



ACTIVITY REPORT - OCT. 2010 – MAR. 2011

- **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**
- **LEARNING CENTRES**
- **STUDENTS' CLUBS**
- **SUPPORT CLASSES**



PROGRAM SCALE

- **SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM – 100 students**
- **LEARNING CENTRES – 3 centres, 150 children**
- **STUDENTS' CLUBS – 15 clubs, 100 children**
- **SUPPORT CLASSES – 10 villages, 250 children**

Total reach – 600 children

BI-ANNUAL PARENTS' MEETING

PARTICIPANTS

- 96 scholarship students & their parents

CHIEF GUESTS

- General Manager (Technical), Thiagarajar Mills, Nilakottai
- Community Development Officer, Thiagarajar Mills, Nilakottai



PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

- The chief guests addressed our 6th batch of students on the importance of learning with conceptual understanding, stressing that it would lead to innovations.
- Dress materials were distributed to children so they could celebrate Deepavali wearing new clothes.

FIELD TRIPS

PARLE-G FACTORY & KEEZHAKUYIL KUDI

- 25 students participated in this field trip.
- At the factory, an officer explained the products and processes at Parle-G & students asked questions which were answered satisfactorily.
- At Keezhakuyil Kudi, students learned some historical facts & got a bird's eye view of Madurai.



TNAU & G. D. NAIDU MUSEUM, COIMBATORE

- Students got to visit the Department of Floriculture & Landscaping at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore. They saw several species of flora at the Botanical Garden.
- At the G. D. Naidu Museum, they saw fossil remains, age-old tools, old coins & decorative artifacts.
- Finally, they went trekking on Maruthamalai where they saw several medicinal plant species and also visited the temple.



FIELD TRIPS

KODAIKANAL SOLAR OBSERVATORY

- 23 students participated in the field trip to Kodaikanal.
- They visited the Solar Observatory operated by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics. They were enlightened about the effects of sunspots on surface temperatures.
- Following this, children went sightseeing to the Kodaikanal lake and Silver Cascade Waterfall.



HARBOUR, TUTICORIN & TIRUCHENDUR

- 19 students participated in the field trip to Tuticorin.
- Students got to visit the harbour, where an official explained the port operations. They also spent time at the beach and light house. Then, they got a glance at the airport in Avaniyapuram.
- Students were also taken to visit the Tiruchendur Murugan Temple.



WORKSHOPS & EVENTS

CAREER GUIDANCE FAIR

15 students participated in the 2nd career guidance fair conducted by Dina Malar in Madurai this year. Students got useful information on courses & career options. They also bought booklets and guides with details of universities in Tamil Nadu offering various courses.



PREPARING FOR STD. 10 BOARD EXAMS

In early March, we conducted a workshop for Std. 10 students on preparing for their Board exams. The main resource persons were Retd. District Education Officer, Dindigul District and High School Government School teachers. 34 students participated in this workshop and found the tips provided by the resource persons very informative.



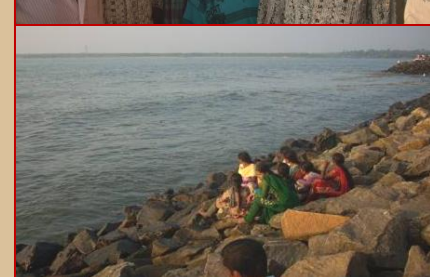
ANNUAL EXCURSION

POLLACHI & COCHIN

This year, our annual excursion was to Pollachi and Cochin during Christmas season – Dec. 25^h & 26th.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 75 students participated in the tour, accompanied by 7 staff from the Aspire team.
- Travel arrangements included a bus and a mini bus.
- Stay was organized at YMCA & Grand Residency dormitory at Cochin
- Sights visited included natural retreats like Thirumoorthy Waterfall, Neyyar Dam and Parambikulam Wildlife Sanctuary, .historical places like the Mattanchery Palace, Museum & Fort Kochi and popular venues like the Jawaharlal Nehru Cricket Stadium and Cochin Marine Drive.
- Needless to say, the most popular destination was the Cricket stadium where students took photographs in various poses and got views from various stands!



PROGRAMS AT LEARNING CENTRES



VILLAGE EDUCATION WATCH COMMITTEE MEETINGS

At our 3 learning centres at Thummalapatti, Thoppupatti and Sengatampatti villages, we organized meetings of the parents who formed the Village Education Watch Committees, coinciding with Saraswathi Poojai. The functioning of the centres was discussed and parents were exhorted to send more students to participate in the activities. Their suggestions were asked to improve the quality of education in their village.



ARE YOU WASHING YOUR HANDS PROPERLY?!?!?

Did you know there were 9 steps involved in washing your hands? Well, we didn't either – not until we participated in the workshop on health and hygiene. Our centre staff at Sengatampatti got children to bring vessels, soap and towels from home and demonstrated the step-by-step procedure involved in cleansing ones hands thoroughly. Children were exhorted to follow this practice, especially before every meal and after attending to nature's calls.



WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS

FIELD TRIP – ANSA, PLANETARIUM & KALLANAI DAM, TRICHY

- In continuation of the workshop and exhibition on medicinal plants and environment conservation, students from the 3 learning centres were taken on a field trip to Antyodaya Sangh (ANSA) near Trichy. ANSA's interpretation centre at Vidudhalaipuram has a collection of many species of well-preserved herbarium, seeds and raw drugs. Their thematically developed demo garden has medicinal herbs. The ANSA staff explained in detail to our students about the importance of preserving medicinal herbs and their use in medication.
- After this, the students spent a couple of hours at the Anna Planetarium in Trichy watching a show on the solar system.
- Finally, they cooled off at Kallanai Dam, The Grand Anaicut on River Cauvery.



WORKSHOPS AND EVENTS continue...

KNOW YOUR GEOGRAPHY

This was an event organized to get students to know more about India and her States. They were divided into groups and given empty India (political) maps. Each group had to mark information such as unique resources/specialties of specific states. At the end, every group presented their maps.

ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS

A programme on environmental awareness was organized at Ethilodu Panchayat in collaboration with the local Government school. At Sengattampatti learning centre, children were involved in preparing a nursery patch on common village land and planting seeds. They have promised to water the seeds and nurture them into saplings first and trees for the future.



NEER MORE!

For a local temple function at S. Thummalapatti village, the children from our learning centres put up a buttermilk stall and took turns distributing the thirst quenching drink to all those who wanted it for over 2 to 3 hours. They gained a lot of popularity and blessings that day 😊!



SPORTS MEET ON CHILDREN'S DAY

- 157 children from 18 villages participated enthusiastically in the 2-day Sports Meet organized on Nov. 13th & 14th.
- 43 students won prizes in various events such as kho-kho, running race, kabadi, skipping, sack race, etc.
- Participation certificates were given to all students and prizes distributed to the winners & runners-up.
- Parents and youth in the village gathered to cheer and encourage the participants.



OTHER CLUB EVENTS

PARENTS' MEETING

- Since students' club is a new initiative, we organized a meeting of members' parents and explained the vision of our organization.
- We outlined the nature of programs that we would involve their children in and exhorted their support.
- We also asked them to send their children to participate in our programs after confirming the date, time and venue.

'LET'S EDUCATE CHILDREN' CAMPAIGN

- 140 children from students' clubs and learning centres got together at Sengatampatti village and organized a rally to sensitize parents to continue educating their children beyond primary school.
- At the end of the rally, they staged a drama on the importance of education.



NEW UNIFORMS!

To provide a sense of belonging to members of students' clubs and learning centres, we provided T-shirts to these children. The Panchayat President at Thummalapatti village & CDO, Thiyagaraja Mills distributed the T-shirts.

Children were very excited with their "new non-school uniforms" and have been wearing them for most of our programs 😊



EXHIBITION

Volunteers in 10 villages have been running after-school tuition classes for primary school children regularly. Our volunteer at Maniyakkaranpatti brought selected students from all villages together and organized an exhibition.

- Children brought their creative talents and scientific temper to the forefront. Children displayed and explained varieties of models they had made such as a multi-storey house with a lift, rainwater harvesting tanks, windmill, battery-operated grinder, periscope and amusement park.
- Some kids put together albums with interesting historical facts and others maintained herbariums & illustrations.
- The most creative exhibit was a group of children dressed to portray various stages of evolution!!



OTHER PROGRAMS

PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

- A personality development lab was conducted for all staff and volunteer teachers by engaging a Madurai-based consultancy firm, Zentech.
- Sessions involved team building, self-assessment and goal setting. About 15 members participated in this program, handled by 3 resource persons.
- Our team found the program useful to assess their strengths & weaknesses and also to understand the motivation factor for their colleagues to take up this line of work.



EYE CAMP

- In collaboration with Thiyagaraja Mills, we helped organize an eye camp by mobilizing 45 parents from 7 villages. Eye screening for cataract was the main activity undertaken. Both parents and the Mill team were happy with the outcome of the camp. Some patients diagnosed with cataract were referred to eye hospitals.



PONGAL CELEBRATION

- This Pongal was memorable for the Aspire team, as a group of zealous visitors from Chennai spent the festival with us.
- The Chennai children and their parents – a group of 28, arrived with eager faces, enthralled by the peacocks which welcomed them and the rustic atmosphere.
- The 2-days were packed with events such as bullock cart ride, kolam potti (rangoli contest), kummi-adi, making sakkarai Pongal, uri-adi (pot-hitting!), painting cow horns, paddy planting, folk dances such as devaraattam, uyilaattam, karakaattam and trekking – all in Nilakottai's villages.
- The finale was an evening of cultural performances by the hosts, reciprocated in good humour by the visitors.
- The program enabled true exchange of cultural experiences, as the urbanites experienced village life, with Aspire students.



All the children and teenagers who were part of the visiting team were given certificates by the Aspire team for their sportive participation in the cultural exchange program. They went home with happy memories and heavy hearts, promising to return again.





PLAN FOR THE YEAR 2011'-12

Program type	Current scale	Planned scale
Scholarship	100 children	150 children
Learning Centres	3 centres, 150 children	5 centres, 250 children
Students' Clubs	15 clubs, 100 children	20 clubs, 200 children
Support Classes	10 villages, 250 children	10 villages, 250 children
Total reach	600 children	850 children

Help us reach out to 850 children this year!

Continue to support our initiative!

Do come and visit us!

Share your ideas & interact with our students.

Continue to support our initiative!

Thank you for the patient reading 😊