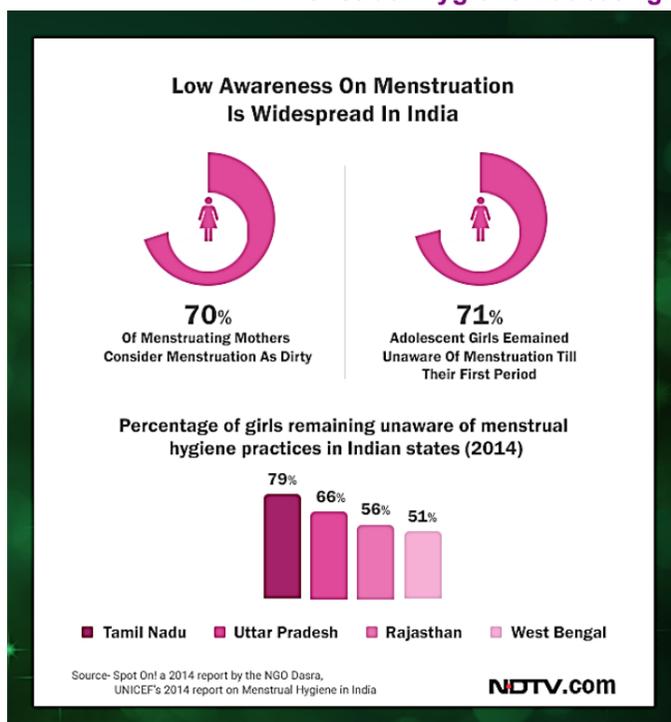




Menstrual Hygiene-Educating Mothers



Menstruation continues to be a subject of gender disparity in India. Myths about menstruation are largely prevalent, forcing many girls to drop out of school early or be ostracised for the duration of their menstrual cycle, every month. [2.3 million girls drop out of school annually due to lack of proper menstrual hygiene management facilities](#), which include availability of sanitary napkins and logical awareness of menstruation. Girls are typically absent for 20 percent of the school

year due to menstruation. Many mothers themselves are unaware on what menstruation is, how it is to be explained to a teenager and what practices could be considered as menstrual hygiene management. Mothers also need to be educated on the taboo surrounding menstruation owing to 70 percent of mothers with menstruating daughters considered menstruation as dirty, leaving adolescent girls remained unaware of menstruation till menarche

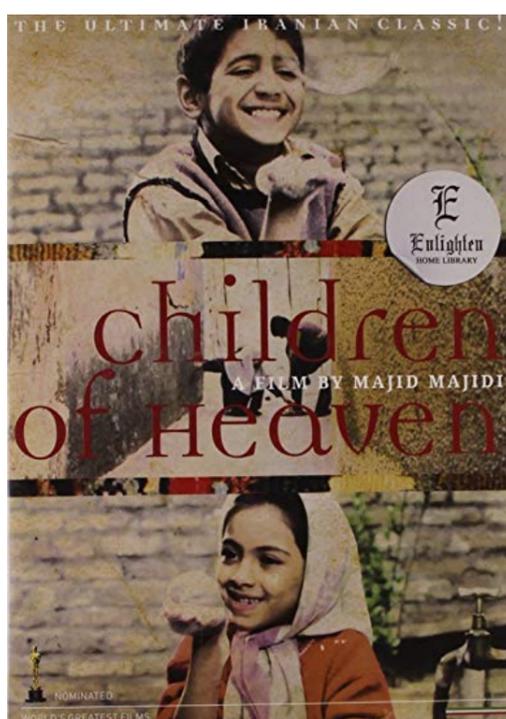
Government Schools Struggle to Retain Children

[Between 2010-11 and 2015-16, student enrolment in government schools across 20 Indian states fell by 13 million, while private schools acquired 17.5 million new students.](#) This raises an important question, why are students opting out of India's government schools that



educate the poorest and most vulnerable students until the age of 14 for free and migrating to fee charging private institutions in such large numbers. The Government of India spends 1.16 lakh crore (\$17.7 billion) on Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)—the national programme for universal elementary education and henceforth the dropout rates between 2010 -2015 have been startling. This also increases a concern around the myth of sending children to private schools which does not necessarily result in better learning outcomes, since [children's learning levels in private schools are no worse than and in many studies better than, those in government schools.](#) A viable environment for learning which includes better infrastructure, qualified teachers are major factors for opting for private schools

Recommended Watch- Children of Heaven by Majid Majidi



The film is about a boy who loses his sister's shoes. He takes them to the cobbler for repairs, and on the way home, when he stops to pick up vegetables for his mother, a blind trash collector accidentally carries them away. The boy, named Ali, is afraid to tell his parents and his sister, named Zahra, wants to know how she is supposed to go to school without shoes. [The answer is simple: Zahra will wear Ali's sneakers to school every morning, and then run home so that Ali can put them on for his school in the afternoon.](#) In "Children of Heaven," life in Teheran is documented in everyday detail, from the less desirable potatoes available to Ali's family to the way a woolen garment is carefully unraveled so it can be knitted into something else.

In director [Majid Majidi's](#) movie, life is sweet despite countless hardships, and no reality beyond the economic intrudes upon a fairy tale atmosphere. Only through heavy-handed emphasis does the quest for new sneakers take on any greater meaning.

