State: Bangladesh

Committe: Jr Unicef

Agenda: Impact of Covid-19 on children

Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease that spread around the world drastically. It can cause death or harm to some people, even children both mentally or physically.

The virus was confirmed to have spread to Bangladesh in March 2020. The first three known cases were reported on 8 March 2020 by the country's epidemiology institute, IEDCR. Since then, the pandemic has spread day by day over the whole nation. Because of Covid-19 most of the countries have brought unprecedented efforts to institute the practice of “social distancing”, as a result, many schools have been closed and classes are shifted to home-based distance-learning models.

As a matter of fact, children are not beyond the grasp of this pandemic, and also the most vulnerable to the drastic effects of it, as they are forced to stay home for extended periods due to lockdown and school closure, resulting in minimal interaction with peers and decreased the opportunities for exploration and physical activities. All of these adversely impact children's mental health and welfare, leading to a wide variety of mental health issues, such as anxiety, stress, depression, and sleeping difficulties.

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Bangladesh has closed the academic institutions, therefore, about 3.7 million students and more than a million teachers have stayed at home. Although the scientific controversy is unremitting concerning the effectiveness of school closures on virus transmission. We all know that schools play an emergent role, not just in supplying educational resources to children, but also in offering students an opportunity to communicate with teachers and receive psychological counseling.

Moreover, evidence shows that whenever children are beyond schooling (e.g. weekends and summer payday’s), they become physically less active, have much-prolonged screen time, irregular sleep schedules and less healthy diets, resulted in excess weight and lack of cardio-respiratory performance. Furthermore, pandemic stressors such as terror of infection, dissatisfaction and boredom, lack of knowledge, lack of personal space at home, and family's financial loss may have even more troublesome and enduring impacts on children’s mental health.

To assess the impact of home quarantine on children’s mental health, a study was performed among 1800 children and identified that one in five children (20 percent) was either suffering from depression or anxiety, or both. Also, mental health issues remain fairly The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental well-being is worrying 60% of parents, according to a survey by parents with primary-aged children and 87% reported that their children were missing school and less than half stated that their children were feeling lonely, which all together affects their children’s mental health and wellbeing. Yet, there is no literature available in Bangladesh on the long-term impact of COVID-19 pandemic on children’s mental health. Thus, it becomes important to determine how extended school closures, stringent social distancing steps and the pandemic itself have impacts on the mental health status of children. Therefore, this study is aimed to investigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on mental health and determining the associated factors among children of Bangladesh.

To sum up, as Bangladesh, we are hoping;

* to decrease the amount of children that need physiological care by organizing outdoor group activities
* to have councils at schools to provide mental guidance
* to provide meetings for parents to get a better idea of their children’s mental state
* to plan a better eating schedule for each child by supporting their families

All in all, we hope to act together and reach a consensus on this vital issue with you dear delegates. As Bangladesh, we think that if you make the world better for kids you make it better for everyone.