

Child Sexual Abuse

A study in Government Schools of
Gandhinagar



⚠ Contains emotionally triggering content

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Introduction

Child Sexual Abuse is a form of child abuse in which a child is abused for the sexual gratification of an adult or older adolescent.

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines CSA as a coercive act with a child who cannot comprehend or provide consent, leading to severe physical or psychological damage. Child Sexual Abuse includes sexual activities like inappropriate touching of private parts or indulging the child in touching the remote parts of the perpetrator, molestation, sodomy, exhibitionism, pornography, and cyber sexual acts.

Introduction

In 2012, the POCSO Act was enacted to protect children from sexual offences. The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012, (POCSO Act) and its corresponding rules were enacted with the objective of protecting children from a slew of sexual offences and introducing child-friendly judicial mechanisms for dealing with such offences. However, the general level of awareness of the POCSO Act remains woefully inadequate in our country.

Incidents of child abuse have also risen exponentially since the Covid-19 pandemic, with new and insidious forms of cybercrime. The CSA survivors are at greater risk of developing psychiatric disorders, such as personality disorders, depression etc.

Research Approach

- **Phase 1: Secondary Study**
Reading Papers, news articles, Government Provisions to form a basic understanding
- **Phase 2: Primary Study**
Visiting Schools, both Government and Private Schools in the vicinity of NID, Gandhinagar, to assess the landscape, and develop a comparative understanding
- **Phase 3: Problem Definition**
Defining the problem statement based on the secondary and primary study to focus the research
- **Phase 4: Simulation**
Testing the possible ideas as simulations to create possible directions for solutions

Targetted Social Behaviour

Making children aware of their bodies and their rights to overcome the knowledge gaps and misconceptions about child sexual abuse.

Awareness of the nature of the topic and the ownership of one's body is essential for prevention, recognition, and action. The change is required at individual, institutional, and societal levels to bring a positive paradigm shift in the mindest.

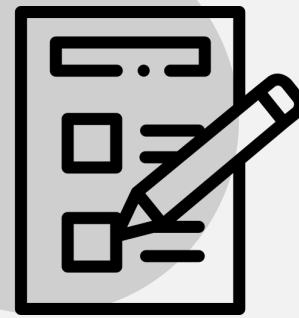
To start with at the individual level, awareness is to be developed in children themselves, who may be victims and suffer long term consequences about things they are not even aware about.

Tools



Interviews

Parent | Psychologist | ASI



Survey

of students at NID aged between 22-32



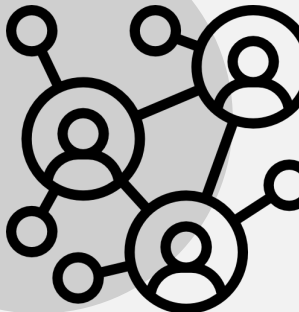
Media Study

A review study of existing media such as videos and infographics

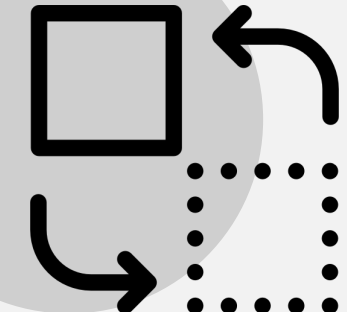


Comparative Study


A study of the structure and medium through which content is delivered in private and govt. schools



Ecosystem Mapping

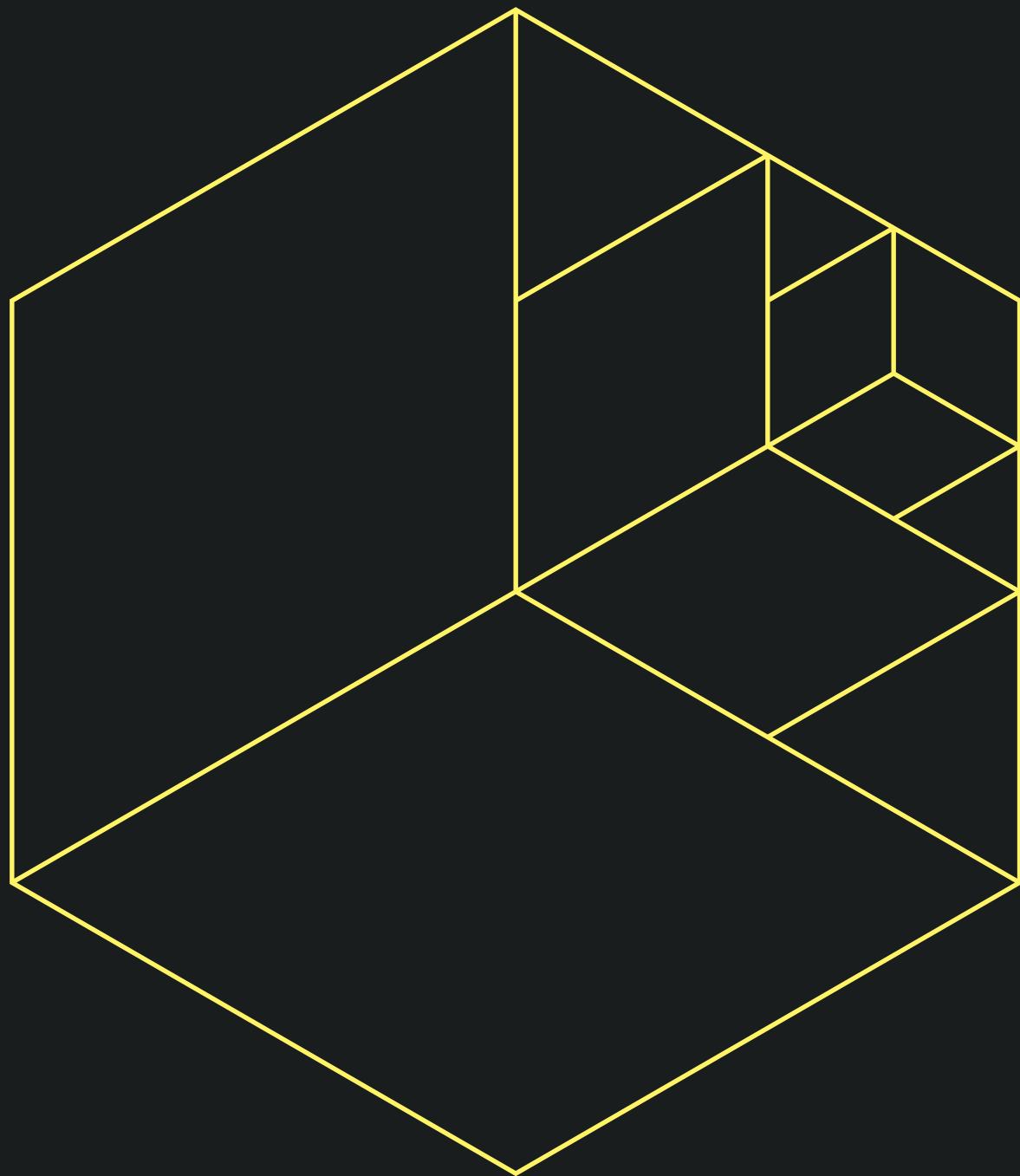


Theory of Change



1 in every 2
children is a
victim of sexual
abuse in India.

Survey, World Vision India, 2017



53%

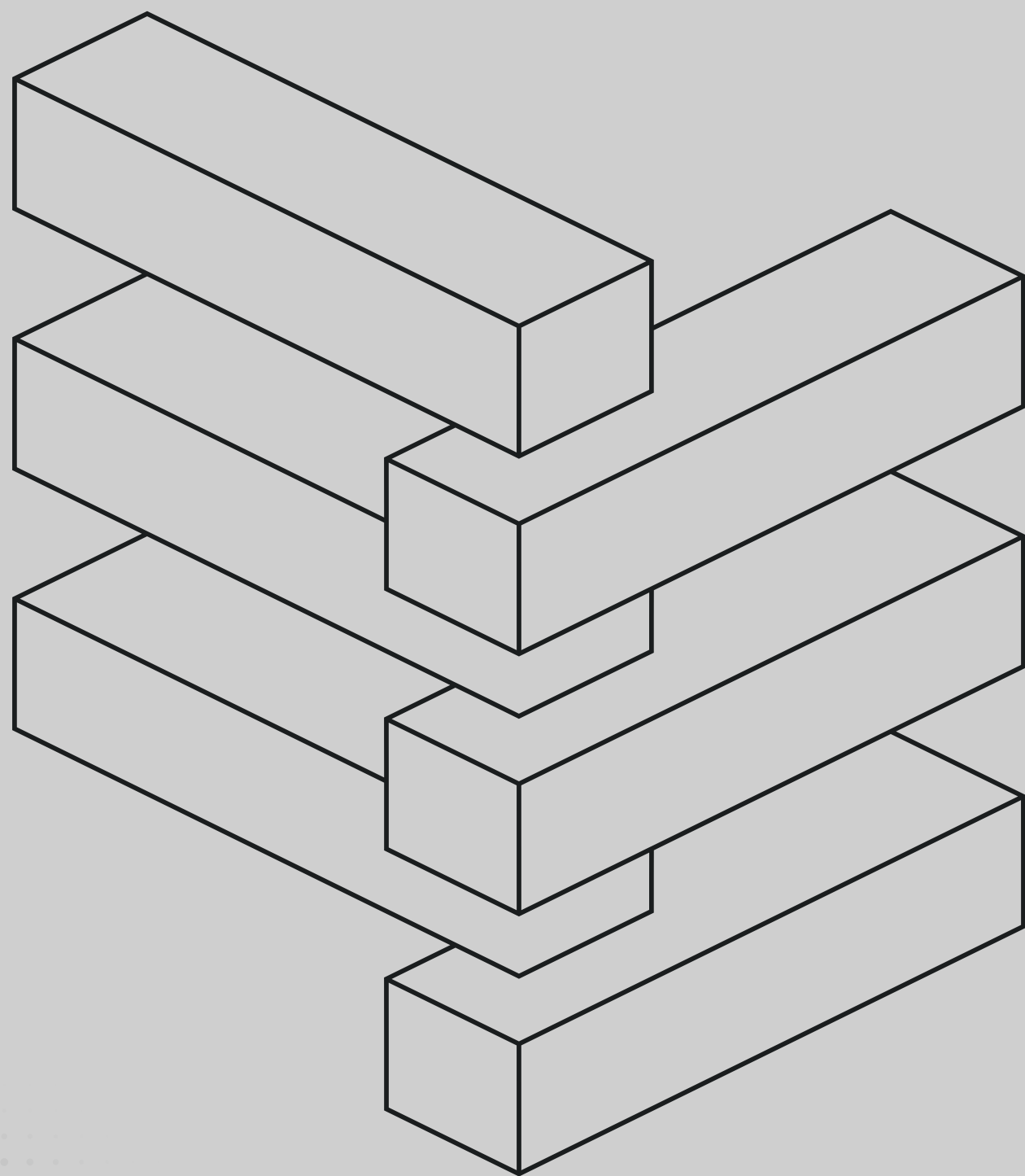
of Indian children reported experiencing different kinds of abuse

93%

of perpetrators are relatives of the victims

Less than 5%

of the victims show physical signs of sexual abuse



World rank 2

India's rank in child sexual abuse

5-12 years

age group that is most at risk of abuse and exploitation

Objective

To capture the statistics about good touch and bad touch

- the understanding of the topic
- formal education about the topic
- past experiences

Execution

Anonymous forms were circulated within the NID campus with students aging between 22 - 32 years.

SAMPLE SIZE - 50

Survey

1 in every 2 children in India is a victim of child abuse.
As part of our Social Innovation module we are trying to assess the education system in how they impart knowledge on 'Good Touch' and 'Bad Touch'. Help us understand the problem better by filling up this short survey.

Gender Female Non-Binary Male

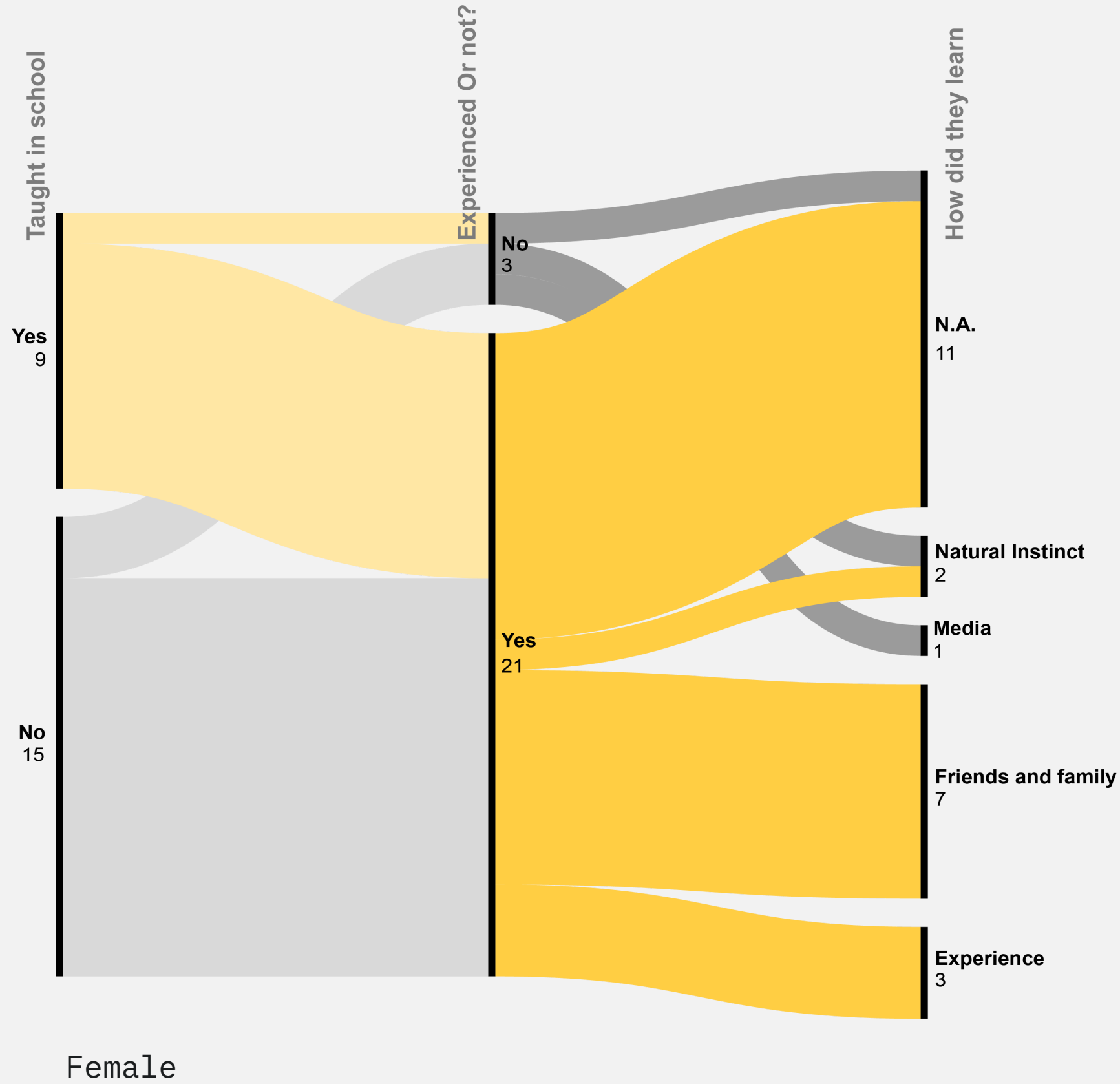
Were you taught about Good and Bad Touch in Primary School? Yes No

If not, then how did you learn about it?

Have you ever experienced any form of bad touch? Yes No

*Your anonymity will be maintained.

Survey Findings

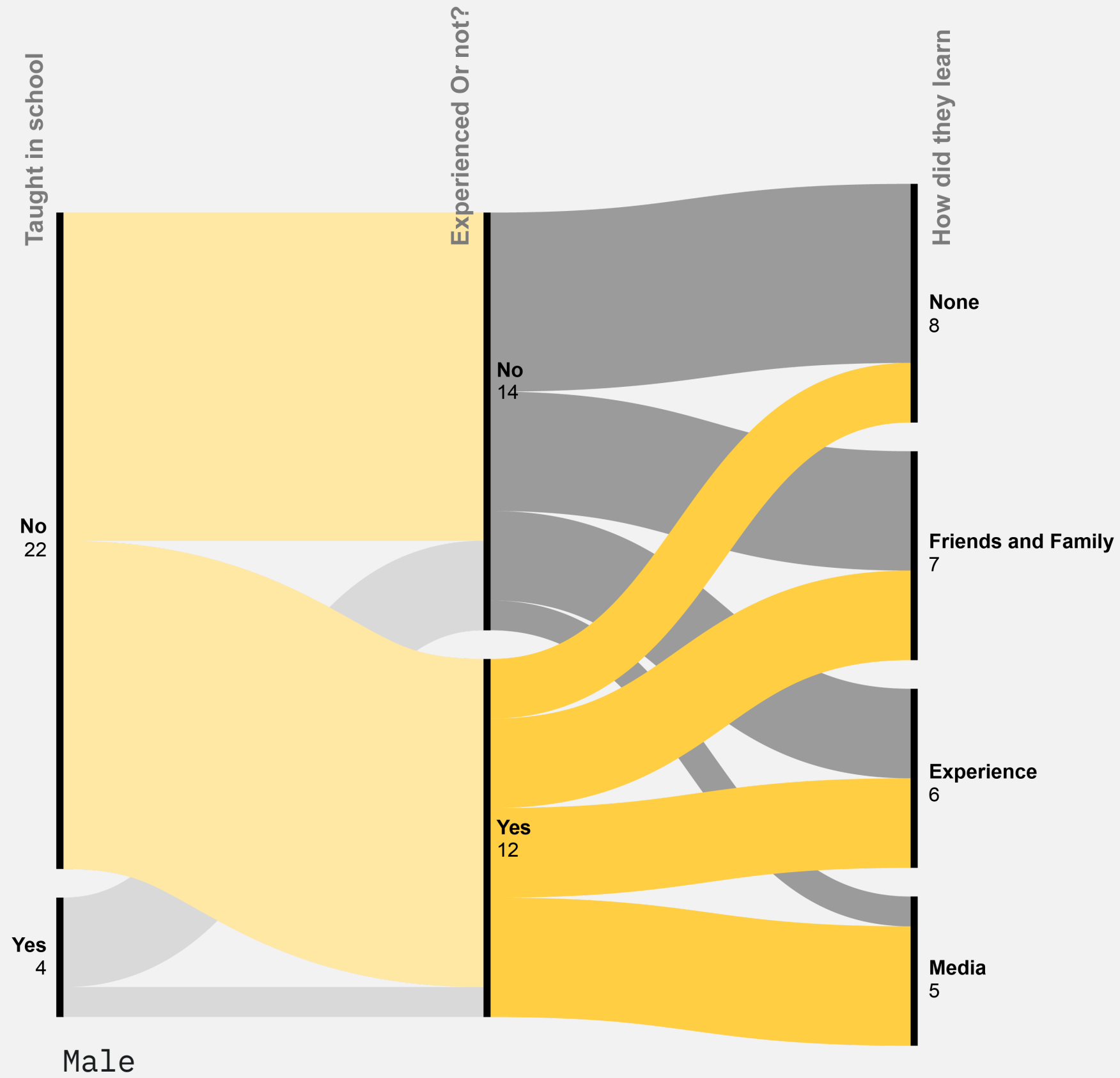


87.5% of the females surveyed have experienced 'bad touch'

An alarming 62.5% of the total females surveyed were not taught about good and bad touch in primary school



Survey Findings



46.1% of the males surveyed have experienced 'bad touch'

An alarming 84.6% of the total males surveyed were not taught about good and bad touch in primary school



Comparative Study

Rural Govt. School



Urban Private School



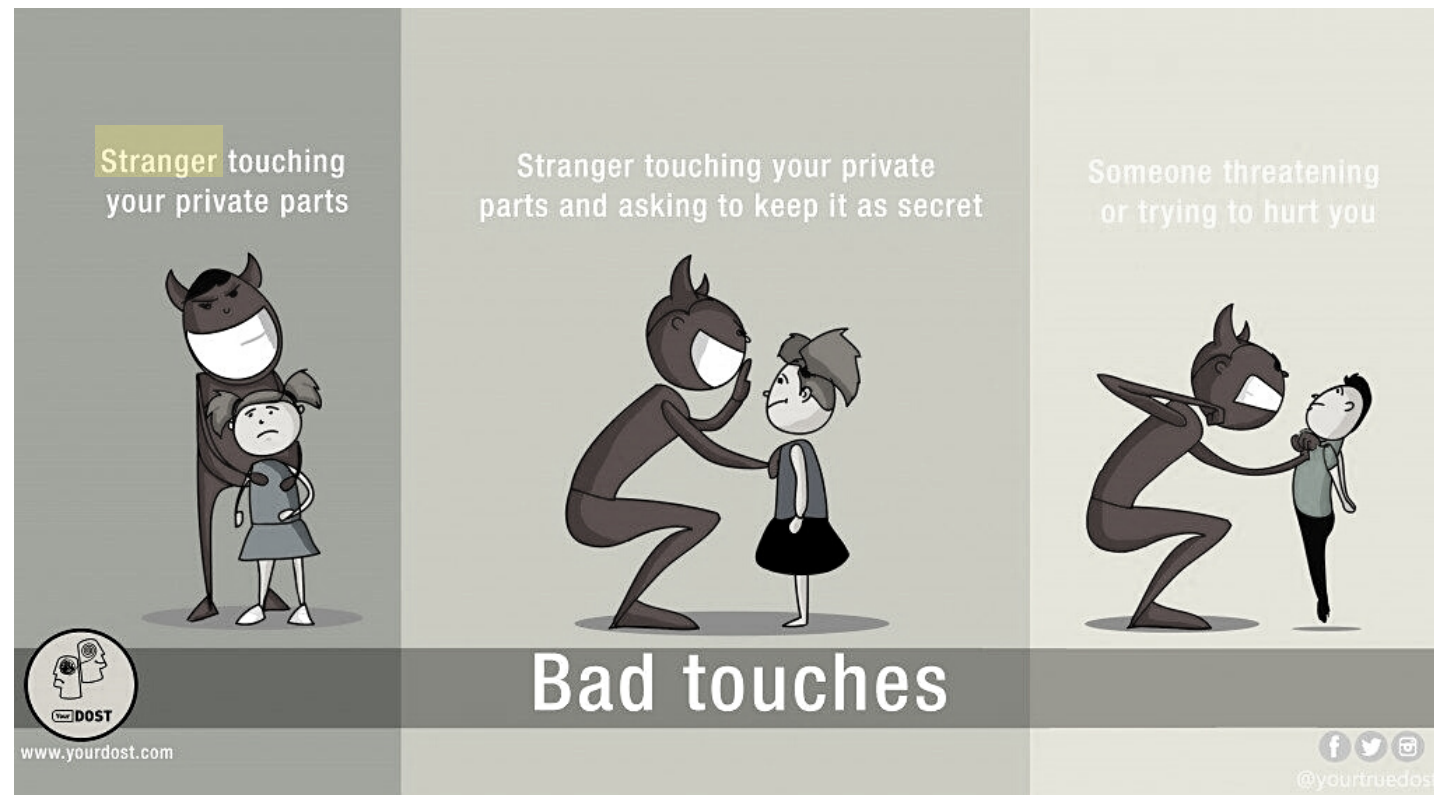
Comparative Study

Urban Private School

- Schools educate and create awareness from early ages (since play-school) and involve parents in the process too
- There is revision and revisiting of concepts with leveling up the information
- Materials used include YouTube videos and certain demonstrations as well
- The children are inquisitive when they are told not to do something. They question the logic behind things. Parents and teachers clarify the doubts of children
- The pandemic wasn't a hindrance in making students aware about CSA, and other life skills because of the technological advantage the schools and students have

Rural Govt. School

- No material available for teacher to refer to or give to students on CSA/Good touch and bad touch
- More stigma attached to discussion around CSA with students of rural govt. schools
- Very limited (or negligible) information imparted from homes
- Teacher and students share a closer bond in rural schools due to small number and more informal interaction within classrooms and beyond
- Students don't know appropriate names for all body parts
- Girls taught separately about topics such as menstruation and harassment
- There are initiatives by the Infocity police station conducted to spread awareness about safety against CSA



Observations

- Focuses on harm from strangers only
- Good and bad touch are getting associated with "bad body parts"
- Lack of holistic awareness
- No mention other than touch such as gaze, inappropriate actions or conversation with children
- Incorrect nomenclature and indication of body parts



Mr. Vipul- Parent (Private School)

- Bringing the topic up in play school, nursery and KG helps foster communication between child and parents, and reduces gender based biases.
- Revision/revisiting concepts and level-ing up the info.
- Mediums used are YouTube videos and demonstration

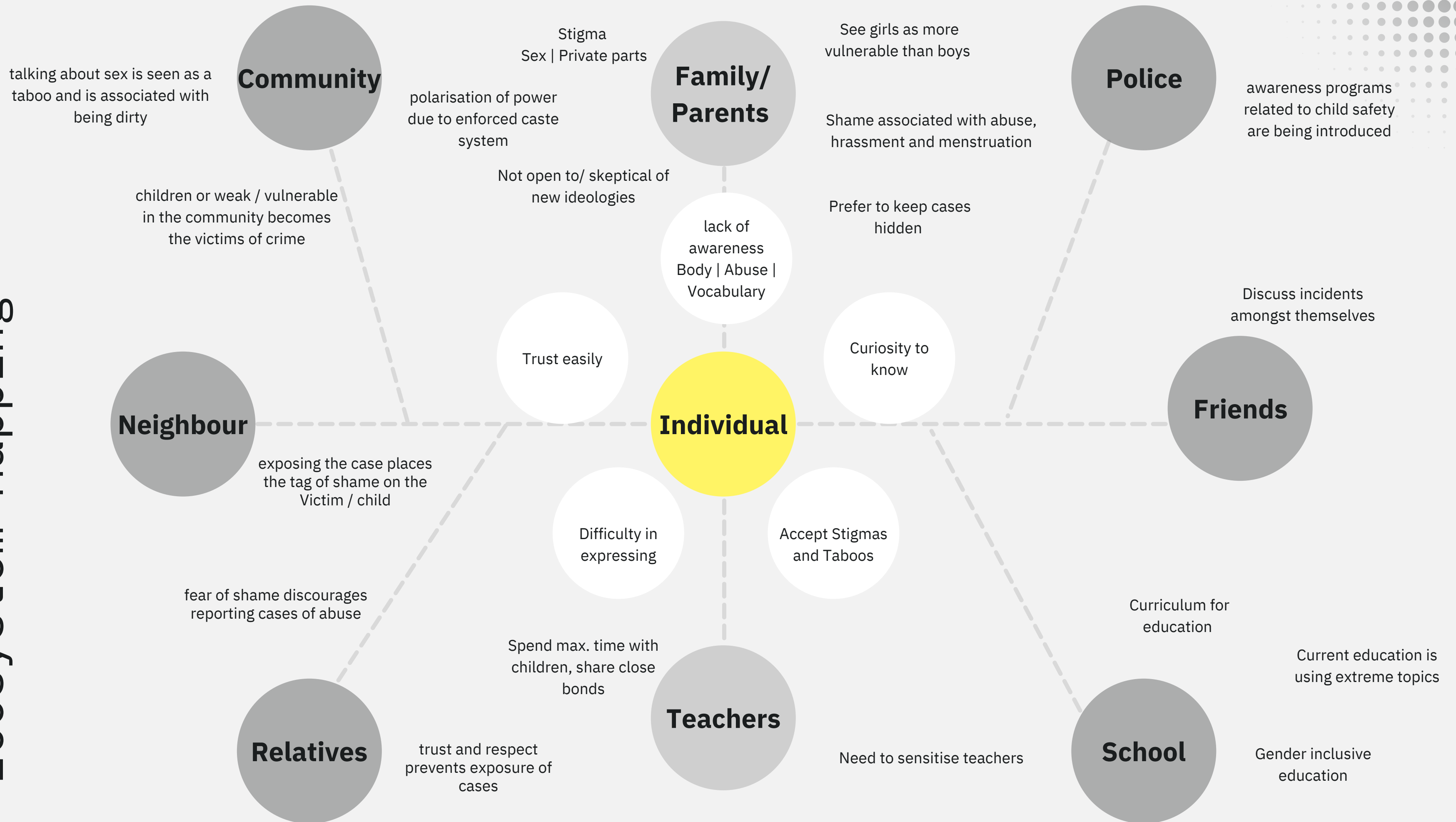
Ms. Shrinkhala- Psychologist

- Major development of a child happens at 2-5 yrs of age.
- Kids are not made aware of comfort and discomfort and how to react to discomforting touches/actions. Actions>Feelings associated>Comfort OR Discomfort
- Understanding the background of a kid and their parental conditioning is crucial
- The kid struggles between the balance of autonomy and shame and mostly made to deal with shame.

Mrs. Kaushal- ASI (Infocity)

- SHE Team Gandhinagar has IG, SP, ASI, 2 Constables
- Rural, migrants and the ones living roadside kids are primarily targeted
- Absence of parents make the kids vulnerable to crimes
- Communication/content delivery is verbal

Ecosystem Mapping



Social Context



Government Primary Schools

Randesan Primary School
and Raysan Primary
Schools.



Rural Areas in Gandhinagar

Randesan and Raysan
Villages in the vicinity.



Economically Vulnerable

Thakur and Darbar Castes
were the primary residents
of the village.



Problem Definition

To empower and inform children of Government Primary Schools, in the vicinity of rural areas within Gandhinagar, about their bodies and aid in prevention of Child Sexual Abuse by designing innovative and child friendly channels of communication.

Theory of Change

Problem

- Designing mediums to educate and make Govt. primary school children aware about their safety.
- Making students aware about the ownership of their body
- Acknowledging them about their bad feelings.

Key Audience

- Primary School children - Class kg to 3rd
- Teachers of government schools

Entry Point

- Government Schools: Gandhinagar

Steps

- Designing participatory tools and techniques
- A change in the education curriculum for govt schools in regional languages
- Sensitising the teachers about the importance of the subject.
- Counselling for new parents by the doctors / pediatricians

Measurable Effects

- Awareness about one's own body and the changes during growth.
- Outreach and reporting of such cases.
- Power of knowledge in the hands of children to take right decisions.

Wider Benefits

- Openly talking about such incidences in public and family.
- Punishing criminals, serving justice, implementation of acts.

Long Term Change

- A safe and healthy society for children.

Tool one: Understanding Personal Space

What

Inspired by the classic game of 'Paper Dance' to be played in pairs by the students of grade 1& 2 in the schools under study

Why

To introduce the concepts of personal space through the feelings of comfort and discomfort

To encourage the children to say 'NO' when they felt uncomfortable sharing their personal space

How

- The children were made to pair up by choosing a partner they were comfortable with.
- They were given a sheet of paper to stand on
- They danced till the music was playing
- Once the music stopped, the sheet of paper was folded
- This was continued till either they felt uncomfortable or the paper was too small to be folded



Tool Implementation



The personal space tool was implemented in 2 government primary schools in the rural vicinity of Gandhinagar.



Tool one: Understanding Personal Space

Findings

- Kids opposed and refused to participate in the activity if they were not comfortable dancing
- The kids crossed the confined area of the paper when the space was less, kids were able to experience discomfort when they were very close to people

Limitations

- The activity demonstrated by the teacher created a sense of authoritativeness and became like an assignment
- Regulation and mentoring are easy when kids are fewer, more kids, and lack of objective dilutes the purpose
- Kids become competitive and started breaking rules
- Teacher was concerned towards educating girls on the matter than boys

Tool two: Safe Circle

What

Creating an impression of palm using colors and mentioning people whom they love the most, trust the most, and are scared of.



who do you 'Love' the most?



who do you 'Trust' the most?



who are you 'Scared of' the most?

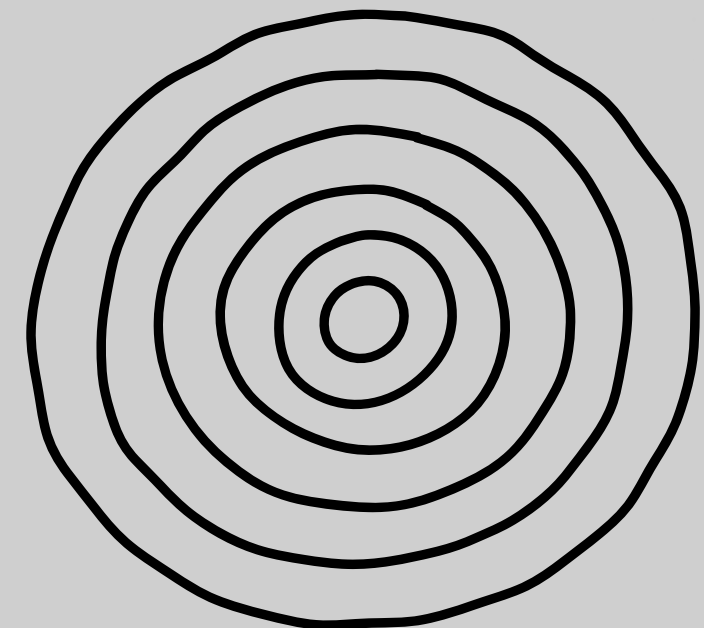
Why

To understand their family structure and whom they feel safe and secure with.

To know who amongst their family makes them feel comfortable and uncomfortable or they are scared of.

How

Using colors as a tool to engage them and tap the subconscious mind, and helping them express better about their safe and unsafe people and why they feel so.



Tool Implementation



The safe circle tool was implemented in 2 government primary schools in the rural vicinity of Gandhinagar.

Tool two: Safe Circle

Findings

- **5 out of 9** are afraid of relatives.
- Safe circle were mostly the immediate family (mother, father, and siblings)
- The family structure being **erratic**, the unstable familial situation has been normalized
- Joint (large) families of 7-8 people hence access to kids are easy as parents are working
- Lack of understanding of the uncomfortable situations makes it difficult for them to acknowledge and express

Limitations

- The responses we got for people whom they are scared of were mostly limited to parents because they hit and scold them

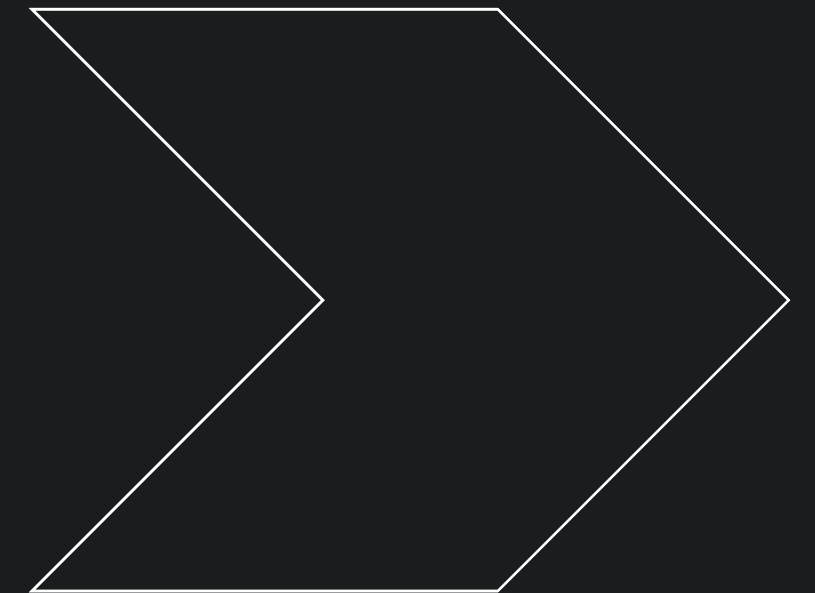
Insights

- **Stark difference between government and private schools' structure and medium of communication on CSA**
- **Lack of appropriate media which covers all important aspects of harassment by any person**
- **More stigma attached to discussion around CSA with students of rural govt. schools**
- **Bringing the topic up in nursery and KG helps foster communication between child and parents**

Objectives

Designing the framework of content, with a degree of flexibility that enables contextualisation pan India based on local circumstances

- Introducing this topic at the primary level reduces the risk of developing gender biases.
- Evolving the concept of good touch and bad touch towards feeling of comfort and discomfort
- Awareness about the ownership of the body
- Acknowledging and expressing bad feelings to others.
- Sensitising teachers and parents on how to convey and teach the primary school about the topic.



Strategies and Solutions

Changing the vocabulary regarding good touch/ bad touch to comfort/ discomfort.

Developing material for Teachers and Workshops that is iterative in nature and context specific (language, situations, settings)
In the long run, focus can be on teacher training to sensitize them as well as equipping them with techniques to handle such delicate issues around children

Designing a curriculum to include body safety from early years to create autonomy and awareness. introducing this topic reduces the risk of developing gender biases and becomes the basis of education on body.

Targeted media ads (radio jingles) towards:

- Children: To create awareness
- Perpetrators: To explain the implications of the POCSO Act

Roadmap

Milestones and Objectives

Pre Nursery & Nursery

- Awareness about ownership of our own body
- Introduction to good touch and bad touch
- Conditioning them to react to sexual abuse / harassment

Lower & Upper KG

- Learning "all" body parts' names, including private parts
- Acknowledging bad feelings and expressing; open communication
- Understanding touches and their intentions

Class 1st, 2nd & 3rd

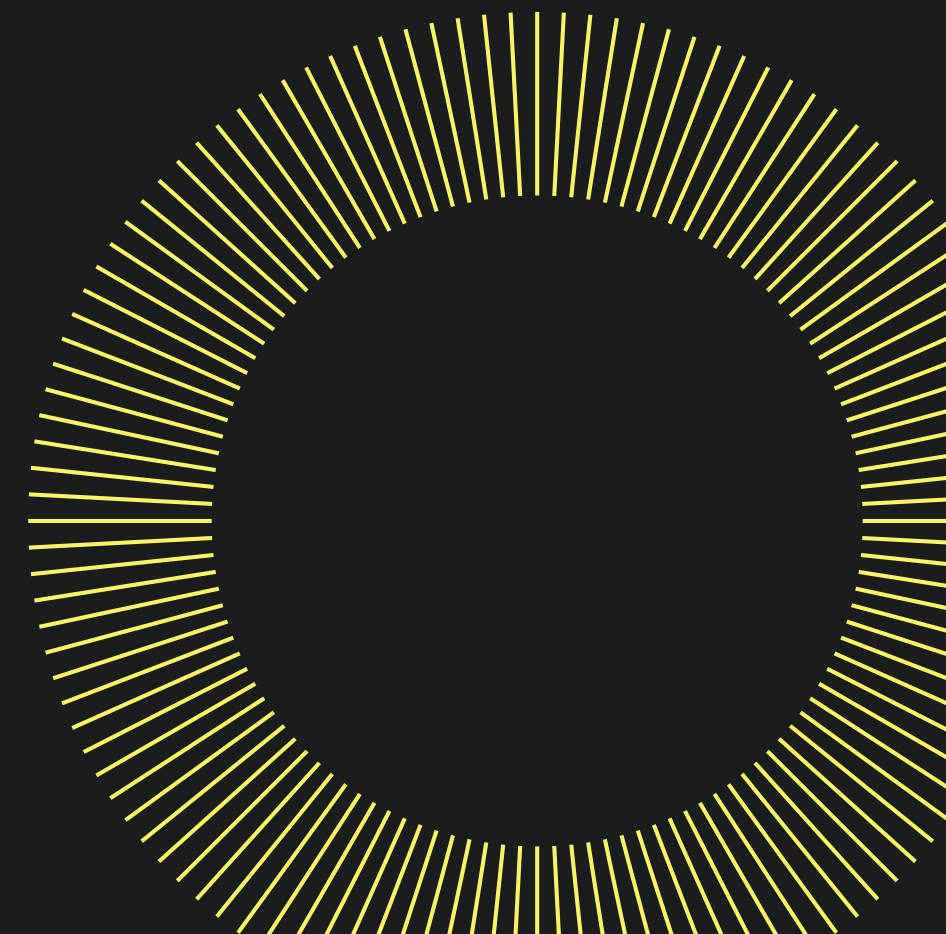
- Knowledge about the private parts and its importance
- Conditioning to react in such situations
- Acknowledging bad feelings, saying NO

Class 4th & 5th

- Educating about puberty and changes in the body
- Awareness about menstruation and private parts

Limitations of the Project

- The issue requires a system-level study and intervention. The solutions proposed can be relooked and iterated post an intense study on the complex issue.
- The proposed interventions are particular to the two rural schools studied near Gandhinagar and can be developed/altered further concerning the specific context.
- The language barrier with the students stood as a challenge, and we conducted most of the conversations with the help of their concerned teacher. The latter can communicate in Hindi / English, other than Gujarati.





राष्ट्रीय डिज़ाइन संस्थान
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF DESIGN

Thank you!

Bhoomika | Prashansa | Ruchi | Trisha

