



59% of School Children May Be At Risk of Contracting Chicken Pox

Findings from GSK's nationwide Suraksha Kawach School programme revealed

Mumbai, February 08, 2006: GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), one of the world's leading vaccine manufacturers, released their findings from the Suraksha Kawach nationwide school survey. The study reveals that a majority of the schoolchildren surveyed in Western India may be unprotected against chicken pox – a highly infectious disease. A similar trend was found in other parts of India as well & was found that the kids were not vaccinated against chicken pox. This clearly indicates that a majority of the children may be at risk of contracting the disease (if they have not already suffered from chicken pox) across India.

The first phase of Suraksha Kawach focused on creating awareness about the importance of preventing disease for a healthy life and safeguarding their future. The year-long programme was implemented across 10 cities in India and received active participation from over 270 schools getting response from 75999 school children.

According to a World Health Organisation report, chickenpox is experienced by almost every child or young adult in the world. Chickenpox is a highly contagious disease causing tremendous discomfort to the affected child and the family; and can be the cause of absenteeism from school or the work place, adversely impacting important events like exams. Vaccination is the only effective method to prevent chickenpox and is a safe, convenient and affordable way to save the child from discomfort associated with chickenpox.

"I see a lot of chickenpox cases during the months of January and February which is exam time", said Dr. (Mrs.) Neeta Prabhu, Akshay Child Care Centre, Mumbai. "We have been seeing fresh cases of chickenpox regularly and as annual examinations are fast approaching, parents need to take adequate preventive measures for the child; like vaccination", added Dr. Ramnath Aiyer, Paediatrician, Neerja Children's Hospital, Mumbai.

Children spend most of their day at school, an environment that should be clean and free from germs or infections. Infectious diseases can spread rapidly in such an environment. Children are the architects of the future and schools play a major role in shaping them. The responsibility of ensuring health and wellness for the children rests not only with their parents, but also with schools. Schools play a very important role and can help prevent the spread of communicable diseases, such as chicken pox by sharing appropriate information and implementing necessary guidelines.

Suraksha Kawach is GSK's social responsibility initiative whose objective is to instill the importance of protection against disease and preventive healthcare for wellness amongst children, their families, and society at large.

Suraksha Kawach School Programme Results

CITY	NO. OF SCHOOLS	NO. OF CHILDREN	TOTAL VACCINATED (%)	NOT VACCINATED (%)
Mumbai	76	24909	36	64
Pune	22	10399	42	58
Ahmedabad	21	3932	42	58
Bangalore	44	14110	51	49
Hyderabad	33	8075	32	68
Chennai	10	2384	40	60
Ludhiana	13	1960	50	50
Delhi	16	5508	34	66
Jaipur	15	2082	41	59
Kolkata	18	2640	37	63

GlaxoSmithKline Biologicals (GSK Biologicals), one of the world's leading vaccine manufacturers, is located in Rixensart, Belgium. Belgium is the centre of all GlaxoSmithKline's activities in the field of vaccine research, development and production. GSK Biologicals employs more than 1000 research scientists who are devoted to discovering new vaccines and developing more cost-effective and convenient combination products to prevent infections that cause serious medical problems worldwide. In India, the division leads the represented vaccine market with a 51% market share.

In 2005, GSK Biologicals distributed more than 1.2 billion doses of vaccines to 165 countries in both the developed and developing world, more than three million doses per day. Almost nine in every ten doses were paediatric vaccines and one in every ten were combination vaccines intended to prevent up to six diseases at the same time. For information, visit GlaxoSmithKline's website at www.gsk-bio.com.

GlaxoSmithKline - one of the world's leading research-based pharmaceutical and healthcare companies - is committed to improving the quality of human life by enabling people to do more, feel better and live longer.

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