cbse.nic.in/cce/life_skills_cce.pdf.