The CACA Safety Workbooks are life skills and value education books. They focus on the prevention of Child Abuse. Age-appropriate, progressive and in the Indian ethos, the workbooks are a result of a three-year-long democratic chain of processes like Opinion Polls, Focus Group Discussions, Conventions, Consensus Building Discussions and a Pilot Programme. They continuously evolve under a project committee. The workbooks cover certain core principles which are mapped with 10 life skills prescribed by the World Health Organisation - WHO.

We are grateful to parents, teachers, non-teaching staff, counsellors, schools, and various government and voluntary organisations like Commissions for Protection of Child Rights, National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), State Legal Service Authorities, Child Welfare Committees, Counsel to Secure Justice for their support, contribution and active participation in shaping and implementation of project CACA across India.

The workbooks disseminate information mainly through stories, poems, plays, letters, cartoon strips, and activities. Some of the reference stories are based on Panchatantra, Jataka and Aesop's tales. They empower our children against the tricks played by abusers. They prompt the young readers to express their feelings and emotions through various open-ended and close-ended questions. A look at their answers will be helpful for parents, teachers and caregivers and provide them with an opportunity to have a dialogue with the child on sensitive issues which are otherwise difficult to talk about.

The safety workbooks focus on self-esteem and emotions as friends to its young readers. These two core principles then build on their rights, gender equality and abuse prevention. They, like a safety drill, are to be practised repeatedly by our children year after year. The workbooks cover various day-to-day situations that children face, have faced or will face in and outside their schools. The books prompt children, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff to adopt behaviour changes which are necessary to prevent child abuse.

The workbooks, also share essential information on child rights and various laws formulated for the protection of children like, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, (JJA) 2015, child helpline numbers like 1098, e-portals like POCSO-E-Box and government organisations like Child Welfare Committees, among others. For senior students who will soon be adults and go to colleges/Universities, or may start working part-time to support their education/family, the workbooks introduce laws on prevention of ragging in colleges, sexual harassment of women at the workplace - POSH Act, and Motor Vehicle Act.

The workbooks evolve around three lead characters: A girl Sana, a boy Arpit, and a tiger Pocso. The tiger acts as a friend and familiarises children, from an early age, about the POCSO Act, and Law in general, as a safety net. They, with other characters, break age-old gender roles and stereotypes prevalent in Indian society. Sana loves football and wants to become a football player. Arpit's passion is dance and he wants to become a dancer. In the stories, it is not just boys who protect girls; it also works the other way around. Various stories and images depict women in uniform, working mothers, fathers doing household chores and a lot more. The language and artworks in the workbooks tend to be gender inclusive.

It is important to note that the workbooks do not show any abuse occurring in real time. One of the characters usually intervenes before the situation takes an ugly turn. The intervention builds confidence in children to achieve the same. Besides, Pocso the tiger always acts as a confidant and guiding figure in the stories, telling children right from wrong and helping them take the right decisions that help them stay safe. As the characters grow from class to class along with their readers, Pocso evolves into a law.

The workbooks will prompt children to ask difficult questions on ethics, feelings, happiness, relationships and more which would be impossible for the wisest human to answer. Hence, evaluation for these workbooks cannot follow the standard practices. But when children ask these questions to their teachers in a classroom-based peer-to-peer learning environment, it builds confidence in them. Because now they can be guided in a way that is academically, psychologically and legally correct. Moreover, most of the teachers are also parents and some are on their way to becoming grandparents. They are in a position of responsibility, trust and authority.

Please read all the CACA safety workbooks and the companion booklet before teaching this workbook.

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