the yp foundation

DEVELOPING POTENTIAL IN YOUNG PEOPLE

Blending Spectrum: Education, Health and Life Skills for Urban Street & Slum Children

Project Overview

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INTRODUCTION

Blending Spectrum is a project undertaken by The YP Foundation that engages young people as peer educators, to work with urban street and slum children in Delhi to foster child rights and learning opportunities as part of the same. Founded in 2006, the project increases sensitivity and promotes a better connect and understanding between street and slum children and the urban youth. The programme aims at identifying potential within and learning opportunities for children, increasing their understanding of primary health and hygiene education, connecting them to formal education and opportunities to develop life skills, complementing formal educational systems.

The programme currently supports 155 children and 30 active volunteers through a bi-weekly teaching module and works in two locations across Delhi. At the Nizamuddin Basti, we work with 30-40 girls and boys (3 to 12 years of age) in a community of 15 families who are primarily rag pickers. At Mehrauli, we partner with the NGO Aman Biradari at the Qutub Hostel for Boys, where we work with 125 boys (4 to 18 years of age) implementing a peer-to-peer education model. The programme has successfully assisted 110 children to enrol in schools with a zero percent drop out rate over 2008 – 2010. The project focuses on the twin tracks of providing assistance with formal education and has advanced to include providing Life Skills education. Using a range of interactive games and sports, the Life Skills Curriculum develops critical primary analysis; inter-personal and comprehension skills that equip the children to adapt better to mainstream schooling. Blending Spectrum is currently supported in part by the Global Fund for Children.

RATIONALE

According to the WHO, in 2008 there were over 11 million street children in India. Children on the streets are often nameless, with no legal residential identity and unaccounted for in India's developing annual economic growth rate. They are deprived of proper food, water, shelter, healthcare and education and are a target for abuse and trafficking. Despite being neglected and forgotten, these children have immense potential as individuals and have the fundamental right to access education and health services in India.

The YP Foundation believes in the philosophy of recognizing the unique potential of each child and works towards enhancing children's knowledge and awareness, with a focus on building self-confidence as well as personal and social development. We work for increased community awareness and concern for issues related to children as well as improving the status of children in society. We also strongly believe in a human rights system that encourages the active participation of children themselves in this process.

Our goal is to empower and enable young people as well as adolescents to be able acquire both skills and knowledge, in a manner that is both productive and practical. As stated in the UN Convention on the Rights

of the Child (UN CRC), 'It is a subject of rights, who is able to form and express opinions, to participate in decision making processes and influence solution, to intervene as a partner in the process of social change'.

Today, young people's engagement and active response in this process is critical, they are already involved in decision-making processes in government bodies and in active community work with civil society organizations. In order to achieve the MDGs successfully, the strategy of affecting, involving and encouraging young people to lead processes of change is critical. Levels of participation amongst young people range from being demonstratively effective to being non-existent based on the opportunities provided and the kind of enabling environment and opportunities young people can access.

There is an irreplaceable and invaluable citizen change that occurs while working to develop a stronger future that guarantees all children their fundamental rights and promises them a positive future, irrespective of their economic background, caste, creed, color, religion, gender or sex.

VISION

Blending Spectrum's vision is to empower street and slum children to access and claim their right to health and education.

OBJECTIVES

- To implement a Life Skills Based Education and Awareness Program that enhances the community's knowledge and develops skills that enable children to be able to deal effectively with the challenges of daily life.
  HOW: By building interpersonal skills, self-management skills and critical thinking inculcated though the themes of health awareness (hygiene and nutrition) and socio-cultural awareness.

- Providing additional support to children who have transitioned to formal schooling, in order to assist their progress in school.
  HOW: By helping children with homework, preparation for tests and connecting children who are ready to transition to formal schooling, with schools in their vicinity.

- Increasing Health Awareness within the community and helping improve existing hygiene and sanitation standards.
  HOW: By conducting health awareness camps at the Nizamuddin Basti with parents as well as their children and further connecting the community to health facilities in their vicinity.

ACTIVITIES & TIMELINE (SEPTEMBER 2010 – MARCH 2011)

Locations: Nizamuddin Basti and Umeed Home for Boys, Sarai Hostel

Blending Spectrum offers a Life Skills Based Curriculum to 155 Children between 3 to 18 years of age. The Curriculum is taught to children across 4 programmes that encourage learning through creative expression:

1. **Blen Spec Crayon:** Art Based Workshops
2. **Blen Spec Stage:** Theatre and Storytelling Workshops
3. **Blen Spec Camera Action:** Digital Storytelling
4. **Blen Spec Build:** Capacity Building and Training for Peer Educators
5. **Blen Spec School:** Supporting Formal Education

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LIFE SKILLS CURRICULUM	CONTENT, PERIOD & OUTREACH	OUTCOMES
Blen Spec Crayon Art Based Workshops	80 Art Based Workshops over 5 Months with 130 Children. (2 batches of 65 children each) with a Curriculum Partner.	The programme builds Creativity, inculcates Thinking Skills, encourages Teamwork, strengthens Inter Personal Skills and encourages Imagination.
Blen Spec Stage Theatre and Story Telling Workshops	16 Theatre and Story Telling Workshops by 12 peer educators on 2 locations over 1 month with 130 children (3 to 12 years) of age with implementing partners. With the aim of developing Life Skills using theatre and story telling through observation learning and performance. **A hygiene awareness program**, with certified medical professionals to educate the children and their families on sanitation, personal care and community based cleanliness. o Involving 30 parents from the community at the Nizamuddin Basti. o In collaboration with Home Staff at the Umeed Home for Boys.	Outcomes: Developing Interpersonal and Communication Skills, Coping, Management, Active Listening Skills and Assertiveness. Content: Health, Hygiene and Nutrition, Socio-Cultural Awareness, Civic Awareness
Blen Spec Build Capacity Building and Training for Peer Educators	Capacity Building, to train and sustain 30 young people as Peer Educators to work on 2 Locations with 155 children (ages 3 to18 years) for 1 year.	By conducting 12 capacity building workshops across 3 months on Project Management, Skills Building and Knowledge Building on Child Rights and Development and Human Rights. 1-month placement programme for our Peer Educators with partner organizations that work with children.
Blen Spec Camera Action Digital Storytelling Workshops	A **Digital Storytelling** 2 month workshop series with 25 children (12 to 18 years) with 15 volunteers and 6 peer educators on digital stories and photo diaries on Child Rights and their experiences and aspirations for the future. The children will conceptualize, storyboard and shoot their own stories, producing 8 digital stories. **Implementing Partners:** Adobe Youth Voices and Global Fund for Children Implement 40 classes with children from 3 to 12 years of age over 6 Months, conducted by a team of 8 Peer Educators, to support the children as they mainstream and transition into formal education.	For children at risk, specifically street and slum children, they are personal survivors of many obstacles at an extremely young age, digital storytelling provides them with a medium through which they can recognize and voice the obstacles they face and have overcome. This fosters a positive attitude and the 'awareness creates participation and inclusion, along with promoting self-confidence, awareness and worth among the children. These values and attitudes help children excel in school with curriculum matters and outside[1]'.

[1] Description of 'Children At Risk' from Music Basti Concept Note, August 2010. Copyright, Music Basti/IDEA.

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Blen Spec School The Convention on the Rights of a Child states in Article 28 that *every child has the Right to an Education.* We provide children with assistance as they transition into formal education to support their progress in school.	Goal: To support the children as they mainstream and transition into formal education. Module: 40 classes with children from 3 to 12 years of age over 6 Months, conducted by a team of 8 Peer Educators.	In the past 2 years, we have assisted 110 children transition into school over the past 4 years with a 0% drop out rate.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The programme works with a total of 155 children, between 3-18 years of age, with 100 boys (4 to 12 years) and 25 boys (12 to 18 years) at the Umeed Home for Boys, a home for runaway, abandoned and orphaned children run by our partners Aman Biradari, as part of the 'Dil Se' Government Campaign. We also work with 30 boys and girls (3 to 12 years) belonging to a community of rag pickers at Nizamuddin. Our Digital Storytelling Programme reaches out to 25 girls and boys between 14-18 years of age. We also work with 30 parents from the community at Nizamuddin and 30 young people (16 to 26 years) as well as the home staff at Aman Biradari. Blending Spectrum receives mentoring and capacity building from partner organizations, including Dream A Dream in Bangalore and funders including the Global Fund for Children and Adobe Youth Voices.

TYPF advocates for child rights, working with a network of over 30 schools and colleges in the NCR region, along with many other local, regional and international NGOs, communities, civil society organizations, UN organizations and government. The organization also works with national, regional and international youth networks and forums such as the Indian Youth Climate Network, the Millennium Development Goals Summit 2009, and Students for the Promotion of International Law (SPIL), Today's Youth Asia, Nepal, The Bali Youth Force at ICAAP 9, The Youth Committee of the APCRSHR 2009 and others, with a specific focus on South and South East Asia.

IMPACT (2006-2009)

Key highlights of the impact the programme has achieved since its inception in 2006 include:

- Working with 305 Street Children and training 150 peer educators to work with urban street children.
- Helping 110 children transition into school with 0% drop out rate.
- Working with 100 members of the community at the Nizamuddin Basti.
- Conducting a Life Skills program successfully for 2 years, teaching modules on Hygiene, Socio-Cultural Awareness and Civic Awareness.
- Increasing regular attendance of the children from 50% to 70%.
- Conducting nutrition classes, after which 80% of the children can identify the names of the vegetables and fruits and give them a negative/ positive nutrition value.
- Their parents have noticed a considerable reduction in their junk food consumption.
- Feedback from our partners Aman Biradari has been that the children enjoy the programme and there is a significant change in the hygiene level, where some of the children take initiative on their own to bathe and brush twice a day.
- The President of India recognized the programme in 2008, inviting the children to visit him at Rashtrapati Bhavan.

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NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **Our partners for 2010** are the Global Fund for Children, Adobe Youth Voices and institutionally, the MacArthur Foundation, International Planned Parenthood Federation, UNESCO, International Women's Health Coalition.
- **Our partners in 2009** included the Global Fund for Children and have been supported by corporate companies like IDEA Celullar. Blending Spectrum has been supported by 40 individual donors since 2006.

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