



THE NETWORK
TOWARDS UNITY FOR HEALTH



Facultad de Medicina



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"PRIMARY HEALTH CARE: A PATH
TOWARDS SOCIAL JUSTICE"

SYSTEMS AND COMMUNITY BASED
RESPONSES TO COVID-19

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TUFH 2020 Abstracts

Title	Unwanted Pregnancies In Adolescent Girls, Global Challenges
Type	Oral Presentation <i>Working with Underserved Populations towards Community Empowerment</i>
Presenting Author	Shakuntala Chhabra
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Country	India
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Content

Teenage pregnancies are a global public health problem. Their prevention is essential. While advocacy continues, girls do indulge in sex either because of own desires or they get exploited. In some countries, unwed pregnancy is a social stigma. Some countries have restricted laws, others do not permit abortions. There are variations in safe/unsafe abortions, safe/unsafe births. India has a liberal abortion law. Still sometimes abortion is sought from quacks, untrained health providers. Sometimes girls commit suicide or are killed and babies murdered. Nobody knows the numbers. When unwed girls with advanced pregnancies report, advocacy of prenatal care, safe birth may not help, because of dangers. So a system was created with medical, social, financial help, under which 558 girls with unwanted advanced pregnancies had safe births. Surrendered babies were helped to have parents through the legal system. Girls were provided family life education with stakeholders' including civil society support. Up to March 2019 around 83,000 girls attended programs. Institution's teenage births have come down, 11% two decades back to less than 1% presently, septic abortions are almost eliminated. Public health learning got strengthened with undergraduate, postgraduate medical/nursing students from all over the country getting sensitized to social issues. They send mothers for a safe birth and a surrender of their baby, needy parents for adoption, become ambassadors of the centre, some even trying to do small things.