

Health minister releases UNICEF report on children's mental health

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Mansukh Mandaviya, Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare has released UNICEF's global flagship publication – 'The State of the World's Children 2021; On My Mind: promoting, protecting and caring for children's mental health'. The report details the significant impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children's mental health.

The minister acknowledged that it is very vital to address mental health as an important aspect to create a healthy society. He noted that teachers are very important stakeholders for addressing mental health issues along with parents and family. Family and teachers should have open consultation with children from a position of mutual trust and respect.

Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan noted that mental health and physical health are two sides of the same coin. He underscored the prevalence of the societal stigma associated with mental health issues. He also highlighted the lack of full-time student-counsellors in several reputed schools.

Dr Yasmin Ali Haque, UNICEF India Representative presented some key findings of the report. The State of the World's Children 2021 has found that around 14 per cent of 15 to 24-year-olds in India, or one in seven, reported often feeling depressed or having little interest in doing things.