Context

- 50% of currently married women in Karnataka were married before 18 years
- Gender and social norms limit girls’ mobility, aspirations and participation in decision making
- Girls experience early sexual contact because of marriage or due to being initiated into sex work as part of the devadasi system
- Nutrition, healthcare and education services at the state, community and family levels does not cater to the specific needs of the girls
- High poverty levels take girls out of school and push them into marriage and/or the unskilled work force

Objectives

- To understand the needs and aspirations of the adolescent girls in the age group of 9 to 19 years
- To facilitate the creative expression of their needs and aspirations by the girls

Methods

- Three days residential workshop with 63 adolescent girls with sessions on self-exploration, sharing of dreams and aspirations and creative expression
- Recording of answers to questions on their daily routine, people they like and dislike, and their dreams and role models

Know me: A self exploratory exercise to understand vulnerabilities of adolescent girls - A northern Karnataka experience

Mallika B, Mohan H L, Soni S, Raghavendra T.
What is your dream for the future?

• To become a teacher, doctor and police officer

Who is your role model?

• Teachers were named as the role model across age groups
• Those girls who did not have role models were not in school

“Our's is a poor family and it is difficult for me to continue studying for very long. If I study up to 12th standard, I can go for teacher’s training and become a teacher.”
- Adolescent Girl

Social needs identified by the girls

• Prevent child marriage
• Prevent child labour
• Prevent dedication of adolescent girls as devadasis
• Keep adolescent girls in school

Findings

• Intervention on behalf of adolescent girls needs to occur at a variety of levels
• It is important to facilitate a peer support system among adolescent girls
• Girls seek affection, appreciation and acceptance from their family and society at large
• When a girl drops out of school, her social sphere is restricted in addition to having less knowledge about resources in the society

“I want to become a police officer to arrest my father. He does not come home often and every time he comes, he gets drunk, shouts and beats us. Because of him, I had to drop out of school.”
- Adolescent Girl