



Child Marriage & Teenage Pregnancy

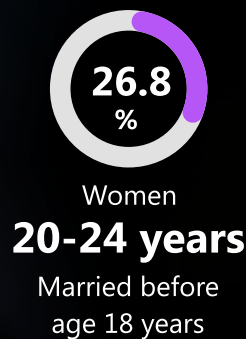
End **child marriage**,
preserve childhood.

What is child marriage and teenage pregnancy?

Child marriage is one that takes place before the legal age of 18 years for girls and 21 years for boys.

Teenage pregnancy is defined as a teenage girl, in the age group of 13-19 years becoming pregnant.

Current scenario





Impact of child marriage



EMOTIONAL STRESS

- Child brides are neither physically nor emotionally ready to become wives and mothers
- Loss of freedom • Limited exposure to information • Loss of family and friends when she moves to her parent's house

HEALTH ISSUES

- Risk of infertility • High risk pregnancy
- Higher infant and maternal mortality
- Stunting in children born to teenage mothers
- Increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases



INABILITY TO NEGOTIATE DURING FAMILY PROBLEMS

- Domestic violence • Sexual abuse
- Harassment by in-laws and spouse
- Spend on self and child

VULNERABLE FUTURE

- Discontinued education • No career opportunities
- Financial dependency on spouse/family
- Family pressure on boys to earn soon
- No decision-making powers

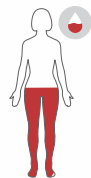


Risks in Teenage pregnancy



Young adolescent experiences:

- Preterm labour
- Higher risk of abortions
- Still-births



Pregnancy-related illnesses:

- Hypertension
- Anemia



The child of an adolescent has:

- Low birth weight
- Higher infant mortality



Young mothers might face:

- Poor childcare and child feeding practices
- Less likely to breastfeed their babies

How prevention of child marriage and teenage pregnancy can be enabled?

- Empowering girls with information, skills and support networks
- Changing social norms that place a low value on girls by educating and mobilizing parents and community members
- Enhancing the accessibility and quality of formal schooling for girls
- Offering economic support and incentives for girls and families
- Fostering and enabling legal and policy framework
- For any assistance please call on 1098



Myths/Barriers

Vs

Your Response

DOWRY

✗ Younger the bride, lesser the dowry the family has to pay

✓ Any type of dowry is illegal and against law in India

FAMILY BURDEN

✗ Patriarchal society considers a girl to be a financial liability hence they get her married early

✓ Investing in girl's education and employment will enable her to be independent and also add to the family's income

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS

✗ Certain religious occasions are considered auspicious and lead to mass child marriages

✓ Most religions lay emphasis on the importance of education and harms of child marriage

OBEY AND ACCEPT

✗ Daughters are forced to marry the boys chosen by their parents

✓ Marriage done with the consent of both boy and girl proves to be more fruitful and long lasting

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FUTURE

✗ It is believed that early marriage of girls lead to social and financial security of the family

✓ Various Government Schemes support the education of a girl child so that she becomes economically independent

UNWANTED MASCULINE ATTENTION

✗ Child marriage protects the honour of the family and the girl. It also perpetuates the family honor norms around virginity and chastity of girls

✓ Child marriage leads to an early introduction to reproductive and sexual behavior which is harmful for the health of both girl and boy

What do different religions say?*



Hindu

“Never think of giving in marriage a daughter of very young age.”

(RV 3.55.16)



Islam

“On no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear.”

Surah Al Baqr 286



Christianity

“If anyone does not provide for his own and especially for those of his household, he is worse than an unbeliever.”

(1 Timothy 5:8)

**This is only a representation of few religious teachings and not an exhaustive list of all religions.*

Being an inspiration to many in the community, what can you do?

I will not perform **child marriages** and will not support **early pregnancy**

I will **emphasize on the life risks** for both underage mother and her newborn in case of child marriage and pregnancy

I will raise awareness on the **equal rights** of girls and boys over family resources and in **decision making**

I will emphasize the importance of **support from parents, family and community** as essential for a girl and boy to achieve her/his dreams

I will educate the community that every girl/boy has the power to **make decisions concerning her/his marriage**

I will provide information on **government schemes** and promote uptake of these schemes to prevent child marriage and continue education

I will promote the importance of completing **school and higher education** for every girl and boy

Where can you communicate?

Leader to Leader/Community



Religious Meetings

Festivals and Fairs

Leader to Community



Community Gatherings

School, College and Madrassa

Panchayat/ Sabha

TV, Newspaper, Mobile, Radio