

STUDY INFORMATION SHEET FOR ADOLESCENTS

Title: SAMA – Safeguarding Adolescent Mental Health in India: a co-designed feasibility study of a systems intervention targeting youth anxiety and depression.

Introduction: I, Dr N Janardhana, Professor, Department of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bengaluru, am conducting research on a study entitled ‘SAMA: Safeguarding adolescent mental health in India - a co-designed feasibility study of a systems intervention targeting youth anxiety and depression’. You are invited to take part in the development phase of this study. Please read this form and ask any questions to help you decide if you want to take part.

Who is running this study?

This study is a collaboration between NIMHANS and the University of Leeds in the UK. Researchers from Indian and the UK institutions are helping us. The study is funded by a co-operation of UK funders (the Medical Research Council, the Economic and Social Research Council, the National Institute of Health Research, UK Aid and the Department for International Development). If interested, you can find out more on our study website www.sama.org.uk

What is the purpose of this study?

The aim of the study is to determine if school-based programs can protect the mental health and well-being of adolescents so that they can do well in school and life. The project is developing and testing a package of inter-related programs – one for young people, one for parents, one for teachers and one for school culture/environment. This form is about the development phase of the programs:

1. The school culture/environment program will **aim** to promote whole school awareness and understanding of adolescent mental health, reduce mental health stigma and promote a caring school community. We hope the program will improve student attendance, performance and well-being in school.
2. The teacher program will **aim** to build teachers’ knowledge of adolescent mental health and how it might affect young people in schools. The program will help teachers to use disciplines approaches in school that are positive so that student well-being is protected
3. The young people program will **aim** to teach young people to manage stress, anxiety and low mood as well as positive behaviours such as problem-solving and good sleep which are important for mental health.
4. The parent program will **aim** to promote parents’ awareness and understanding of adolescent well-being and mental health, and how it can affect adolescents’ behavior and performance in school. It will aim to help parents feel more informed and confident about how to support their child. This in turn may help adolescents feel understood and supported, and more able to do well in school and life. We will work with young people and parents to get ideas about how we can encourage parents to attend the event.

In this development phase, we will work collaboratively with multiple stakeholders to co-produce the programs to increase their chances of being acceptable to schools in the test phase. Collaborative work will be via separate online focus groups with teachers, school leaders, young people and parents as well as education stakeholders and national organisations (e.g., State Education & Health Department,



Teachers of India, ChildLine India, Save the Children). In the test phase in 2022, we will host the program in eight schools in Bengaluru & Kolar to determine if the program is acceptable, feasible and effective.

You will be invited to take part in the development phase of either the **school culture, teacher, parent, or young people program**. We want to hear your views, concerns, ideas and preferences for mental health education in schools to help young people learn how to look after their mental wellbeing and do well in school and life.

Why am I being invited to take part?

Your school has agreed to be one of our study schools and has given us permission to invite all adolescents in 9th standard. We would welcome your participation if:

- you are interested in mental health, with ideas for how we can address mental health in schools
- currently feel well in terms of your mental health, although you may have experienced poor mental health in the past
- you are able to work well with other young people in a group format
- you are able to dedicate your time for the online focus groups with other adolescents
- you have consent of your parent/ guardian to take part
- you agree to have your contribution to our online focus groups audio/video-recorded so that outcomes can be documented No names will be linked to this.

What are the procedures?

You will be asked to attend online focus groups. Depending on which program's focus group (young person program, parents' program, teachers' program, or school culture program) you are asked to attend, the format will differ slightly:

- **Adolescent Program:** focus groups will be a small group of 10 either all girls or all boys.
- **Parent Program:** focus groups will be a small group of adolescent students aged between 14-18 years old with one of their parents.
- **Teachers Program:** focus group will be a small group of 10 either all girls or all boys.
- **School culture Program:** focus group will be a small group of 10 of either all girls or all boys.

These online focus groups will be led by a small group of experienced researchers.

The online focus groups will involve group discussions of your views on various topics depending on which programs focus group you attend – the topics discussed might include:

- Your views on mental health education and the ways to deliver it in Indian high schools
- How we can teach young people to manage stress, anxiety, and low mood as well as positive behaviours such as problem solving and good sleep that are important for mental health.
- Your views of what is important to include in teacher training about adolescent mental health and well-being and training to help teachers manage behavior and discipline in schools in a positive way.
- Your views of school cultures/environment, how they affect teachers and students, what is working well and what should be a priority for change.
- How to communicate and engage with parents on the topic of adolescent well-being, and the key issues that should be addressed.

We will show you existing resources and work out together how we could adapt them and implement them in Indian schools.



We will never ask you about your personal mental health, but if you think it is relevant to the focus group, you are free to talk about this if you wish as long as no names are revealed. We will make a record of basic information about each focus group participant (e.g., age, gender) but we will never reveal the names of participants in any research reports.

Will you consent to recording the online focus groups?

We will record the online focus groups and consultation so that we can document the process and outcomes, and we will keep these audio/video-recording safe in line with a strict data storage policy. Transcripts of the online focus groups and consultation may be reproduced in whole or in part for use in presentations or written products that result from this study. No names or identifying information

will be associated with the recording or the transcript. Only the research team will be permitted to listen to the recordings.

What are the potential risks?

This is a low-risk study. However, talking about mental health in the focus groups might make you think about situations that are or were difficult for you. Immediate support will be provided by the research team, which include trained mental health professionals. If we think that detailed assessment or help is needed for you, we will talk with you about this. We will provide you with information about where you can seek help, either through NIMHANS or in your community. If needed, we can help with a referral for support.

What are the potential benefits?

You may enjoy participating in this important development phase of a large international project that influences resources for schools. You will have the opportunity to learn about programs about the aforementioned topics and are likely to feel appreciated as we listen to you. You may appreciate hearing the views of others. The wider benefit of the study is to Indian young people and schools, who will have access to a whole school intervention for adolescent well-being.

What if I do not want to participate?

Taking part is voluntary. You have the right to refuse consent without giving a reason. This will not prejudice the mental health support (from NIMHANS or elsewhere) to you if they need it.

Can I stop taking part even after I said yes?

Yes, you can stop taking part at any point without giving a reason. If you want us to remove the recordings of the sessions you have attended, you can let us know and we will go by your decision.

How will you store and use information?

All information that you provide will be anonymised. We will not report your name, nor anything else that could identify you, in any reports of the study. We will only use information about you (e.g., name, email) to manage focus group participation and for no other purpose. The only time we would reveal information is if we learn about something that suggests you may be in danger (of being harmed) and need to contact others for support.

We will store the online focus group recordings and notes in a secure NIMHANS drive, which has been approved for storage of international data. This will be encrypted and accessible only by the research team. We will delete your name and contact details at the end of the study. We will keep copies of the completed consent forms for 5 years after the study ends. We will therefore share anonymised outputs from the focus groups on international data-sharing sites as well as our study website.



Who has reviewed this study?

NIMHANS Ethics Committee, the University of Leeds (Faculty of Medicine and Health) and the Indian Health Ministry Screening Committee have reviewed and approved this study. The study will be monitored by a UK and Indian ethics oversight committee.

Who should I contact for more information?

We welcome questions you may have about the study. Please feel free to contact me now, or at any time during the study: Dr N Janardhana, Professor, Department of Psychiatric Social Work, NIMHANS, Bengaluru on +91-80-26995238 (Mon-Sat, 9.30am to 4.30pm).

