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INCLUSION

Oasis India's monthly e-newsletter

September 2018



Hi Communication,

According to UNICEF, 30% of very poor children live in India. Oasis India's mission is to make India better for children by providing help in areas like education, personal development, sports etc, which empowers them to build a better life for themselves and the community around them.

HOW WE PAVE THE WAY FOR OUR CHILDREN IN THE COMMUNITY



Oasis India conducts after-school programmes (ASP) for children in our various locations across India. Initially started to help with supplementary education – this programme now provides holistic education to help children excel in personal development too.

What is holistic education?

Holistic education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds their identity, meaning, and purpose in life. The aim is to help students meet the challenges in everyday life as well as academics. (www.holisticeducation.net)

Oasis India's ASPs focus on these four core objectives:

Supplementary education support

It is of utmost importance for the tutors at ASP to be able to give individual attention to each child. Through five years of experience, survey and research, the staff at Oasis have narrowed down the focus to Math and English, since a large percentage of children need help in those two subjects.

Personal development

Children receive one-on-one counselling to help them according to their circumstances. Majority of parents are daily wagers and children are often on their own until late hours at night. Faced with poverty, abuse, and negligence, adolescents turn to reckless behaviour. Activities and life-skill sessions help them to be disciplined, groom themselves, and look after their social and emotional well-being.

Behavioural modification

Many ASP students are part of the sports programme, which allow young children to imbibe team spirit, the ability to handle both wins and losses, and also keeps them fit. Further, sports serves as a catalyst for discipline during training sessions, at school, and at home.

Creating change agents

issues and needs of their neighbourhood because they face them first-hand. Using their experiences, we guide them to plan awareness sessions and events with local groups and schools in the area to combat the very same issues they face.

Coming from poverty-stricken and broken families, children lose a sense of purpose. They determine their worth and future according to the confinements of their community. The experiences and activities at ASP prepares them to take life head-on and overcome the obstacles they face.

RAHUL FOUND HIS SILVER LINING



"It takes all the running you can do to keep in the same place. If you want to get somewhere else, you must run at least twice as fast as that!" - Lewis Carroll.

15 years old and living in a high-risk area, Rahul* struggled to fit in with the other teens around him. His mother, a sex worker in Kamathipura was too busy to pay attention to the deviant behaviours he exhibited.

She often found him involved in crimes, loitering and being irregular to school. When Rahul was held back in 9th grade, she could not keep quiet anymore, and after meeting Oasis staff, she began sending Rahul to our daycare center. With good influence and consistent counselling, he has been able to get back on track in school and is not a prey to the negative influences around him.

Last year in Kamathipura, Oasis India worked with over 60 children, providing help with education as well as imparting good values and morals.

NOTABLE BENEFITS OF ASP IN SLUMS AND RED-LIGHT AREAS

- Create a sense of belonging
- Improve social skills
- Provide academic support
- Make learning more fun
- Provide safety and supervision
- Build confidence

Source: www.understood.org

HELPING CHILDREN WITH LEARNING DISABILITY



Learning disabilities (LD) are neurological-based processing problems that affect an individual's ability to learn basic skills such as writing, reading or math. A new study from the University of Melbourne states that every classroom is likely to have two or three children with a learning disability. Moreover, many of them are likely to have more than one learning disability - the most common being dyslexia (the inability to read or interpret lessons and symbols), autism (a neurological disorder in which the child has poor social skills) and attention-deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD). **In India, 13 to 14 percent of all school-going children suffer from learning disorders.**

although she puts in a lot of effort to study.

Why is it important to address this? Children are affected the most due to the social issues among them and those with disabilities are receptors of the worst form of negligence. **Firstly, adults are unaware of the different kinds of disabilities, especially LD. Secondly, they are in denial.**

ASP classes at Oasis are inclusive to all children including those with LD, helping them to learn in their own individual way. **Tutors plan and customise their teaching according to the strengths and weaknesses of a child.** With Fathima, the tutors started from the basics through activity-based learning. After a few months, Fathima is now able to identify words and letters on her own. Although it is a long and tedious process, the individual attention they receive pays off. Pradeep, a 4-year-old was always inattentive and easily distracted in class. When he was diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactive disorder, they changed their whole approach, according to Kalai, Pradeep's tutor. She says, "It was very hard to get Pradeep's attention even for a minute. But with activity-based learning and teaching he has learnt to be more attentive. His parents even see the difference at home."

I CAN STUDY WELL TOO!



My name is Suchitra and I study in 7th grade. I have two little sisters and my parents are farmers.

I love playing with my friends but I could not study like them. I had difficulty reading and writing on my own and there was no one to help me at home. My constant fear was that my friends will make fun of me if I don't get good marks. I did my best in everything, but I was not able to concentrate in class. I felt alone.

After joining Oasis' special education programme, the tutors gave me individual

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now starting to follow what my teachers teach in class. This gives me hope that I can do well in my studies, just like my friends!

Suchitra

12 years old

Gudurupalli village

Punganur

SIGNS OF LEARNING DISABILITY

A child with a learning disability may exhibit the following symptoms:

- Impetuous behavior
- Inappropriate responses in school or social situations
- Difficulty staying on task (easily distracted)
- Difficulty finding the right way to say something
- Inconsistent school performance
- Immature way of speaking
- Difficulty in listening
- Problems dealing with new things in life
- Problems understanding words or concepts

Source: www.nichd.nih.gov

SPORTS, A MIRROR OF LIFE



Some of the best conversations happen during the life-skill sessions with the young children who are part of our sports programmes in Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and Punganur. The teams meet for practice in the early hours of the day and after their rigorous training, they learn about discipline, behaviour, fitness and nutrition. Many of them come from low-income families and some are children of commercial sex workers, and they are prone to adopt harmful behaviours. Eventually they could become addicted to drugs, alcohol, participate in crimes, drop out of school etc. **While instilling discipline through other means is usually strenuous, sports has been an effective medium of connection.**

Hari, 17, has been a part of the Chennai football programme for the past 4 years. When he and his mother were physically abused by his father, who struggles with alcoholism, sports enabled him to channel his frustrations in a positive way. He showed major improvements in behaviour and character after activity-based learning and sessions in the field.

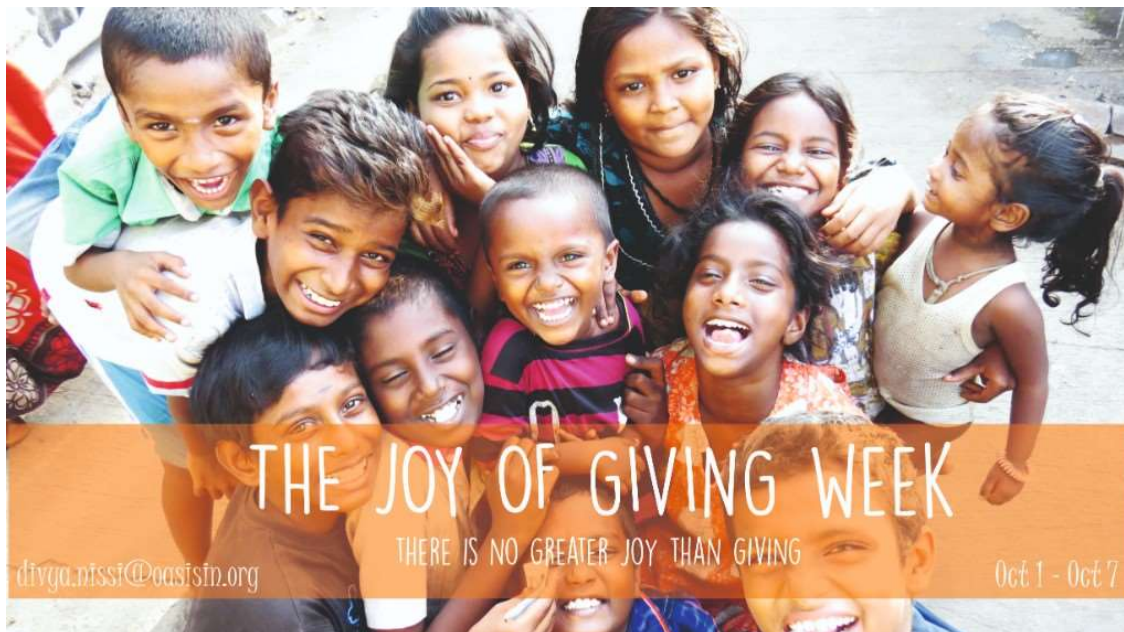
Positive reinforcement plays a huge role in dealing with individuals like Hari. Appreciation and constructive feedback are great tools to enable them to perform better, both on the field and in their personal lives.

Suresh Daniel, the Project Co-ordinator who oversees the volleyball practices at Punganur says, **"Children long for opportunity and recognition.** Since parents are not home to give attention, they seek for care and appreciation. They have a drive and it's our responsibility to recognise and use it. Since Punganur is a rural area, children have not even seen the cities and we make it a point to take them for tournaments and inter-school matches to give them that exposure. This helps in widening their range of thinking. Parents have seen the difference as their children wake up early, are regular, determined and disciplined." **Such opportunities help them realise that they are being recognised and they can do well too.**



In collaboration with the local authorities in Mumbai, the Early Encounter (EE) team rescues children found in vulnerable situations every day.

Watch our EE team in action



"Practice random acts of kindness and senseless acts of beauty"

Let this Anne Herbert quote inspire us to do a random act of kindness for a family member, neighbour or even a stranger as many times as possible marking the Joy of Giving Week in October.

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