



Child Health Care

Consolidated Report of Training Sessions on Prevention of Blindness and Eye Health of Children

December, 2021

Society for the **A**dvancement of Nature, **J**ustice & **H**ealth-
SANJH



Society For the Advancement of Nature, Justice & Health

Consolidated Report of Training Sessions on Prevention of Blindness and Eye Health of Children

Partner:	SANJH	
Grant Title:	Child Health Care	
Activity name:	Awareness Sessions on preventable blindness and Eye Health of Children	
Activity Number:	1st Session	2nd Session
Date:	27-11-2021	18-12-2021
Location:	Pakistan Public School Gurmani Town, Muzaffargarh	Head Office; SANJH Modern Schools System, Peer porri Khanpur Bagha Sher, Nuzaffargarh
Participants:	33	26
Total Participants:	59	

Agenda

Sr No	Activity	Timings		Responsible Person
1	Introductory Words	09:00am to 09:05am	05 minutes	Representative SANJH
2	Introduction of SANJH	09:05am to 09:15am	10 minutes	Representative SANJH
3	Why SANJH took this initiative?	09:15am to 09:35am	20 minutes	Representative SANJH
4	Importance of Eye Health of Children	09:35am to 10:00am	25 minutes	Trainer



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5	Causes of Blindness in Children	10:00am to 10:25am	25 minutes	Trainer
6	Prevention of Blindness in Children	10:25am to 11:00am	35 minutes	Trainer
7	Tea Break 11:00am to 11:20am (20 minute)			
8	How to take Vision of Children at School? (Practical)	11:20am to 12:20pm	01 hour	Participants
9	How Eye Health of Children can be promised in our society?	12:20pm to 01:00pm	40 minutes	Trainer
10	Lunch 01:00pm to 02:00pm (01 Hour)			

Objectives:

- To train teachers so that they can take visual acuity of students.
- To aware teachers about effects of blindness.
- To describe the major causes of blindness in children in detail.
- To aware teachers about how blindness can be prevented in children.
- To aware teachers about role to promise eye health of children.
- To explain that how children can keep their eyes clean and safe in their surroundings.

Proceedings of Session:

Eyes are the most important, sensitive and second most complicated organ of the body. Whatever we learn everyday 80% of it is perceived through eyes. Man of this modern world is more susceptible to developing any eye abnormality than Stone Age man. With the increase of modern man's intimacy toward screens, he is more vulnerable for developing eye abnormalities. Hence, prevalence of blindness and visual impairment increase. Although, modern world is advance in technology but still people are unaware of the conditions they are suffering from. Therefore, there is a need to take steps so that incidence of blindness and visual impairment can be reduced.

SANJH took this step so that prevalence of blindness and eye abnormalities can be decreased.



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Sr. No.	SAP's Name	Venue	Town	District	Date	Total Participants
1	1 st Eye Health Awareness Session	Pakistan Public School	Gurmani Town	Muzaffargarh	20-11-2021	33
2	2 nd Eye Health Awareness Session	Head Office SANJH	Khanpur Bagha Sher	Muzaffargarh	24-12-2021	26

Session started with the recitation of Holy Quran. After that representative of SANJH gave brief introduction of the organization and made them aware about the previous work of SANJH. Then he gave a detailed introduction of the project and told them why SANJH took this initiative. He said, “According to WHO report, 245 million people are visually impaired and 39 million people are blind. It was estimated that out of 245 million people, 19 million are only children in which 14 million children are visually due to uncorrected Refractive Error. Technology has increased the prevalence of refractive errors. Refractive Errors are the most important cause of preventable visual impairment. They are the second major cause of blindness. Developing countries majorly contribute to the percentage of uncorrected refractive errors that is 90%.”

Moreover, he added, “Children are the building blocks of a successful society. That’s why their health is the major concern. If they are not healthy then success of a society cannot be guaranteed. Child Eye Health is a major concern as 80% of the information they take every day is through their eyes. If they cannot see, then it is very difficult for them to understand the knowledge they are seeking every day. That means literacy rate in our society is going to decline hence success of a society cannot be promised.”

Furthermore, Trainer led the awareness session and highlighted the major factors that are barriers of a healthy society. She made them aware that shortage of service delivery, financial crisis and lack of awareness are the major barriers in front of a healthy society. Due to lack of awareness of certain diseases health is compromised in a society. Most of the people are unaware of the fact that they are suffering from a condition/ disease. More the disease is progressed, the more it becomes difficult to cope with it. Therefore, early diagnosis of certain conditions is necessary such as lazy eye (amblyopia). If a person is amblyopic and he is unmindful of his condition, as he ages the chances of his vision recovery also decrease. So, it is better that certain conditions are diagnosed early.



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Trainer said that SANJH looked into all the factors that are barriers in front of a healthy society and decided to bring down the proportion of these roadblocks. SANJH decided to provide health service delivery along with awareness about health issues as these are the major hindrances for a healthy society. To bring down the ratio of these barriers, SANJH decided to train teachers about some common and important health issues starting with the eye health of children.

Importance of Eye Health of Children:

Trainer made all the teachers aware about the importance of eye health of children. She said, “In 1997, WHO estimated that 45% of the blind children have lost their vision from avoidable causes. It means through early diagnosis and management, prevalence of childhood blindness can be reduced by almost half. Child Eye Health is a major concern because 80% of the information they are take every day is perceived through eyes. Eyes are important, second most complicated and sensitive organs of the body. Therefore, their care is necessary.”

She gave voice to importance of eye health of children and said that good vision is important to make sure that a child does his best at school as well as in a social setup. Eyes are developing throughout childhood therefore it is necessary to detect issues early so that it can make a long-lasting effect and do not make the condition worse. It's never too early to have a vision test. Vision issues of a child can go undetected as child might feel no abnormality, hence, leading to permanent vision loss that could have been preventable.

Identification of a child having any eye problem:

Trainer asked teachers to notice if any of their student is showing some symptoms that are related to eye conditions. She said that some eye conditions do not show any signs but some of them show certain type of signs such as:

- Appearance of eyes
- If any of the eye drifts inwards or outwards
- Behavioral Problems
- Frequent Rubbing of eyes
- Headaches
- Sitting too close to television
- Drifting of either eye or both eyes when exposed to light

She said that if any of your student is showing one of the above mentioned signs then the teacher should ask his student's parents to take him to hospital for further investigation.

Causes of Blindness in Children:

Trainer informed teachers about the major causes of blindness in children. These are:



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- Vitamin A deficiency (causes 250,000- 500,000 cases of childhood blindness each year)
- Cataracts
- Amblyopia
- Retinopathy of prematurity (ROP)

She further made them aware that vitamin A deficiency is usually caused by measles and retinopathy of prematurity is caused by premature birth, low birth weight (2.75 pounds or less) and being oxygen given immediately after birth. She said if they find any of the above mentioned conditions in their surroundings, then they (teachers) should recommend their parents to visit hospital for an eye checkup.

She asked them that if any child in their surroundings is diagnosed with congenital cataract, then they (teachers) should recommend his parents to operate it as soon as possible as any further delay in operation can cause amblyopia and hence vision is compromised.

Prevention of Blindness in Children:

Trainer stated that childhood blindness can be prevented by early detection of vision threatening conditions. She said that SANJH gave it a thought to hire optometrists so that they can screen out school children with poor vision. But it seemed an expensive and ephemeral step as every year SANJH would have to hire optometrists to screen out school children with poor vision. Therefore, SANJH team decided to train teachers to take vision so that they can screen out children with poor vision every year and then send those children to optometrists or ophthalmologists for further investigation and management.

After that, there was tea break of 15 minutes. Participants and trainer enjoyed tea with cookies. They also reviewed their previous learnings and teachers asked some important questions related to child eye health during tea break.

How to take visual acuity?

After the tea break, trainer paraphrased about visual acuity i.e. what is visual acuity?

“Visual Acuity is a measure of the ability of the eye to distinguish shapes and details of objects at a given distance.” She told them that visual acuity is measured at 6m (18 feet) with Snellen chart monocular and is expressed as VAsc. VAsc is abbreviated as Visual Acuity sans correction. “Sans” is a Latin word which means “without”. If visual acuity is measured with spectacles then it is expressed as VAcc. VAcc is abbreviated as visual acuity cum correction. “Cum” is a Latin word which means “with”.

Trainer further explained that normal visual acuity is written as 6/6 in which numerator 6 represents 6 meters distance and denominator 6 represents the distance at which a normal person can read that word compared to the person with poor vision.



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Following this, she paraphrased about Snellen chart and told them about how to take visual acuity of a person. Then there was a practice session of 1 hour about how to take visual acuity of a person. Teachers practiced on each other and reported back to trainer after they took each other's visual acuity. Trainer pointed out the mistakes made by teachers and asked them to practice more. Everything required to practice about how to take visual acuity was provided by SANJH.

How Eye Health of Children can be promised in our society?

Trainer stated that there are some important points that should be fulfilled to promise eye health of children in the society. These are:

- School vision screening programs should be encouraged
- Teachers should be trained to educate children about a healthy lifestyle.
- Consumption of vitamin A rich foods and 6 monthly vitamin A supplementation for all children between 9 months to 5 years
- Annual vision screening of school children is necessary to detect any refractive error.
- If a child is diagnosed with cataract, then prefer a cataract surgery as soon as possible as it will decrease the chances of development of amblyopia.
- Paying a visit to an eye clinic as early as possible in the childhood so that vision threatening conditions can be diagnosed if any.
- Teachers should educate children about how to increase personal hygiene, environment sanitation, water supplies as this will decrease chances of many diseases from occurrence.

Different Tips to keep your eyes healthy and safe:

Trainer taught them different tips to keep their eyes healthy and safe. These are as follows:

- Regularly play and exercise. At least two hours of outdoor activity a day is ideal for healthy eyes
- Eat healthy and balanced diet
- Drink enough fluids
- Protect your eyes from the sun. Never look directly into the sun. Use high quality UV-rays blocking sunglasses.
- Use protective glasses while playing outdoor games such as cricket, gulli danda etc
- Rest your eyes when using electronic devices. Follow 20/20/20 rule
- Sleep at least 6 hours daily
- If you use contact lenses, make sure to sterilize them to avoid any kind of infection.
- Make sure that the glasses you are using are prescribed by an optometrist or an ophthalmologist not by a shopkeeper.



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- Make sure if glasses you are wearing fit properly on your face or not.
- Be careful while playing projectile games like cricket, gulli danda
- Avoid firecrackers, bows, arrows at events
- Avoid colors that cause chemical burns.
- Do not smoke
- Avoid looking directly into the sun

Closing Remarks:

At the end of the session, SANJH representative thanked all the participants of the session and took reviews from them if the session was helpful or not.

Key Achievements:

- 66 teachers (including teachers from different schools of the areas) were trained to take visual acuity of school children
- Trainer made them aware about causes of blindness and what can be done to prevent blindness of children
- Teachers were trained to educate children about how to keep their eyes healthy and safe

Beneficiaries Quotes:

Miss Humaira Bibi; Head Teacher of Pakistan Public School said,

“This session was really helpful. My eyesight is weak and today for the first time I checked my own eyesight. I believe that today’s training will also be helpful for our students.”

Miss Kashmala; Teacher of Huzaifa Islamic School System said,

“I have some students in my class that show signs of having eye problems. I didn’t know that these signs are due to certain eye conditions. I will definitely call their parents and will suggest them to visit hospital for their children eye checkup.”

Miss Riffat Safdar; Teacher of SANJH Modern School System Dittay wala said,

“This session was very helpful for me as I didn’t know that my eyesight was weak. I never felt that I was having blurry vision through this whole time. Thanks to this awareness session I was able to find out about my poor eyesight.”

Miss Iram Mujahid; Teacher of SANJH Modern School System Dhori Wala said,

“Today, I learnt a lot from this awareness session. I think my nephew shows some signs as if he is suffering from any eye condition. Now I will make sure to pay a visit to a hospital for his eye checkup.”

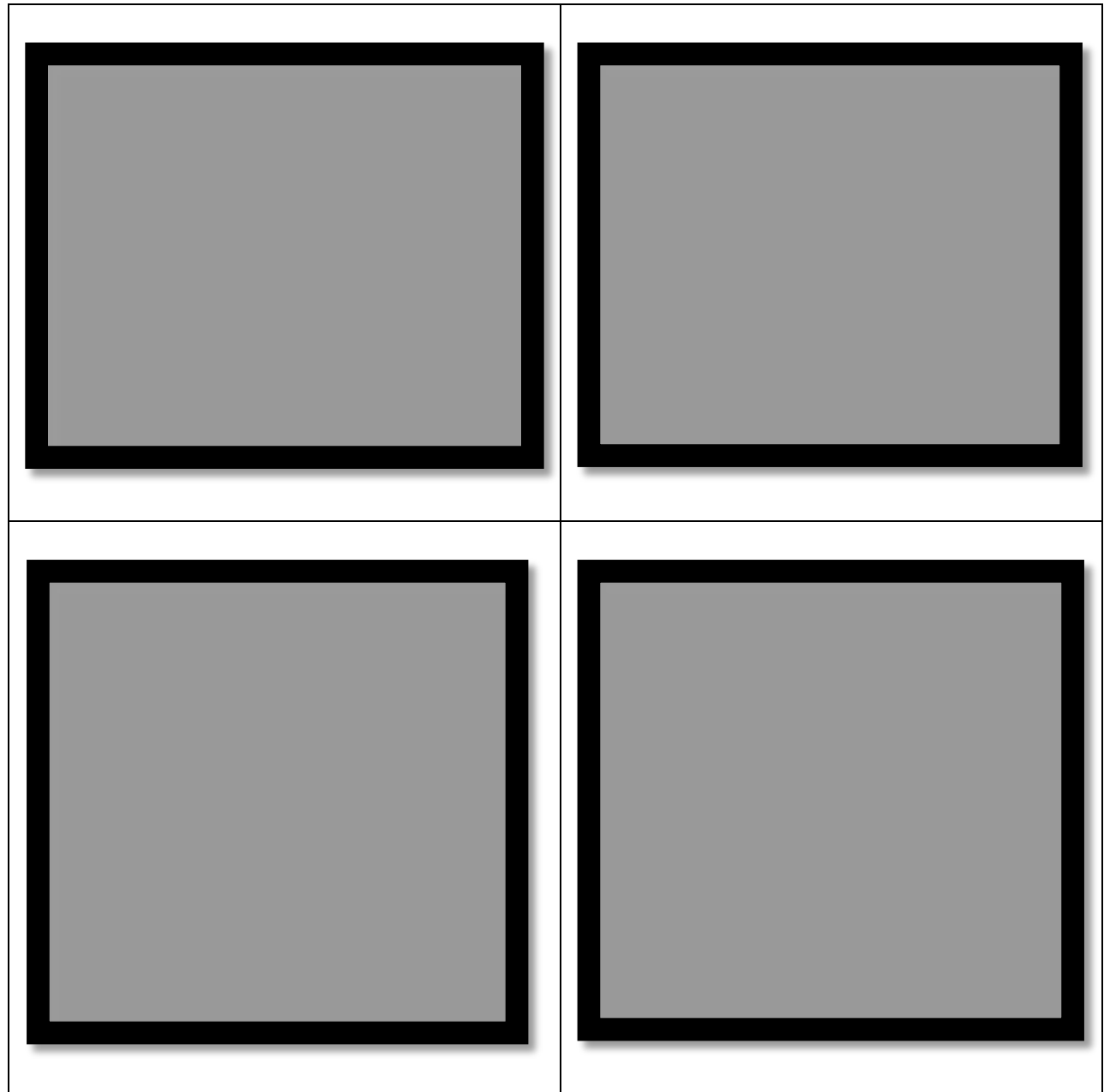


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Miss Zarmina; from SANJH Modern School System Rehmua said,

“One of my relative had this eye condition called amblyopia. He had this condition since birth but he was unaware of it. He was 35 years old when he found out that he had such an eye condition. He tried to get best treatments in the world but everything was in vain. Doctors said that it would have been better if his condition was diagnosed early. Now nothing can be done to improve his vision. I think this is a very big step taken by SANJH as many children will save their eyes and their future through this initiative.”

Picture Gallery





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*During Awareness Session on Preventable Blindness and Eye Health of Children
Venue: Pakistan Public School Gurmani Town*



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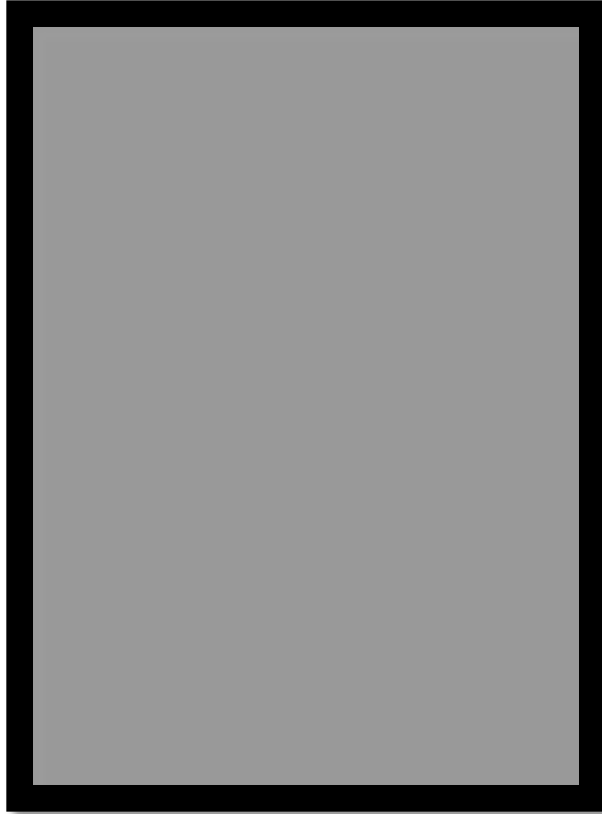


*During Awareness Session on Preventable
Blindness and Eye Health of Children
Venue: Head Office SANJH Khanpur Bagha
Sher*

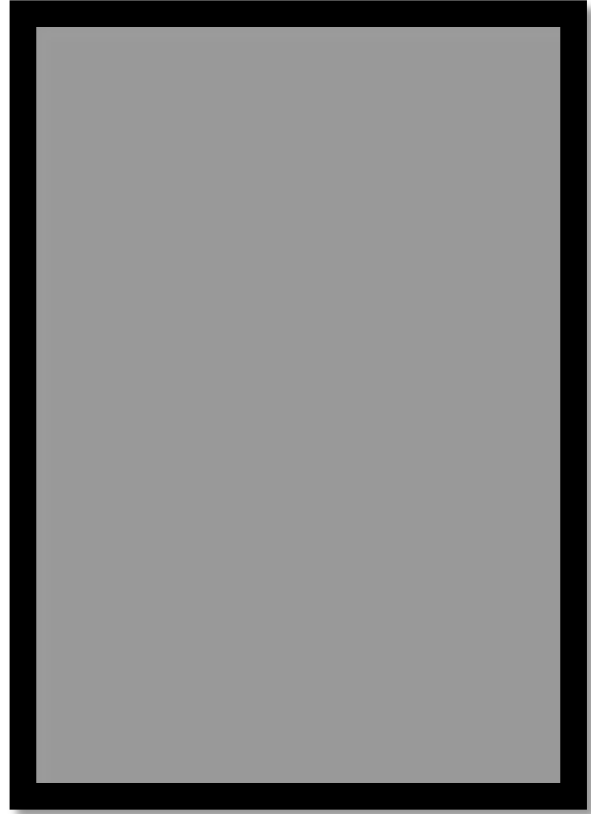
*Participants at Awareness Session
Venue: Head Office SANJH Khanpur Bagha
Sher*



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***A teacher performing a role of a patient sitting
at 6 meters from the Snellen Chart
Venue: Head Office SANJH Khanpur Bagha
Sher***



***A teacher taking Visual Acuity of another
teacher through Snellen Chart shown in the
previous picture
Venue: Head Office SANJH Khanpur Bagha
Sher***