

Rashtriya Kishore Swasthya Karyakram

January 9, 2021

Ministry: Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)

About Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK)

- The Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) has launched Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK) to address the health problems of adolescents in a comprehensive manner.
- RKSK is based on the fact that Adolescence is the most important stage of the life cycle for health interventions
- Adolescents aged 10 to 19 years constitute about one-fifth of India's population and young people (aged 10-24 years) about one-third of the population.
- The large and increasing share of adolescents and youth in India's population can translate into a demographic dividend only if policies and programmes focus on the health and wellbeing of this 243 million strong, yet very vulnerable adolescent population.

Objective

- To cater and address the health and development needs of the country's adolescents (10-19 years).

Feature

- Students are screened in schools and then referred to health facilities for early detection of diseases, particularly the non-communicable diseases (NCDs).
- Six thematic areas of RKSK namely- nutrition, sexual reproductive health, substance misuse, non-communicable diseases, mental health, injuries and violence.

- It introduces community-based interventions through peer educators (Saathiyas).
- Saathiya resource kit: to help peer educators, especially in villages, discuss sensitive issues and answer teenage queries in their community in an informed manner.
- To guide the implementation of this programme, MOHFW in collaboration with the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) has developed a National Adolescent Health Strategy.

Reasons for focus on Adolescent health

- One of the primary reasons for this new focus on adolescent health is due to recognition of the fact that maternal and child health outcomes will never be fulfilled unless attention is paid to adolescent health.
- Also, if India wants to reap the much celebrated demographic dividend, it has to improve the health of its present adolescent population, who will form a bulk of its demography in future years.
- Further, a multitude of lifestyle and behaviour related disorders such as substance abuse, mental disorders, gender based violence, physical inactivity are starting to afflict people in this age group and are also becoming a major cause of mortality.