



SNEHA SHABD

A Bimonthly E-News letter by Sneha Care Home

Vol: 6, Issue 24, July 2014

Director Speaks



We are at the threshold of another academic year; at this juncture I would like to thank God for his guidance and blessing over our centre last year. We all could see an ample improvement in children in the bygone year, which will be an asset for their future. We are indeed happy that we have begun the second phase of our programme; snehagram in Krishagiri during last year.

As our children went home for holidays we were certainly happy to see that they got a good support and encouragement from their family. We also could see a better response and participation for parents meet which was held at SCH on 13 April. Their result at their final exams shows their improvement in studies. We were also able to make inroads into building fruitful collaborations with other schools and colleges and institutions.

I would like to thank all the well wishers of our programme, I am really happy to see more and more committed participation in this initiative.

Let us pray that our children may perform better in the coming academic year.

The First Lady of Canada Visit Sneha Care Home

Sneha Care Home was privileged to welcome Her Excellency, Mrs. Sharon Johnston, the First Lady of Canada. The visit took place on 27/2/2014. Her Excellency's visit to the centre was facilitated by the Canadian High Commission in India in partnership with Karnataka Health Promotion Trust.

Mrs. Sharon Johnston arrived at 9 am. She was welcomed with a bouquet by Dhanush the Captain of the School. Fr. William the superior of Snehadaan, Fr. Vince, the director of SCH, Fr. Mathew, the director of Snehagram and Dr. Reynold Washington, Director of Karnataka Health Promotion Trust also received Her Excellency. Yeshweshini accompanied Her Excellency to the various departments of the centre along six small children. Children themselves explained to Her Excellency about various programmes of the centre at different departments.

Following the visit to different departments children put up a cultural show to entertain Her Excellency and the team of delegates accompanying her. Her Excellency was thoroughly bemused by the dance performance of our boys and girls and was seen moving her body to the Bollywood rhythms.

After the cultural programme, Her Excellency was escorted to the multi-purpose hall where the children had prepared an art display. All the Birthday babies of February celebrated their birthdays with Her Excellency. She had a special talk with all the ministers of our Children's Parliament. At the end of the programme she met all the staff and thanked and appreciated all of them for the commitment and dedication with which they were taking care of the children.

Her Excellency was accompanied by Mrs. Brenda Beck, Spouse of High Commissioner of Canada to India, Mrs. Madhulika Verma, Spouse of High Commissioner of India to Canada, Ms. Jinny Sims, Member of Parliament, Canada, Ms. Wai Young, Member of Parliament, Canada, Ms. Elisa Paloschi, Private entrepreneur and noted film maker. All the children enjoyed her presence with them and the warmth and love with which she talked to them.



Conclusion of the Academic year 2013 - 14

The academic voyage that we began on 3rd June 2013 reached the shores on 11th April 2014. It was an year of fulfillment as we could innovate and improvise many things. Some of the activities that we conducted at the closure of the year are as follows

1. Annual Academic Assessment

The annual academic assessment of our children was held from 24th March 2014 to 1st April 2014. The assessment in each subject was done for 100 marks. We had one assessment per day and it was for a 2.5 hours duration. The pattern of assessment was both oral and written.

Most of the children performed well in the assessments. The assessment scores were distributed among the children the following week and their performance was reviewed and evaluated by each teacher

We also prepared a progress report for all the children, which included the marks they secured for each examination and a separate assessment based on certain criteria for each subject. The progress report was shown to the parents during the family gathering.

we could see a very steady progress in the case of all the children. At the end of the academic year, we were very happy to see that our strategy of retaining children who did not perform well in the same class was very effective as most of them became toppers in their respective classes. We could also observe that they were high on their confidence and eager to perform well.

2. Annual Academic Review and planning meeting

Sneha Care Home conducted the academic review and planning meeting for the teachers on 9th of April. The programme included reviewing and evaluating the academic programme using a SWOT analysis. During this session each teacher shared his/her feedback about the academic system of the bygone year, various strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats of the programme and effectiveness of strategic changes we had initiated last year.

The second session focused on planning for the new academic year. we planned about the different levels in the new academic year, new curriculum, the number of children to be promoted to the next level and the number of children to be detained in the same level, and strategies that would improve the academic performance and behaviour of children.



3. The Annual programme Review and Planning Meeting

In accordance with our tradition, we organized the annual programme review and planning meeting on 11th and 12th of April. The meeting aimed at garnering a holistic vision of the impact of the programme in the bygone academic year and creating innovative and productive plans for the new academic year based on the new learning. All the core team members participated in the meeting.

The meeting started with a SWOT analysis of the entire programme. A review of the SWOT analysis was held henceforth. Later, the programme was thoroughly reviewed department wise. Persons in-charge of each department shared his/her feedback about each activity they carried out under their respective department. They pointed out the effectiveness of their activities and the areas where they faced challenges. Moreover, various events that we organized and the things that we initiated were also reviewed systematically.

The second day's programme focussed on making plans for the new academic year. The planning was carried out based on the SWOT analysis and review on the previous day. The future activities of all the departments were planned during the meeting. In addition, the other events for the new academic year were also planned.

The meeting has proved to be very crucial as it gave everyone a chance to reflect about the effectiveness of our programme and plan for making it more innovative in the next year.

4. Family Gathering and Annual Holidays

Family is the most important unit of our relationships and identity. It is a place from where we receive selfless and genuine love, warmth and affection. Sneha Care home strives to build a model which is rooted in communitarian and familial relationships because we have found that family linkage is key to the proper growth and development of our children. With this aim we send our children for holidays twice in a year. According to our custom we organized the Family gathering on 13th of April. On this day, 85 of our children's parents/relatives came to Sneha Care Home. The programme began at 10.30 am. The choir of Sneha Care Home sang a song imploring the blessing of God. The children welcomed the gathering and performed a few cultural items to entertain the gathering and shared about the life in SCH. After the cultural programme, Ms. Clera oriented them about the various things which they should follow generally. Mrs. Soniya oriented them about how they should take care of the children's health. The parents/relatives were also given time to clarify their doubts and share feedbacks. We also honoured children for their outstanding performance in various areas.

All the care takers met the counsellor along with the children and collected their annual progress report before they went home. All of them were happy to see the improvements of their children. 89 children out of 93 went home for holidays along with their parents/ relatives. They will come back on May 18th.



Summer home visits

The sneha care home team visited the homes of our children during the summer holidays. A team consisting of three members visited the homes of our children in Bidar, Gulberga, Belgaum, Bijapur, Kolar, Shimoga and Mysore districts. We visited the homes of 46 of our children in 25 days. It was a wonderful experience to understand the real life situation of our children at home, meet the family members and relatives and enquire the welfare of our children during holidays.

Children return after holidays

After a long summer holidays for nearly 40 days, all the children returned to Sneha Care Home in the second week of May. We conducted a post holiday assessment and found that all the children had a memorable vacation. We also carried out a post holiday health analysis of all the children and found that generally most of the children enjoyed good health at home.

Kolar out reach programme summer camp

Sneha Care Home organized a summer camp for the children from Kolar district on 12th and 13th of May 2014. The main objective of the camp was to conduct various types of assessments and plan out interventions based on the assessment. The camp was organized at Christy Bala Bhavan Kolar. The camp was inaugurated by Dr. Reynold Washington, Director, Karnataka Health Promotion Trust.

We conducted various health assessments, psycho-social assessments, adolescent guidance sessions and disclosure sessions and fun and entertainment activities. At the end of the camp the children organized a cultural programme. We also distributed medicines and school stationery for the children at the end of the camp. Fourty five children attended the camp.

School reopening

After two month long summer holidays the Shining Star School reopened on 2nd June 2014. Fr. Paschal, the assistant parish priest of Carmel Church, inaugurated the new academic year with a prayer session. He also addressed the children on this occasion and admonished them to be faithful and responsible in all their undertakings.



RAINBOW SUMMER CAMP

Rainbow summer camp is an annual event organized by Sneha Care Home right after the summer holidays. It is a supervised, fun filled and activity based programme. It is conducted aiming at offering children a wide variety of specialized activities like performing arts and crafts, music and dance, awareness sessions, and skill trainings. The primary purpose of the summer camp is to help the children recuperate after the holidays before the beginning of the new academic year. Secondly it also opens new avenues of educational and entertainment opportunities and allows them to take healthy risks in a safe and nurturing environment.

Rainbow 2014 was organized from 26th to 30th of May. The summer camp was inaugurated by Mr. Aris Miranda, the international coordinator of Camilian Task Force. The main objectives of the summer camp were to give the children an opportunity to learn skills, which they do not normally get a chance. We managed to find an excellent team of resource people who were experts in conducting various activities. It was an attempt to unfold many of the unexplored talents of our children by exposing them to a learning atmosphere which supports and enhances their skills and provides an opportunity to meet and interact with the experts.

Rainbow 2014 was a unique experience with a lot of fun and frolic. Major highlights of the week-long celebration included activities by U&I, magic show, cookery show, Dance, music arts and crafts, theatre workshop, pot making sports trainings and various other fun activities.

One of the apparent outcomes of the summer camp is that it enhanced the socialization skills and team spirit of children. Moreover, it also provided a framework for developing lifelong friendships and working relationships. The importance of cooperation, friendship, teamwork, decision making, responsibility, trust and distinguishing between right and wrong was emphasized continuously through each activity.



SHARING ROOM

Child Protection Protocols being practiced in Sneha Care Home



"All children have the right to protection from abuse, violence and exploitation."

Keeping this universal principle in perspective UNCRC, other National and international conventions pertaining to the protection of children and National and International Organizations committed to protecting the rights of children have made it mandatory on all child care institutions and organizations to formulate a Child Protection Policy for the organization. The Child Protection policy has two basic objectives: to ensure the protection of children from abuse and neglect; namely, physical injury, neglect, emotional abuse and sexual abuse and secondly to commit ourselves to guarantee child rights, "keeping children first" and "keeping the best interest of the child" in all our agenda.

With the aim of guaranteeing best practices in child care, Sneha Care Home also has formulated a Child Protection Policy. In definition, a Child Protection Policy is "a series of documents which direct appropriate behaviour for staff, volunteers and visitors towards children, the procedures for staff and volunteer recruitment, staff training, the procedures for alleged & confirmed misconduct, the communication policies of the organization concerning child protection, all related components for protecting children, i.e. application procedures, reporting forms and press statements.

The first step that we initiated before drafting the CPP was to conduct a two days' training for all the staff about child protection. The training was facilitated by International Services Agency (INSA India). The first part of the training was a child protection audit of our centre. Following the child protection audit child protection issues, relevant legislations and essential components of a child protection policy was also discussed. A half day's session was dedicated to deliberating what should be the design and important elements to be incorporated in the CPP pertaining to Sneha Care Home.

Mr. Manoj Joseph, the programme manager was assigned with the task of drafting the CPP in line with the deliberations. After the draft was made a series of meetings and deliberations, involving the staff, volunteers and trainers from INSA, were held to discuss each component of the CPP and the process of additions and deletions were carried out. After this process was completed the management and staff ratified the CPP on 04/07/2013, by appending their signature on the same.

The Child Protection Policy of Sneha Care Home essentially entails a Child Protection pledge which all the staff and volunteers commit to, an introduction about what the CPP stands for, protocols to be followed in the recruitment, induction and training of staff and volunteers, management systems, behaviour protocols from the part of the staff, volunteers, visitors and even children to ensure the safety of children, communication protocols, reporting and reaction protocols and steps that will be followed in empowerment building of children. As part of the annexure we also have a child abuse reporting format.

In line with the protocols of the CPP we have displayed all the essential components of the CPP for public view in front of the office. We have also started a Children's parliament to teach them about their rights and to seek their opinion in all matters. We had also INSA India conducting a few workshops for the children to teach them about their rights and to empower them to report any child abuse. We have a male and female child protection officer to deal with child abuse cases if reported and also to monitor the child protection ethos are adhered to by all. Recently, we have also installed CCTV in public places to ensure the safety of children. We also demand a police clearance certificate from the volunteers who join the programme to make sure that no person with a criminal background sneaks into this place.

Manoj Joseph
Programme Manager