Entre Amigas’ intervention model takes into account the day-to-day realities girls face and uses this information to guide the interventions. Social research is used to identify the factors that influence attitudes and practices that are not conducive to safe and responsible sexual and reproductive health choices. It is based on a quantitative-qualitative baseline survey (monitoring and evaluation component) of the girls (and their support networks) living in the project’s intervention zones. The survey was designed to find out about their current behaviors, lifestyles, psychological motivations, benefits, and obstacles. Survey findings then informed project design and evaluation indicators.

The survey has an integrated and systemic vision that takes into account individual aspects as well as family, community, and social contexts. It includes the development of educational strategies, based on training that aims to provide life skills. This involves the use of techniques that encourage creative and expressive capacities, critical analysis, leadership, and decision-making.

1. The model is based on an integrated risk prevention approach aimed at support networks (fathers and mothers, teaching staff and health personnel), providing them with the right technical and methodological tools to act as reference points for the girls, and enabling them to respond accurately to their concerns, detect early risk behaviors, and help them develop life skills.

2. The model is inter-sectoral, involving the creation of coordination and negotiation arenas for establishing strategic alliances among the project stakeholders—including the girls—to help improve living conditions, modify personal behaviors, and increase the efficacy of services offered to this age group.

The following diagram conceptualizes this approach.
Gender, Sexuality, and

**Actions**

- Promote better kinds of relationships based on respect
- Strengthen their role as reference points for the girls
- Promote deconstruction of myths and taboos on reproduction, sexuality
- Promote identification of health personnel as positive reference points
- Promote recognition and positive appraisal of the girls
- Foster trust and respect
- Facilitate identification and adequate risk management (1)

**Context**

- Myths and prejudices that devalue women and girls
- Blame
  - Limited handling of issues related to reproduction
  - Myths and prejudices related to reproduction, STIs, HIV/AIDS, etc.

1. Manage risks without affecting the girls’ integrity.
2. Increase knowledge, use, and promotion of care and prevention services in the municipality.
Reproduction in the Entre Amigas Project

Foster equitable relations at home
Strengthen knowledge about pregnancy, STIs, HIV/AIDS

Strengthen reference points (2)
Promote equitable relations
Deal with pregnancy myths and prejudice
Promote respect for sexual options
Strengthen knowledge related to reproduction, STIs, HIV/AIDS
Foster skills for managing risk: negotiation and what to do
Promote shared responsibility
Strengthen peer relations
Promote self-care

Family: mothers, fathers, others

Girls/Adolescents

Myths and prejudices surrounding sexuality and reproduction
Distrust
Blame
Difficulty dealing with issues related to sexuality and reproduction

Deterioration of friendships
Relations with opposite sex seen as “dangerous”
Virginity viewed as a social value
Respectful relationship depends on the woman
Justification of violence in a relationship
Limited knowledge and acceptance of body changes
Myths and prejudices related to STIs and HIV: transmission, risk awareness, people with HIV
Ignorance of use of contraception & emergency contraception
Pregnancy as a female responsibility
Prejudice against sexual options
A. Intervention strategies

The project interventions have been divided into the following strategies for methodological reasons.
Strategies focused on preadolescent girls

- Promote assertive communication.
- Promote positive self-image oriented towards self-care.
- Develop the critical attitudes and skills for questioning beliefs.
- Develop skills for identifying alternatives and making decisions.
- Promote positive self-perception and the exercise of their rights.
- Develop a sense of belonging.
- Increase girls’ knowledge of growth, sexual development, and reproduction.
- Increase perception of, and develop skills to deal with, the risks of early pregnancy, violence (particularly sexual abuse), STIs, and drugs.
- Increase knowledge, use, and promotion of health care and prevention services located in the municipality.
- Encourage gender equity.
- Develop girls’ capacity for individual and collective leadership.
- Facilitate positive relations with their peers and adults.

Strategies for strengthening girls’ support networks

Support networks incorporate many kinds of actors—mothers, fathers, teachers, and health personnel—each with their own set of concerns and needs. In order to accommodate these various needs, each of the groups has a slightly different set of strategies.

1. Mothers and fathers

- Promote healthy ways of relating with their daughters.
- Promote assertive communication between parents and daughters.
- Increase knowledge of growth, sexual development, and reproduction.
- Increase knowledge and recognition of risky behaviors (early pregnancy, violence, STIs, and drugs) and effective, positive approaches for their identification and prevention.
- Increase knowledge, use, and promotion of health care and prevention services located in the municipality.
- Foster gender equity.
- Promote identification of mothers and fathers as positive reference points for the girls.
- Promote strong, active relations between parents and schools.