


by Sexuality&Disability 2 years ago


Of gupt rog, yoni and license to sex!

This is first in the series of storifies on our #sexdis workshops in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh).

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Hey ya'll! We will be reporting LIVE from the holy town of Varanasi today with our first #sexdis workshop in UP.

3 YEARS AGO

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Our team today is headed by @saysnidhigoyal, community builder @smriti264 & live reporting by @latentappy Stay tuned!

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Earnest apology beforehand for the network here is really break-y & while excitement might get delayed but would surely be served. #sexdis

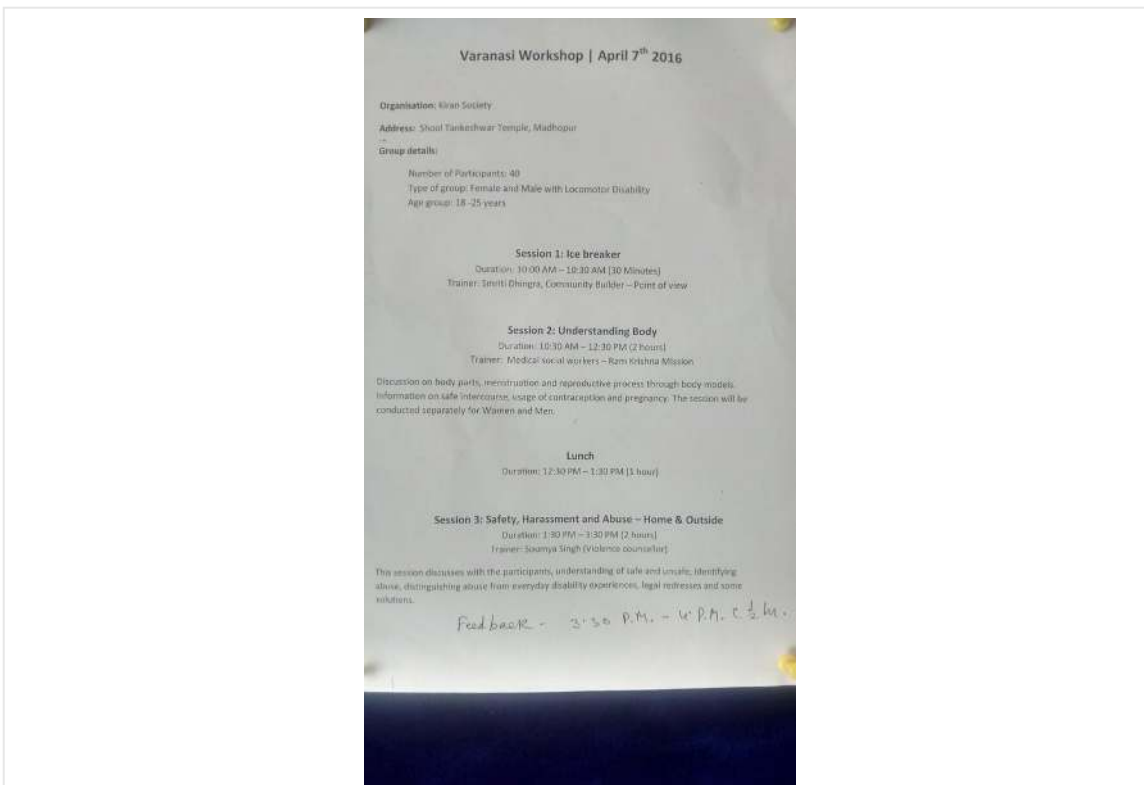
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We are really excited to be reporting live for the first time from the holy town Varanasi. We are at Kiran Society with our team.

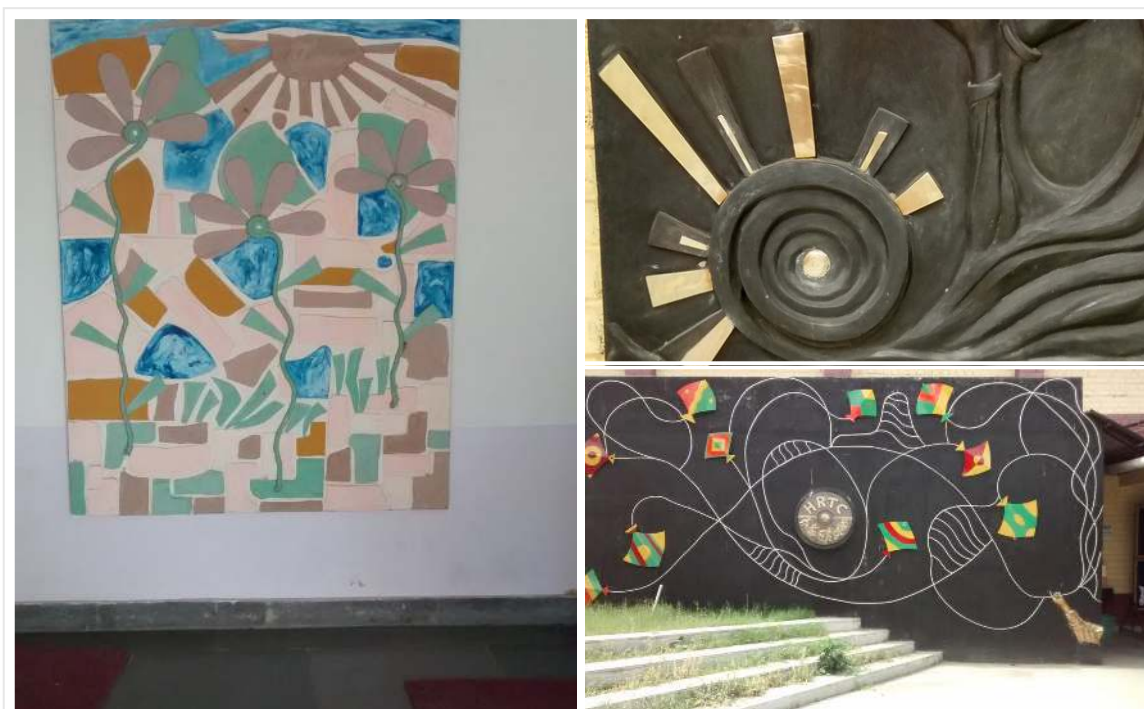
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Our participants for the day included boys and girls with locomotor disabilities studying or/and working at the centre. The workshop was sectioned into 3 parts: beginning with ice-breaker, our trainer held session on understanding body (with boys and girls separately) and to conclude we had session on safety, harassment, abuse- at home and outside from the perspective of disability.



Sneakpeek of today's #sexdis workshop. We are trainers from ram krishna mission along with @ShriwarS from Lucknow. pic.twitter.com/NMUUcFMhHQ

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Check out lovely artwork at Kiran society today. #sexdis workshop at Varanasi is all set to roll. pic.twitter.com/JuOml2xQv0

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Community builder Smriti Dhingra started the workshop with ice-breaker session. She divided the participants in small groups of 4-5 each to come up with collective likes and dislikes.



Our community builder @smriti264 has kicked off the ice breaker session with a mixed crowd of young boys & girls pic.twitter.com/TnREzKDoey


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The activity not only got the participants acquainted, it also created an atmosphere of open discussion around their everyday challenges as disabled people and dealing with society.

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A bright man points out the issue of accessibility for the disabled and the drive to creative change is his biggest challenge. #sexdis

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In the interest & challenge activity, #sexdis participants narrate not only their stories but also society's attitude towards them.

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Very visceral mood here of participants as they tell [@saysnidhigoyal](#) what their expectations from today's [#sexdis](#) workshop is.

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Albeit there were some intense minutes of discussion, participants' sense of humor was intact and gleaming even. There were also singing and shayari (short urdu poetry) performances from some of the talent.

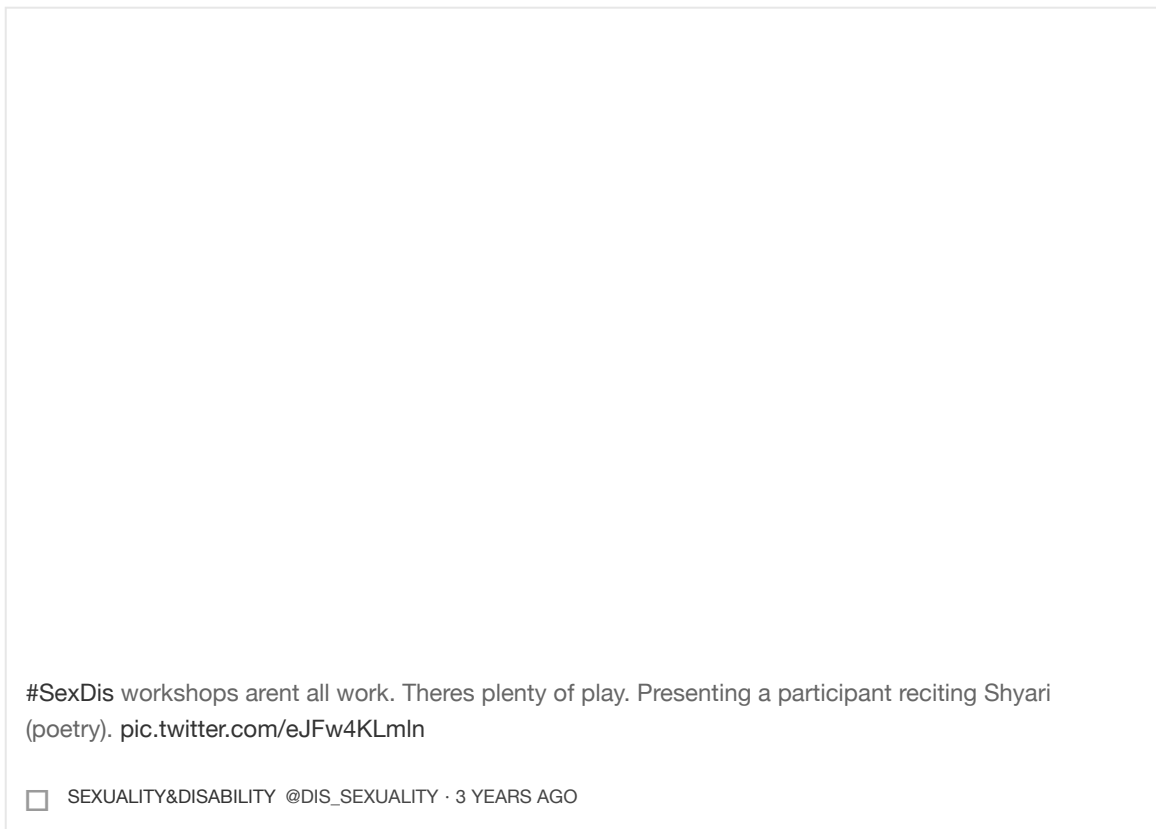
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On finding just one man older than 30 among participants leads to the compliment that 'age of girls can't be predicted these days' [#sexdis](#)

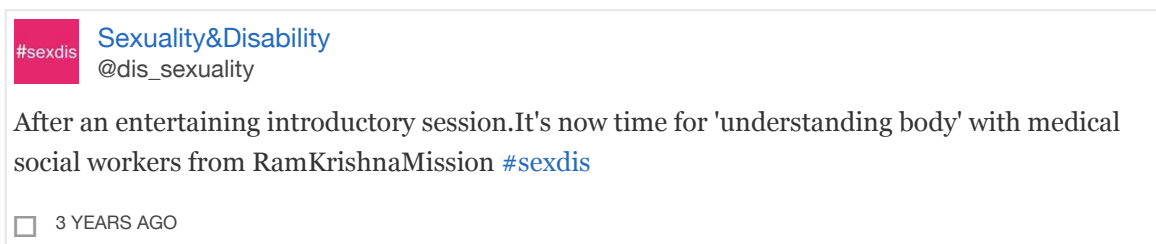
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Talented group of participants today. Here's [#video](#) of one singing. [#sexdis](#) workshops are such unexpected delights! pic.twitter.com/38BCy0tG0L

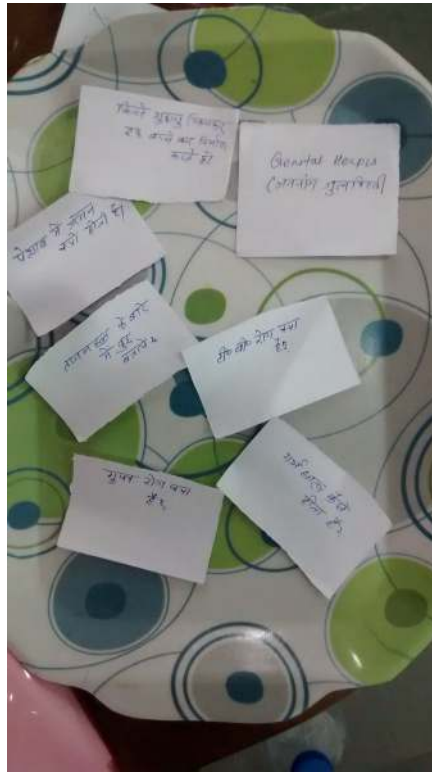
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For the next session on Understanding Body, we had trained social workers from RamaKrishna Ashram Mission. The boys and girls were trained in separate halls with male and female teacher respectively.



Training with boys started with an interesting exercise wherein questions on different sexual diseases, body parts, somatic diseases etc were served in a dish. Each male participant had to pick one, think over it and answer turn by turn.



#FoodForThought served in a dish, one for each participant on bodysession by trainers at #SexDis How many do u knw? pic.twitter.com/tqAGyFVPnC

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While some of the questions got the boys blushing, others just left them blank and still others giggling among each other. Terms such as Trichomonas, Chlamydia or genital herpes got them interested but they returned the chits as they had no clear answers.

The participants recognized some of these terms in their vernacular tongue but were mis-informed on their significance and unsure of their choices when it came to sex.

With these the experienced trainer was able to emphasize the critical significance of sex, fertility, Sexually transmitted disease (STDs) in a scientific manner. He, however, made sure that his language of communication was both socially and culturally connected to his audience.


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Trainer now asks, which questions made u laugh? Questions on AIDS, periods, Herpes NOT food, Gandhi or politics. Why? #SexDis

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Participants answer range from these issues are odd, taboo & embarrassing. Hence we blush talking about these. [#sexdis](#)

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Why did you return the chit that said 'Trichomonas', 'Chlamydia' but no one laughed. When I say say they are STDs u suddenly laugh. [#sexdis](#)

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Why did you return question that asked, "Which CONDOM is good?" Wud u also return q tht asked which soap is good? [#sexdis](#)

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
What is male fertility? Participant says I don't know so returned the question. [#sexdis](#)

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If one of your friends ever have [#AIDS](#), it would no longer be a laughing / embarrassing matter. [#sexdis](#)

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"What made us laugh and embarrassed" is exactly the subject of discussion today! [#sexdis](#)

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The language of conversation today has the range from Bhojpuri to Benarasi (native Hindi forms). Yes, we are in Uttar Pradesh. [#sexdis](#)

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In walls across states invite solutions for "gupt rog" (secret disease), which is so big it is almost in-your-face. [#sexdis](#)

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The training with girls began with a discussion on body parts and functions, period shame and cultural taboos around sex. Girls initially reluctant gradually became serious when discussion progressed to STDs, sex organ anatomy and conception. In the safe space of a room full of women, they were comfortable with their trainer Kanchan in talking openly and clearing doubts.



Girls shying away to draw many more body parts [#sexdis pic.twitter.com/fceVdLIkS4](#)

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Meanwhile, the girl participants react coyly as trainer asks about 'yoni' (sex organs). #sexdis pic.twitter.com/EKCEEKleCd

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
In the midst of irrepressible giggles and palpable discomfort we learn and talk about sexuality & disability #SexDis pic.twitter.com/NjbVI1LEJ6

SAUMYA SINGH @SHRIWARS · 3 YEARS AGO

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
"We tell our aunts and sister about periods but not the mother." Trainer of girl participants asks exposing cultural stigma. [#sexdis](#)

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
When a pack of condoms is found by Amir's character in the film PK, why did everyone refuse to own it? [#sexdis](#)

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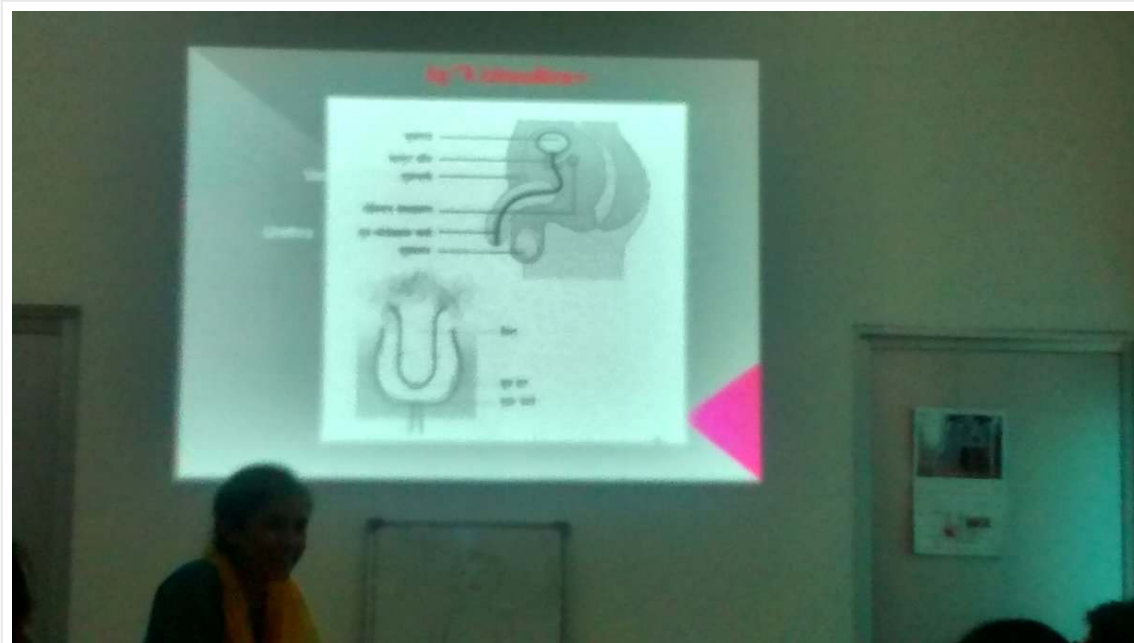
"Why do we marry?" Girl participant, "marriage gives license for sex." [#sexdis](#)

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A culture of taboo around sex makes people vulnerable to diseases. People marry without understanding repercussions of unsafe sex. [#sexdis](#)

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Providing a safe space for girls to understand about male and female anatomy is critical to prevent STDs [#sexDis pic.twitter.com/uYlIE7sTnT](https://pic.twitter.com/uYlIE7sTnT)

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We discuss our personal issues only with our friends. [#SexDis](#)

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Kanchan, our medical social work relates body to a home. The way we care about our home, we should care about yourself [#SexDis](#)

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Discuss about Sex, people refuse to accept because of 'Sharm' reflects a participant [#SexDis](#)


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Discuss about Sex, people refuse to accept because of 'Sharm' reflects a participant [#SexDis](#)

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People teach us that having sex is a problem, and it is not correct. But after marriage we get license to have sex [#SexDis](#)

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 **smriti**
@smriti264

People teach us that having sex is a problem, and it is not correct. But after marriage we get license to have sex [#SexDis](#)

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We have two holes in Vagina. One is for urination other is for 'To carry a baby, from where we do sex' [#SexDis](#)

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Now discussing, medical issues of women. [#SexDis pic.twitter.com/qPI4zF7dMQ](#)

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Perception of reality & a real objects that varies from person to person. Only 5% of this perception is actually real. [#sexdis](#)

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Our uterus is of our Fist size, then how is a baby nurtured in the that? Asks participant [#SexDis](#)

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Do sperms and urine come from the same place? Boy participants unsure. [#sexdis](#)

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
By the end of this session, the trainers had touched on almost all topics around body and sexuality. From anatomy, sexual health, diseases, periods, sex myths, safe sex, intercourse as well as genetics, masturbation and family planning.

While doing so much is challenging in a 2.5-3 hour session, training requires that we modulate the training as we go depending on the participants knowledge and questions.

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
Biology session in progress. How sperms are formed and expulsion outside the body. [#sexdis](#)

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As a child, I imagined food goes into the body into a pit! Tells the trainer explaining importance of body organs. [#sexdis](#)

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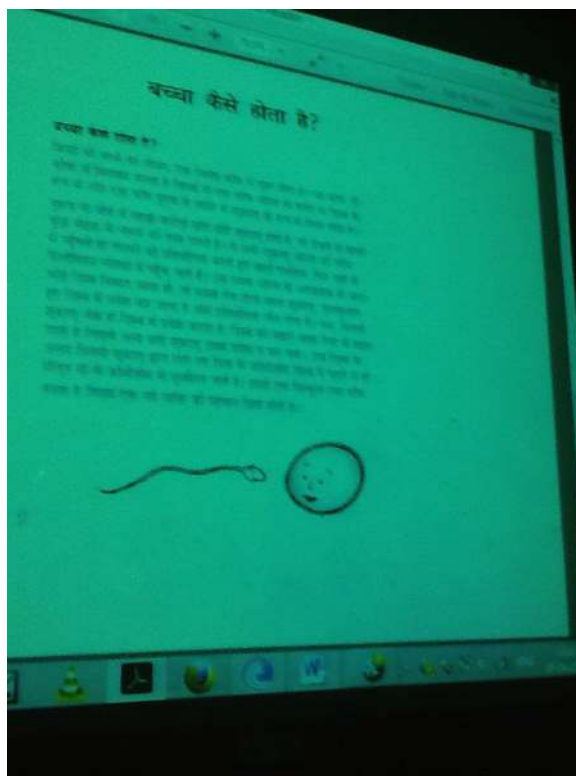
Boys giggle as the trainer says, big and small size of penis can leads to unnecessary stress if man isn't aware of intercourse. [#sexdis](#)

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#sexdis Sexuality&Disability @dis_sexuality

I find people in my own village who become suicidal due to not been able to consummate or misinformation of penis size. -Trainer #sexdis

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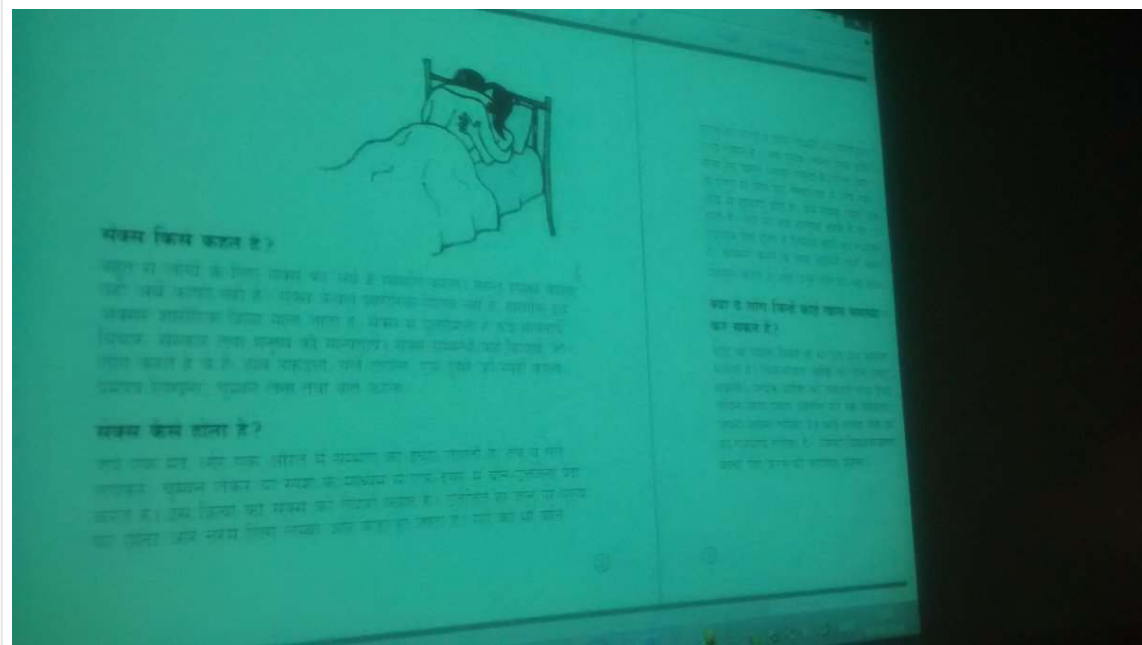
Life's competition starts even before it begins, trainer explaining competition betn sperms during conception #sexdis pic.twitter.com/KprMngXiLD

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Arpita B @latentappy

At #sexdis workshop, I often observe boys react to body models with a bashful chuckle & girls with a coy giggle #everydaysexism #gender #sex

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Getting down to the primal urges without hesitation, shame or embarrassment at [#sexdis](#) [#talkingaboutintercourse pic.twitter.com/zK1MqjxLrt](#)

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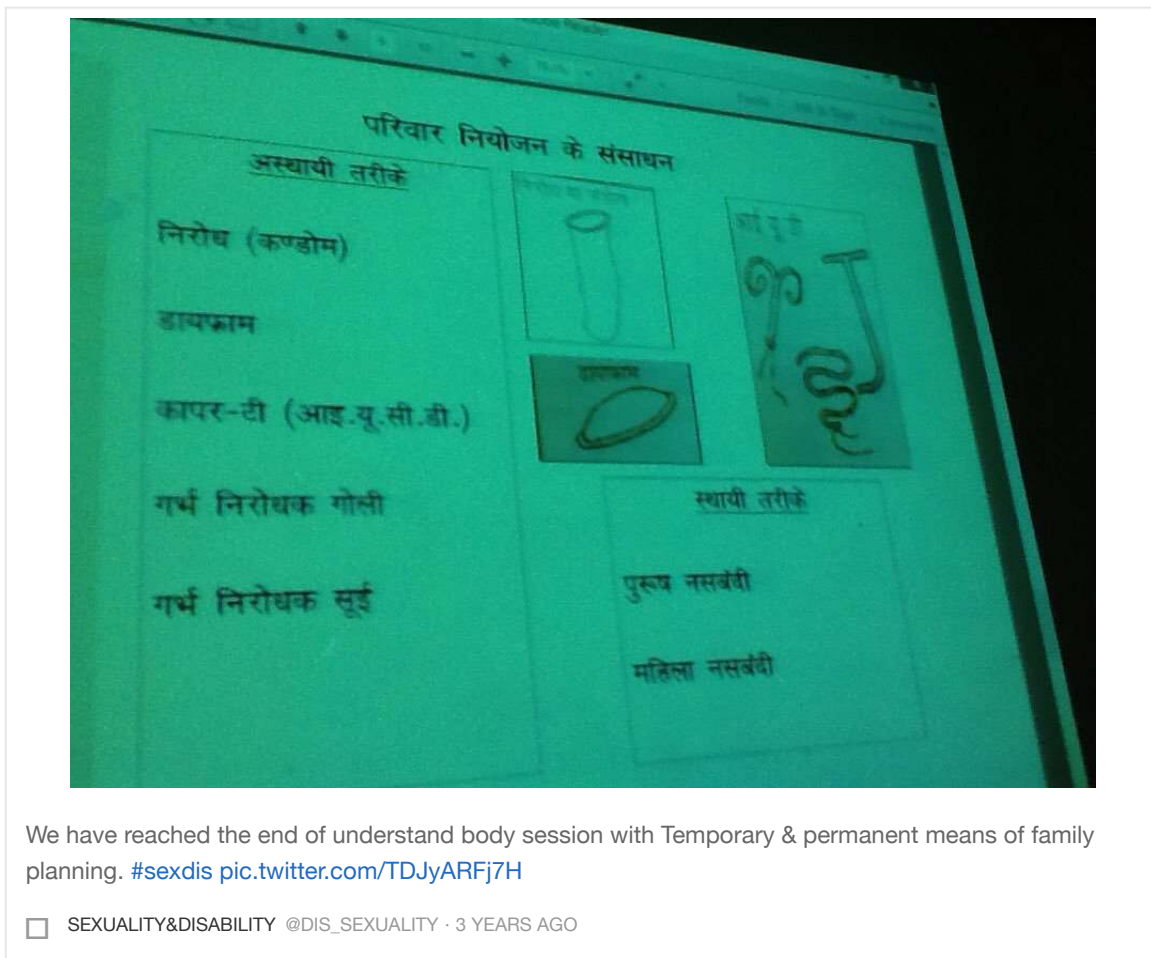
At [#sexdis](#) workshop, we aim for body-positive, well-contextualised, shame-free, consensual sex discussions to educate & break taboos.

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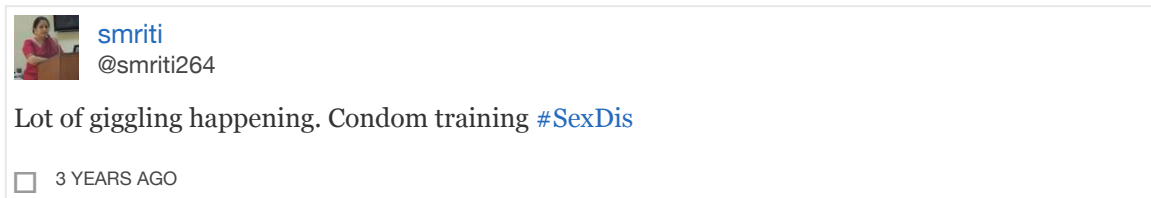
Taboos not only around sexuality of the disabled, sexuality of women, masturbation as well as education on safe sex & anatomy. [#sexdis](#)

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We have reached the end of understand body session with Temporary & permanent means of family planning. #sexdis pic.twitter.com/TDJyARFj7H

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The third (and last) session for the day had our program head Nidhi Goyal along with Clinical Psychologist Soumya Singh from Lucknow.

Nidhi started the session talking about disability, the stigma and challenges faced by disabled in society and shared inspiring stories (via video) to motivate them.

She addressed participant's questions on feeling discriminated, the idea of what's 'normal', disability myths, limitations, meeting life's needs and understand their own sexuality and sexual needs.



[@saysnidhigoyal](#) starts part 2 of the [#sexdis](#) workshop talking it forward to talk about disability and sexuality. pic.twitter.com/oN3LZB63In

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We want acceptance and live a fulfilled life like everyone else including sex, relationships & marriage. [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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Being educated, employed & healthy is our core challenge as people with disability. But what about other needs? [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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We want acceptance and become part of society like everyone else. [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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
Once again we find participants employing the word "normal" when referring to people without disabilities. [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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
"When you ask for acceptance like 'normal' people. Aren't we calling ourselves (without saying it) 'abnormal' ". [@saysnidhigoyal](#) [#sexdis](#)

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If one will have discrimination about ourselves, how would the others react?Is it not our perception that matters? [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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
When you will feel that you are less than others, then the person is bound to feel the same. [#sexdis](#) [#disability](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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Everyone has some limitation. That doesn't mean we need to pity ourselves or we are lacking in any way. [#sexdis](#) [@saysnidhigoyal](#)

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Disability can be genetic, physiological or accidental. Only genetic disability has a chance of being passed to children. [#sexdis](#)

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Playing video of the amazing @sinha_arunima at #sexdis workshop as the participants here craved for some motivation. pic.twitter.com/I1RQP4ZEWj

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Next, clinical psychologist Soumya Singh started her session on safety, abuse and relationships - at home and outside.

Soumya started by touching upon the question of how a disabled self-identifies him/her-self. Does that self-defined identity not reflect how others perceive us as well? What it means to be complete/incomplete?




Next up clinical psychologist @ShriwarS taking session on safety, abuse & relationships - home & outside. #sexdis pic.twitter.com/kqvQ7DfEA

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It's important to understand that I've a handicap, I'm not handicapped. My handicap should not be NY identity. @ShriwarS #sexdis

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If we were complete, wouldn't we be gods. But gods were also incomplete, we gave them shape and completion. #sexdis #justheard #disability

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@ShriwarS thanks for joining us. Wonderful to have you as a trainer. #sexdis

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The fact that you feel you have limitations means you want to achieve. [#sexdis @ShriwarS](#)


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Soumya then discussed what safe and unsafe means to the participants. She addressed how family beliefs affects one's notion on safety and security.

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[@ShriwarS](#) asks, "what is unsafe and what is safe for you?" Participants: somewhere we feel insecure & endangered is unsafe for us. [#sexdis](#)


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Family atmosphere also makes us unsafe because their beliefs can affect our psyche towards safety. [#disability #sexdis](#) Cc [@pinthecreep](#)


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Next, she divided the participant into two groups - abuse and violence. The two groups then debated what abuse and violence means and which one is worse between the two.

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[@ShriwarS](#) decides participants into two - abuse & violence. What is abuse and what is violence?
[#sexdis #safety](#)

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Force, coercion and an environment of discomfort (lack of freedom) are coming out as definitions of violence & abuse [#SexDis @ShriwarS](#)

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Violence involves physical force (display of physical power), abuse can be physical, mental & emotional. #sexdis @ShriwarS

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Participant says abuse is worse than violence because it is long term torture while violence is extreme blow. #SexDis @ShriwarS

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@ShriwarS clarify that violence & abuse are equally bad. What is bad is bad. This question shouldn't arise. #sexdis

3 YEARS AGO

 **To & Fro HELL**
xaxabor@xaxabori

Check this thread everyone #important [mobile.twitter.com/dis_sexuality/...](https://mobile.twitter.com/dis_sexuality/)


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@xaxabori many thanks for your retweet. We hope it reaches all ears, eyes and minds. #SexDis @saysnidhigoyal


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"I honor your truth" was the solemn promise that each participant promised the one sitting next to them as they looked into each other's eyes. This was done to create trust and comfort before delving into their personal experiences dealing with abuse and violence.

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@ShriwarS passes these words in an avalanche from one participant to next "I honour your truth." "Mein aapke vishwas ke kaabil hun" #sexdis

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Participants burst into giggles as they look into each others' eyes and make an earnest promise. I will honor ur truth. [#sexdis](#) [@ShriwarS](#)

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Have you ever felt or experienced abuse? [#SexDis](#) [@ShriwarS](#) asks

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[@saysnidhigoyal](#) narrates her own experiences to burst the myth that ONLY people with disability in small towns face social injustice [#SexDis](#)

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[@ShriwarS](#) reiterates in every situation, you can either accept it, ignore it and move on or fight. [#sexdis](#)

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
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Is violence the right way to deal with injustice? [@ShriwarS](#) addresses this sensitive subject. [#sexdis](#) [#violence](#)

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That sexual abuse is not your fault. That it can happen anywhere and it includes street harassment that may or may not include physical action.

To conclude, she reiterated that consent is key in all relationships even legally binding one like marriage.

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What is sexual abuse? And what other kinds of abuse relates to sex are there? [#SexDis](#) [#Violence](#) [@ShriwarS](#)

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
Making lewd gestures, inappropriate touching, forcing sexual relations, singing songs/comments all constitute sexual abuse [#sexdis](#) [@ShriwarS](#)

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Consent is key! Sex cannot be forced by one partner in a relationship & marriage. This constitutes sexual abuse. [@ShriwarS](#) [#SexDis](#)

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An intensive day of discussions on abuse & violence ends as [@ShriwarS](#) takes participants through meditation to release the stress. [#sexDis](#)

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An intensive day of discussions on abuse & violence ends as [@ShriwarS](#) takes participants through meditation to release the stress. [#sexDis](#)

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 **Saumya Singh**
@ShriwarS

People willing to challenge their limitations, listen to an alternate narrative and redefine their sexual identity. Respect. [#SexDis](#)

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 **Saumya Singh**
@ShriwarS

A day with Changemakers and a brand new Twitter handle. [# SexDis](#) you are amazing beyond words. Thank you!

3 YEARS AGO

Like always, we had an intensive day of new experiences for the first day of [#sexDis](#) workshops from Varanasi which also also our first time in the state of Uttar Pradesh.

Hope this storify could help you imagine the experience.

