

SPARSHA TRUST – With the Children

Annual Report – 2009-10



Sparsha Trust is a non-profit organization founded in 2005 by a group of MSW Graduates and Volunteers. Its aims and objectives are as follows:

- Eradication of child labour – To ensure that children aren't deprived of their childhood and are allowed to realize their latent potential.
- Helping children enjoy their constitutional rights.
- Providing quality education for children who are deprived of the same.
- Empowerment of street girl children and women by giving them education and skill-oriented training.
- Providing job-oriented skills to rural youth (locally in their villages and also to the place of their migration).
- Catalyzing implementation of government schemes by ensuring community participation and to act as a bridge between government and rural communities to ensure efficient execution

"Education is the key to success", so goes a maxim. Educational initiatives provide opportunities to underprivileged children to explore their untapped potential and equip them with necessary skills and qualifications. Our initiatives help children to go to school, learn in a joyful environment and learn to live a healthy life.

With the above objectives Sparsha Trust started work to ensure quality education to the poor and needy children. It started working with child labourers. Child labour reflects the de-humanization of our society and it is the duty of everyone to ensure that child labour is eradicated from our society. Some of the initiatives of Sparsha Trust in that direction are enumerated in the following pages.

MAKKALA DHAMA



We identified children who were out of school and were involved in helping their poor parents in their work place as well as at home. Even though they had a desire to go to school, many impediments came their way, the prime one being financial. During our survey, the children expressed their desire to join school. This made Sparsha to initiate Makkala Dhama (Children sanctuary). This is a home for children who were child labourers, orphans, single parented, street children and drop-outs. It is located at Kuduregere in the outskirts of Bengaluru and is surrounded by fertile land verdant with Guava, Mango and Sapota trees.

Children and Learning

In the month of June 2009 we brought these children into our center about 52 children happily started residing with us. Two teachers, an ayah and a warden were in charge of the children. Initially the children weren't interested in learning. The teachers took up this challenging task to make learning fun and colorful. As a result, 28 children got prepared for the school enrollment. The other remaining children who were slow learners were in need of more preparation.



We distributed the slow-learning 23 children into 2 batches and we adopted concept based learning. In this, we took them to nature and taught them about the leaf, soil, flower, counting (the plants), colors, etc. Making them to draw pictures in mud etc., this practice helped the children learn very easily.



Children and values

In the mean time we also able to make the children to inculcate in them good habits like yoga, dhyana, bhajan, devotional songs, reading books and telling stories to their friends, washing their clothes, to be clean, help younger children to do their work, etc., As Mahesh, an inmate says "*I am happy here because I can read, write, and also learn many things along with this, I am also trying to transfer my learning to my friends. Now I have taught some bhajans and some devotional songs. Every day in the evening we all sit and do bhajan and refresh ourselves for the new day coming and recall the day's learnings*".



Children and library

During the month of January 2010 we were able to set up a small library having books for the age group of 6 to 12 year old children. All the children were able to read the books because they were attractive with big letters and pictures. Library is helping children to adopt moral values, goals and find happiness in their life. We have 24 children who are in the age of 10 to 12yrs who are helping the younger children read books.



Children and cultural activity

There are dance classes conducted three days in a week by our trainer Ms. Gayathri. Here, children are made into groups age-wise and are trained in dance. The children trained by our trainer have received appreciation from their school committee for their performance in school day and Independence day programmes.

Some children of Makkala dhama have participated in drawing, singing, poem writing and sports competitions during independence day celebrations and were able to get prizes. Darshan, a student with us, won 1st prize in sports, Rajini won 2nd prize in poem writing, Mahesh won 1st prize in singing.



Children and organic forming

With all the above academic activity we also train older children in farming for an hour in a day. Makkala Dhama has a patch of land around it, we grow vegetables in that patch which is consumed by the children housed in it.



We have adopted organic farming in the patch of land, and to support organic farming, we have three cows which provide milk for the children and also provide manure for the vegetables grown. Fresh vegetables and milk is helping the children to develop their physical health.



Children and Food habits:

To maintain good food habits we have charted a list of daily foods, according to the table, we ensure that the children consume vegetables in higher quantity and Ragi items for their higher protein content. Fresh vegetables are obtained from the farm and are grown by the children themselves.



Children and personality development

Once in 15 days, we get personality development programmes conducted by in-house and external resource persons. This is helping Makkala Dhama children improve their memory, set goals for their life, adopt good habits, improve teamwork and co-ordination. This is also helping them to overcome their mental constraints. We also conduct need-based individual counseling for some children.



Children and Volunteers

Sparsha Trust is getting support from volunteers who are employed in IT-BT field. They have been able to spend valuable time for the children of Makkala Dhama inspite of their busy schedule. The time spent by volunteers has added more energy to Sparsha team members as well as children. Many volunteers come on weekends, play with children, teach them interesting things. They also sing and dance with the children. Supporters and volunteers have taken care of the basic needs to Makkala dhama including education material, learning aids, etc. of the children. A few volunteers have found happiness in sharing their birthday with Makkala Dhama children. An inmate, Ambika was so touched that she said *"I was very much thrilled to meet such people who work in big offices. For the first time I celebrated my birthday with all my friends I felt like I am a angel on my birthday, I am thankful for all who have made me so happy and joyful. I also promise that I will study well and get a good job like them so that I also can make other needy children happy"*



Outcome of implementation

With all the above effort we were able to get the good results from the school going children in their academics.

Children result list in the academic exam performance

Sl No	Child Name	Class	Grade obtain in the Exam
1	Abhi	1 st standard	A
2	Shobha	1 st standard	A
3	Shyamala	1 st standard	A
4	Ganga	1 st standard	A
5	Pavan Kalayan	1 st standard	A
6	Kirthana	1st standard	A
7	Anitha	2nd standard	A
8	Laxman	2 nd standard	B

9	Dinesh	2 nd standard	B+
10	Rajini	3 rd standard	A
11	Devraj	3 rd standard	B+
12	Sirisha	3 rd standard	A
13	Monika	3 rd standard	B+
14	Anjali	4 th standard	A
15	Rajendra	4 th standard	B
16	Latha	5 th standard	B+
17	Ambika	5 th standard	B+
18	Rekha	5 th standard	A
19	Roopa	5 th standard	A
20	Mahesh	6 th standard	A
21	Kalyan	6 th standard	A
22	Santosh	6 th standard	B
23	Dharshan	6 th standard	A
24	Anand	6 th standard	B
25	Nagaraj	6 th standard	B+

Shikshana Mitra – Shaping personalities of tomorrow

Shikshana Mitra (a friend for education), is a concept of leveraging the inherent skills of educated youth for the benefit of school-going children. Shikshana Mitra is typically an educated young man/woman who is motivated to contribute to the educational development of the poor and needy children, especially slow learning children. He/she conducts daily evening tuition for students and doubles up as a mentor and friend who can be approached for any help on career related issues. Sparsha Trust with the help of subject experts of child psychology, career counseling etc. help the Shikshana Mitra volunteers to make their intervention fruitful.



Achievements of Shikshana Mitra

In the first Shikshana Mitra intervention, a group of 35 children of a very poor community near Yeshvantpur Railway Station which used to make a livelihood by selling scrap Iron was identified. In this, 7 children studying standard X under the tutelage of the Shikshana Mitras took the SSLC exam in 2007. Three of them scored above 75%, with one of them scoring 83%. They are pursuing higher education through scholarship in Vivekananda College, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru. Prior to their association with the Shikshana Mitra project, the community didn't have anyone pass SSLC exam.



Present Activity

Shikshana Mitra intervention started in the month of September 2009 at Sanjeevini Nagar Slum of Hebbal area. We have reached 60 students in this intervention. Slow learners and students with learning disability have shown significant improvement, in that, they have become toppers of the class.

Ensure quality education



Education plays a vital role in the development of individual beings and also nation. As there is a famous maxim in Kannada “today's children tomorrow citizen”, i.e. good education generates good citizens for society. Sparsha believes that equality in and quality of education is very important for a better society. With the above context, it began the implementation of the Shikashana Mitra programme. The way in which the programme was implemented is as follows:

- Classes were divided into 2 groups viz. one group consisting of students from 3rd, 4th, and 5th standards and the other group consisting of students from 6th, 7th and 8th standards. We have one class room for each group.
- Classes are conducted according to time table.
- The teaching staff consists of Mr. Diwakar MSW, Somu Naik D.Ed, Jyothi Mary B.Com., Chitra BA (Psych), Anil Kumar B.Ed. Mr. Hanumanth Rao, lecturer comes on alternate days and teaches Hindi to students.
- We conduct a class test every week. As a result of this, children have overcome exam fear.
- Not only children took up the school exam, They have become confident of taking up competitive exams. 6 children wrote hindi competitive exams in January and passed scoring more by 62%.



Computer class:

Today, it is impossible to thrive in any field without computer knowledge. Computer literacy has become a prerequisite for any field of work. Keeping this in mind Sparsha started computer class to the elder children of 6th, 7th and 8th standard.



- 5 days in a week i.e., on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 4.30 to 6 pm computer class is being conducted. The students were divided class wise. There were 3 batches. In each batch there were 6 to 7 students.
- Each student attends the classes 2 days in a week. In this, one day is dedicated to theory and another for practical.
- In the class, children are taught about the important of computer and about its use.
- They have learnt MS Paint™ and MS Word™
- At present there are 3 computers and we planning to increase the number.

Personality Development sessions

Personality development programmes are very important for young children as it introduces them to the nuances of a good personality when their minds are impressionable. Due to many negative influences, children get disturbed, which results in depression, aggression, lack of confidence, fear and memory problems, etc., which is why these children find it difficult to cope with academic expectations. Sparsha conducts personality development classes regularly. The following are the highlights of the programme:



- Focus on individual and group counseling
- We read out positive thinking columns which come out in leading dailies.
- We try to build up the confidence level and teach memory techniques.
- We teach them methods to be adopted to do good study.
- We train them in values and teach them about good values to be adopted to lead a good life.
- We also give awareness on health and hygiene.
- Every morning children practice yoga and meditation

Library

In our experience we have found that many children pick up skills and knowledge from books with minimal intervention from elders. They also effectively disseminate the knowledge so gained to their friends again without intervention from elders. Books appropriately chosen and exposed to children will go a long way in instilling right values and knowledge in children.



Children coming from uneducated families fail to realize the importance of good books. They realize the importance (if at all) only after they become educated. This has been the experience of the founder of Sparsha Trust, who was exposed to good books only after he finished his SSLC.

A good library in a school goes a long way in becoming an instrument of social change. The effect of a library in a community is not felt immediately, but the effect is positive and permanent.

- Sparsha has started a library on 26th Jan 2010 to make children to get into the practice of reading books to gain the knowledge of world.
- At present we have about 200 books in different subject like general knowledge, moral stories, science, hindi, computer science, history, famous personalities, famous scientists etc.
- Every day evening children make use of the library.
- We are also maintain register for books.

Food and other basic facility:

We have a kitchen, with an experienced cook. The kitchen has water facility to maintain cleanliness and hygiene.



- We mainly focus on nutrition our menu like upma, colour rice, bisi bele bath, palav, ragi ball and rice with lots of vegetable curry. We also provide children with non veg. food / egg once a week.
- In our kitchen we focus on cleanliness and hygiene. Every alternate day we clean the kitchen with soap and water.
- Every two days once we bring the fresh vegetables to the center.

Other activities:

Sparsha not only focuses on education, it also tries to encourage the children in extracurricular activities.

- We had conducted competition on essay and drawing on Republic Day and distributed prizes to the winners
- We celebrate all national festival and discuss its historical significance.
- Every day one child reads news paper for all so as to develop an understanding of the current affairs.
- We celebrated New Year day, SDMC members, local leaders and school head master were the guest for the program and our Shikshana mitra children performed dance and drama program.
- Shikshana Mitra children with staff, participated in the enrollment campaign for government school students during the month of June 2010



Out come of Intervention:

Children result list in the academic exam performance

Sl No	Child Name	Class	Grade obtain in the Exam
1	Pooja.S	3 rd	A
2	Nandakumar	3 rd	A
3	Sonu	3 rd	B
4	Shivagami	3 rd	A
5	Chaitra.S	3 rd	B+
6	Thabasum	3 rd	A
7	Shivakumar.A	4 th	B
8	Rajesh	4 th	B+
9	Sagar	4 th	A
10	Dharshan	4 th	B
11	Revathi	4 th	B

12	Chandana	4 th	A
13	Anu	4 th	B
14	Komala.R	4 th	B+
15	Boomika	4 th	B
16	Vasu	5 th	A+
17	Vishwanath	5 th	B
18	Madhukumar	5 th	B
19	Gunnashaker	5 th	A+
20	Rathna	5 th	A
21	Mamatha	5 th	A
22	Sandhya	5 th	A
23	Monika	5 th	A
24	Soudarya	5 th	B
25	Shalini	5 th	B
26	Vaishnavi	5 th	A
27	Bhavani	3 rd	A
28	Pavankumar	5 th	B
29	Ambika	6 th	B
30	Lakshmidevi	6 th	B
31	Ranganath	6 th	Mentally challenged
32	Praveenkumar.B.D	6 th	A+
33	Pvithra.B.D	6 th	A+
34	Deepa.N	6 th	A+
35	Soumya.S	6 th	A
36	Anitha	6 th	A+

37	Shreyas	6 th	A+
38	Punith	6 th	A
39	Lakshmi	7 th	A+
40	Bhaskar	7 th	B
41	Sathish	7 th	B+
42	Nagaraju	7 th	B+
43	Naresh	7 th	B
44	Shivakumar	7 th	B+
45	Arunkumar	8 th	B
46	Hemanth	8 th	A+
47	Ranjitha	8 th	B+
48	Sharadha	8 th	B+
49	Muthulakshmi	8 th	B+
50	Sharathkumar	4 th	A+
51	Barathkumar	7 th	A+
52	Babu	3 rd	A+
53	Akshayakumar	4 th	A+
54	Santosh	4 th	B+
55	Harish	8 th	B+
56	Jyothi	5 th	A+
57	Dhaivani	7 th	B+

Bala Mitra

Bala Mitra is a project which we seek to provide parental care to young children who are devoid of it



Sparsha Trust has run two crèches in the vicinity of stone quarries at Sonnappanahalli. After successful running of the crèches for 1 year, we have handed them over to the community.

Presently we are running one crèche in the vicinity of Reva College, Kottige halli, Bengaluru outskirts. This intervention was initiated by us and after ten months of successful intervention, the community has come forward with its participation and is providing 30% of the expenses and is also enthusiastically involved in the day to day activities of the crèche. 30 children in the age group of 3 to 6 years are being supported in this intervention.



Activities

- The crèche has become a motivation center where children learn with fun and love.
- We have ensured health care by implementing regular health check up camps
- Conducted monthly parents' meeting to make them aware about health, hygiene, nutrition and childhood care, it has helped the parents to maintain their children in good health.



- Organized awareness program on health, nutrition, hygiene, childhood rights in the community this has leaded the community to involve in the process of child care and promotion of child rights.
- We also provided Mid-day meals from the support of donors.



Out Come:



- We have enrolled children older than 6 years into formal schools
- Children were prepared by us to face school environment
- We have thus prevented use of child labor in this area
- We have prevented malnutrition of children by providing them with suitable nutrition.
- Children are able to write Kannada and English alphabets, tables and tell Rhymes.

Sparsha Trust with other programs:

Survey on Basic facilities:

During the month of February, Sparsha took up the survey to understand the people, their livelihood, and facilities in their reach. The survey was a pilot experiment conducted in the area of Laggere. And we were able to conclude that basic facilities like potable water, sanitation, etc. are out of the reach of many in that area.

Participated in Urban homeless survey:

With the collaboration of IGSSS and 29 Bangalore based NGOs conducted a survey to understand homeless people and their problems. These homeless people were rightly identified as Invisible city makers. With the view of advocacy we initially went into the field to learn the living status of the people. The survey was for 2 nights. Sparsha took up responsibility of Byatharayanapura zone. We conducted the survey with 6 staff and were able to interview 25 individuals and do a head count of 495 people.

Census 2010

Sparsha Trust has also involved itself in the population Census conducted by Government of Karnataka. We did a survey in the area of Kodigehalli, Sahakarnagar, and Sanjivinagar. 3 Staff from our organization have participated in the month of May 2010.

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