

SHAKTI GIRL-SAFE SPACES

EMPOWERING AND MOBILIZING GIRLS
ENGAGING COMMUNITY ADULTS WITH
GIRL SAFETY
ACTIVATING GOVERNMENT SERVICES
FOR GIRLS

**Bhopal, Patna, Varanasi, Bhubaneswar,
Mumbai, Akola, Sitamarhi**

Isolated vulnerable girls find their SHAKTI (strength) to affect change for themselves and the community

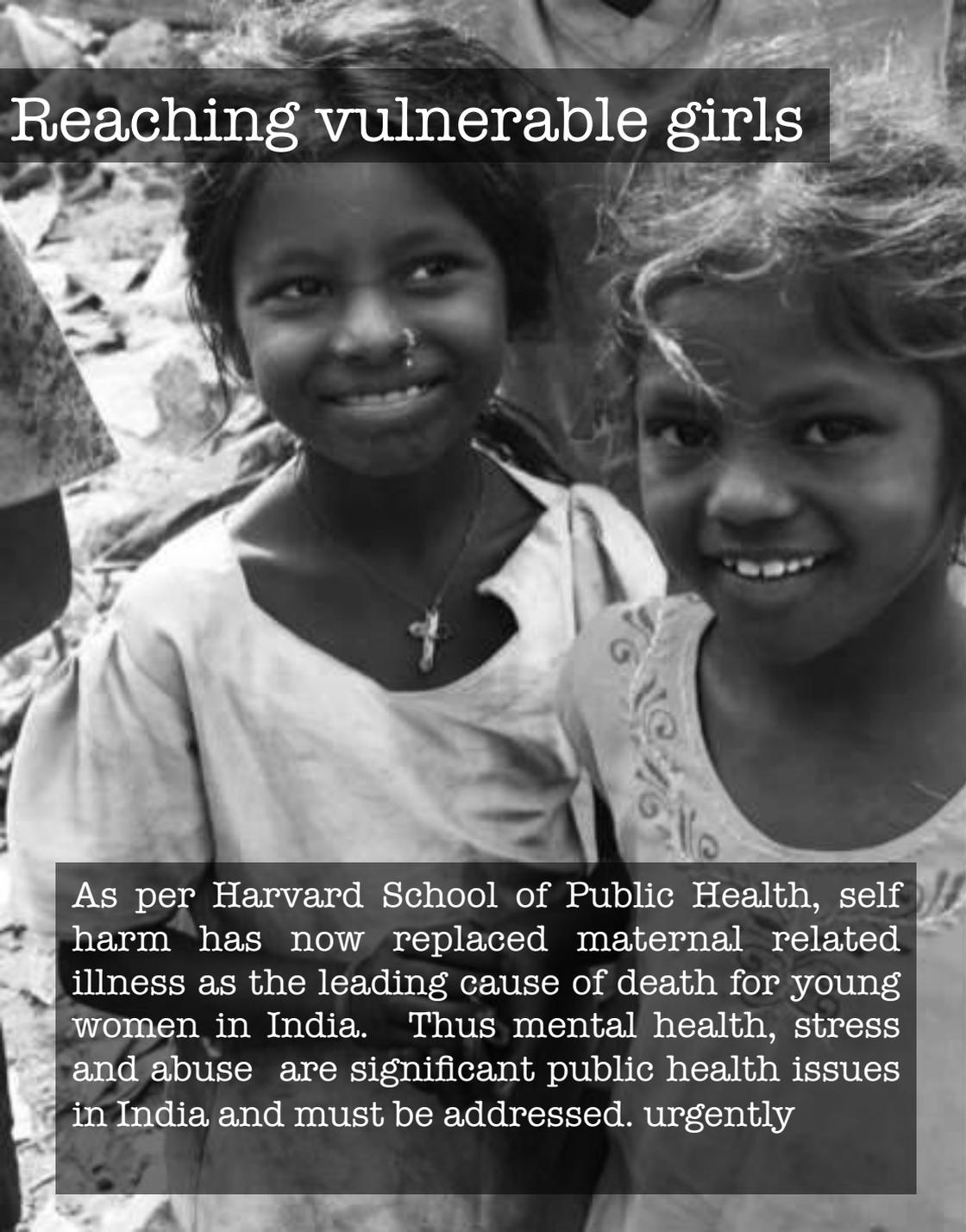
Girls' struggles are rooted in systemic problems—such as poverty, racism, and sexism - that require a collective, rather than an individual response.

This suggests a need for a new concept of health and stress resistance that locates the struggle between the girl and her world and that holds adults in girls' environments accountable for providing girls with experiences and opportunities for them to understand, engage with, and potentially transform what limits and harms them.

“Beyond Appearance: A New Look at Adolescent Girls”

-American Psychological Association





Reaching vulnerable girls

As per Harvard School of Public Health, self harm has now replaced maternal related illness as the leading cause of death for young women in India. Thus mental health, stress and abuse are significant public health issues in India and must be addressed. urgently

Pinky, abused, locked in a shelter home with family unwilling to take her back.

Rakhi, the child of prisoners, growing up in state care

Zarine the child of a sex worker

Heena, 14 years, out of school, works in a garbage dump

Neha who ran away with a boy and found herself trafficked

Nine year old Kanchan in an urban basti unsupervised all day because her single parent is at work

Nasreen harassed on the way to school each morning.

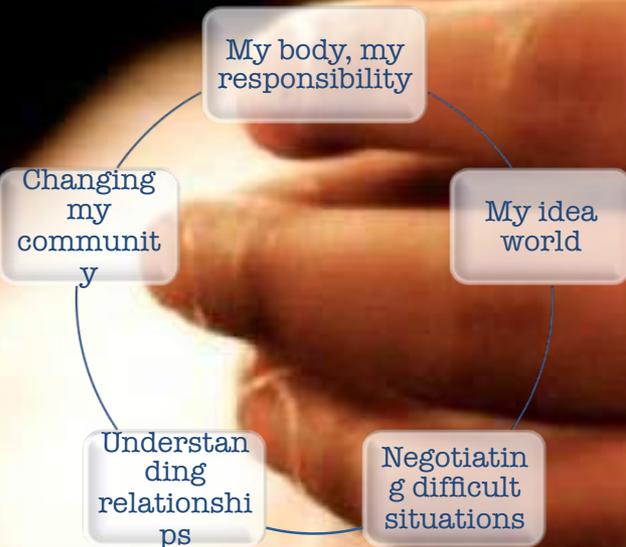
Seema from the *musahar* community, (considered a scheduled tribe group) pulled out of school, works ten hour days, isolated at home.

Varsha, pulled out from school at thirteen to prepare for marriage.

Empowering, informing and mobilizing

Group & Individual Sessions

GROUP WORK & NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS



BEFORE THE PROGRAM, ONLY 30% GIRLS FELT THEY COULD VOICE THEIR CONCERNS ABOUT CHILD MARRIAGE WITHIN THE FAMILY, WHILE AFTER THE PROGRAM, 80% FELT THEY COULD NEGOTIATE TO DELAY MARRIAGE. IN 2012, 90% OF SHAKTI GIRLS DEVELOPED A SAFETY PLAN, IDENTIFIED THREATENING INDIVIDUALS/SITUATIONS AS WELL AS POINT OF CONTACT IN CASE OF CRISIS

SAFETY PLANS FOR EACH GIRL



We can change our Community.

Girls in Dharavi make public toilets safer by negotiating with the authority to mend broken windows and improve lighting outside

Read Govandi, a project by Shakti girls, has admitted over 1000 girls to school since 2010 in Mumbai

In Indrangan in Bhopal, 38 girls in got together to identify free space to get vocational trainings like tailoring or computer classes. into the community

In the Adalatganj slum in Patna, Bihar, 25 girls got together to access nutrition and advice from the local government center (Aanganwadi)



Before the program, only 14% believed that they could change their lives or anything in the community. This rose to 60% after the program.



Girls in Hardaspur, Patna (Bihar) are particularly proud of their water pump. In 2011, they were able to convince the local municipal ward officer to install it, impacting the entire neighborhood. Now they don't spend half the day fetching water and these girls are back in the classroom where they belong.

Engaging parents and communities with girl-safety issues



Shakti circles connect girls to mentors, role-models, supporters, services and the community at large.

SHAKTI CIRCLES HELP GIRLS REACH OUT TO COMMUNITY:

The Champions Study by Harvard School of Public Health found that school enrollment alone is not the answer. It suggests that the most common denominator of marginalized girls' educational success is the sustained presence of a *personal advocate*: someone, be it a parent, teacher, or sibling who actively believes in and promotes the girl's worth as a student, a trainee, a potentially productive member of society.



SHAKTI CIRCLE MEETINGS



ASSESSING POLICE PROTECTION
GIRLS MAP UNSAFE AREAS IN THE
COMMUNITY. POLICE COMMIT TO
INCREASING VIGILANCE



PREVENTING HARASSMENT
MOTHERS, SCHOOL PRINCIPALS AND
SHAKTI GIRLS TALK ABOUT
PREVENTING SCHOOL DROP-OUTS BY
MAKING SCHOOL ROUTES SAFER FOR
GIRLS



COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION:
GIRLS WHO RARELY SPOKE UP AT
HOME BEFORE, TEAM UP WITH
PARENTS FOR A SPORTS EVENT



SHAKTI GIRLS ACCESS OPPURTUNITES:

3126 girls connected to school or job trainings

It was most likely that fourteen year Varsha, would be pulled out school and taken back to her village to get married. But her Shakti network negotiated that her trip back to the village be postponed. They also supported her to get a job with a Shakti friends mother, proving to her family that financial independence was a real option for her financial security over child marriage

In Bin Toli in Patna, 10 girls established who work long ten hour days realized during Shakti that they want a different future. They negotiated with parents and a local organization for functional literacy classes so that they would not get cheated by middlemen who bough their craft products at dismal rates. They also believe that literacy will open up new opportunities in the future and believe that other musahar girls should follow their example



Activating government services for girls

Sensitizing police about security issues in urban slums

Training community, government staff to strengthen a state run program for adolescent girls in Bihar

Pressurizing Municipal Ward officers for access to services