

School Health Services

Introduction

Student health plays a vital role in their educational development and overall well-being. Various health issues, including vision impairment, poor oral hygiene, and malnutrition, can significantly impact a student's ability to learn, concentrate, and actively participate in school activities. Early detection and intervention are crucial to ensuring that children receive proper medical attention and preventive care.

In light of this, a **Comprehensive School Health Screening Program** is proposed for **Federal Government (FG) Schools** and **Army Public Schools (APS)** to ensure students receive timely healthcare interventions. This program is designed to provide a **holistic approach to student health**, focusing on **eye health, ear and hearing, oral hygiene, height and weight assessments, and overall physical well-being**.

This initiative, implemented under **Vision Healthcare Foundation**, aims to establish a structured health screening system in schools, ensuring early diagnosis, preventive care, and necessary medical referrals. By addressing multiple health concerns, this program seeks to create a healthier learning environment that enables students to excel academically and physically.



Objective of the project

The primary objectives of the **School Health Screening Program** include:

- **Raising health awareness** among students, teachers, and communities about eye care, ear, oral hygiene, and general well-being.
- **Early identification and diagnosis** of vision impairments, dental issues, ear and hearing and malnutrition-related concerns.
- **Providing corrective measures** such as eyeglasses, dental treatments, and nutritional guidance to affected students.
- **Training teachers and students** as screeners and Health-Scouts to ensure a sustainable, school-led health monitoring system.
- **Establishing a structured referral system** for students needing secondary or tertiary healthcare.
- **Developing a centralized health database** to track screened students and ensure timely follow-ups.
- **Supporting national and global health initiatives** by aligning with **United Nations SDGs, UNCRC, and CRPD**.

Current Scenario

Currently, health screening in many public and semi-public institutions remains limited, with sporadic initiatives by NGOs or local health authorities. Although some APS campuses may have health screening programs, there is no standardized **Nationwide** framework ensuring regular health checks for students in **FG and APS schools**. The absence of a structured screening program means many children may have undiagnosed health issues, leading to academic struggles and long-term health deterioration.

Program Implementation by Vision Healthcare Foundation

To address this gap, Vision Healthcare Foundation successfully implemented a structured **School Health Screening Program** across FG and APS schools. This initiative focused on:

- **Early detection** of vision, oral, and general health problems through systematic screening.
- **Training teachers and students** (Health-Scouts) to identify symptoms.
- **Providing corrective measures** such as eyeglasses, oral health treatments, and nutritional guidance.
- **Referring complex cases** to specialized healthcare facilities for further examination and treatment.

Implementation Strategy

The program was executed in three phases:

Phase 1: Training & Awareness

- Selection of teachers and senior students as **Health-Scouts**.
- Conducting workshops to train Health-Scouts on identifying basic health issues.
- Distribution of screening kits and health awareness campaigns focusing on **eye care, ear and hearing, oral hygiene, height and weight assessments, and nutrition**.
- **Training provided:**
 - **FG Schools:** 10 teachers and 15 scouts are trained and certified.
 - **APS Schools:** 12 teachers and 25 scouts are trained and certified.



Phase 2:

Screening & Diagnosis

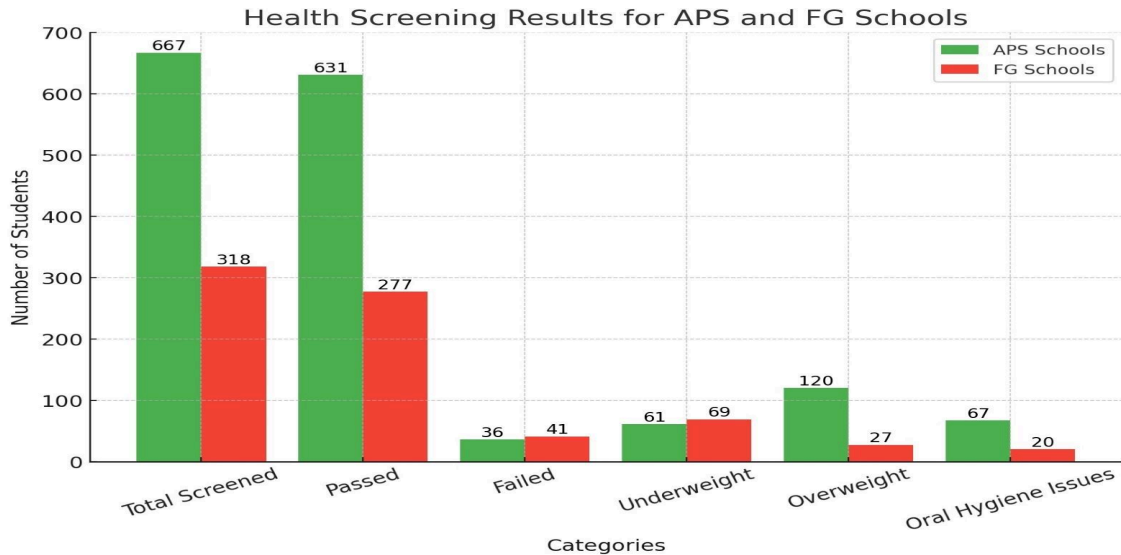
- Conducting on-site **vision, oral hygiene, height, and weight** screening for all students.
- Using a **standardized screening protocol** to detect health concerns.
- Identifying students in need of corrective measures (glasses, oral treatments, or dietary improvements).

Phase 3:

Treatment & Follow-Up

- Providing prescribed glasses to students with refractive errors.
- Conducting **oral hygiene assessments** and recommending necessary treatments.
- Assessing students with **height and weight deficiencies** and recommending nutritional interventions.
- Referring students with severe health conditions to tertiary care hospitals.
- Establishing a **database** to track screened students and ensure follow-ups.

Activity Progress



1. Refraction of 180 students aged 3 to 16 years was done
2. 72 students have been provided glasses, and 5 students are referred for detailed Examination.

Educating Local Communities & Workforce Creation

Educating local communities about **eye health and general well-being** is essential to fostering lasting social change and promoting overall health awareness in society. This program aligns with **United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**, **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**, and the **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)** to ensure compliance with global health initiatives.

A key component of this program is workforce creation, which involved:

- **Training and certifying school teachers** as Screeners and Master Trainers.
- **Motivating and training senior students** to serve as **Health-Scouts** to identify and assist visually impaired classmates and those with other health concerns.
- Enabling these trained individuals to **screen their peers and families**, thus fostering a **self-sustaining and community-driven health awareness movement**.



On-Site Secondary & Tertiary Care Support

The program also offered **on-site secondary care**, where screened children with visual or health impairments were provided with:

- **Testing, prescriptions, and dispensing of eyeglasses, medications, and low vision aids (LVAs).**
- **Oral hygiene treatments** to address dental issues.
- **Nutritional guidance and height-weight monitoring** for students with growth concerns.

Referral of children in need of advanced medical care to nearby secondary and tertiary healthcare facilities.

Follow-Up & Re-Evaluation

A major limitation of many school health programs is that they are conducted as **one-time events** without proper follow-up. Vision Healthcare Foundation designed this program to create a **continuous, self-sustaining model** where schools become independent in conducting regular health check-ups.

Key aspects of follow-up include:

- **Annual or bi-annual re-evaluation** of students' eye health, oral hygiene, and overall well-being.
- **Monitoring changes in children's health**, just as frequently as changes in clothing and shoe sizes.
- **Creating a centralized database** for tracking students' health records and ensuring timely interventions.

Expected Outcomes

By implementing this program, the following outcomes were achieved:

- **Enhanced academic performance** due to improved health and focus.
- **Reduced dropout rates** by addressing learning difficulties linked to health issues.
- **Improved health awareness** among students, teachers, and parents.
- **Sustainable healthcare practices** integrated into the education system.

Conclusion & Recommendations

The **Comprehensive School Health Screening Program for FG and APS schools**, successfully conducted by **Vision Healthcare Foundation**, has proven to be a crucial initiative in safeguarding students' well-being and enhancing their educational experience. By prioritizing **eye health, oral hygiene, and physical well-being**, FG and APS schools can create a **healthier and more inclusive learning environment**, ensuring every student has the opportunity to excel academically and personally.

1. **Enhance community involvement** by encouraging parent participation in awareness sessions and screenings.
2. **Strengthen partnerships** with local healthcare providers and government agencies to support referrals and follow-up care.
3. **Integrate health screening** into the annual school calendar to ensure long-term sustainability.

