



ASSESSMENT OF EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

JUNE 2018



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DO NOT TRAIN A CHILD TO LEARN BY FORCE OR HARSHNESS; BUT DIRECT THEM TO IT BY WHAT AMUSES THEIR MINDS, SO THAT YOU MAY BE BETTER ABLE TO DISCOVER WITH ACCURACY THE PECULIAR BENT OF THE GENIUS OF EACH.

PLATO (BC 427-BC 347) GREEK PHILOSOPHER

INTRODUCTION

Education is an important tool in the contemporary world in order to lead a dignified life, ensure socio-economic development and open doors to opportunities for persons from all walks of life. Education, although slow and steady can help end the poverty cycle.

Though the government of India passed a Children's Right to (Free and Compulsory) Education Act in the year 2009, popularly known as Right To Education or RTE Act, 2009 - accessing education has never been a cakewalk especially for the underprivileged. The Act details the rights of children between ages 6 and 14 years to free elementary education (Class 1 to 8) and makes it compulsory for the State and the private sector to provide for the same. The 86th amendment in the Constitution of India inserted Article 21-A in the Constitution thereby making the right to education a Fundamental Right.

BACKGROUND

In the year 1986, when Prerana started working with the red light area (RLA) based prostituted women (Victims of Commercial Sexual Exploitation & Trafficking - VOCSET) of Mumbai mostly from Kamathipura, Falkland Road and Vashi-Turbhe in Navi Mumbai, it was noticed that they all were highly deprived and exploited women, against whom a variety of exploitative and discriminatory hierarchies like caste, class, status, power, and gender had conspired.

Besides their economic plight, the lack of formal or informal education was a prominent cause and consequence of their being trafficked into the criminally-organized sex trade. When we initiated the interventions to protect the children of the prostituted women from their inevitable trafficking into the sex trade, by investing in their protection and education, there were innumerable hurdles in our path.

Nonetheless, three factors appeared like a light at the end of the dark tunnel.

1 The strong desire coming from the prostituted women themselves to have their children protected from the otherwise inescapable life in the sex trade, and to provide them with a formal education.

2 A sinister hope among the sex traders that if these children get educated then they would be available for upscaling the sex trade and penetrating the higher slabs in the sex market by catering to the high-class English speaking clients. This factor to some extent sobered their outright and immediate opposition for the formal education of these children. As a part of our strategy, we decided not to disclose all our cards prematurely, or actively and openly challenging or demolishing this sinister hope.

3 The State and Central governments had made significant investments in the education sector in terms of infrastructure and human resources. There was a need to link the two, the victim women as mothers of the children and the state-sponsored formal education system.

The project of providing an impetus for educating the children of the victims of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking (VOCSET) was first commenced at our centre in the Kamathipura RLA. The objective was to enroll the children of the VOCSET women of the RLA in formal schooling.

In the year 1986, we took up drives to have these children enrolled in the local municipal school (State-run public school providing free education). Soon we realized that the women were not aware that they had a right to send their children to the schools in their vicinity and that education in these schools was free of cost. It was also realized that there were severe constraints on the physical movement of these women which had made it almost impossible for them to drop their children to school and pick them up from school on a daily basis.

The daily and nightly schedule of these women was very peculiar and most women went to bed almost by 2 a.m. or 3 a.m. and thus would start their day very late. All these factors had made the schooling of their children almost impossible. Considering the level of education of the mothers and their precarious existence, there was little scope to expect them to actively encourage the schooling of their children through guidance, homework and overall monitoring. It was very clear that the obstacles in the way of the education of these children were too many, unfamiliar, unheard of, extreme and almost insurmountable. The children needed a special, comprehensive, path-breaking, creatively conceptualized intervention.

The Education Support Program was conceptualized and developed in response to these needs and challenges.

A | ABOUT EDUCATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

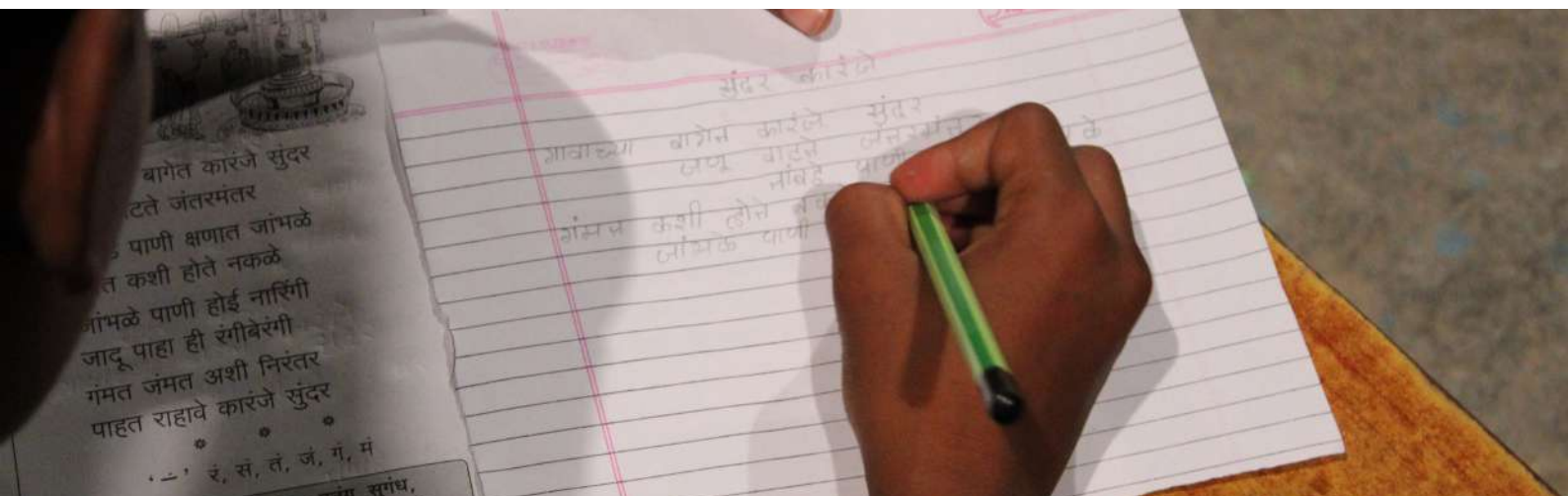
The Education Support Program (ESP) was prompted as a result of one of our priorities for intervention namely ending intergenerational trafficking. The ESP was born out of Prerana's commitment to the children's right to education and aimed at -

- ➔ Providing comprehensive supportive inputs for their sustained formal education
- ➔ Supporting the education of the children and youth of the VOCSET women who were staying in the RLA as well as those children and youth who were placed in outside shelter facilities for long term care and support (yet another flagship program of Prerana for the protection of these children)
- ➔ Providing complementary and remedial education, life skills education, soft skills and personality development inputs besides the routine formal education
- ➔ Sponsoring children to suitable vocational training programs such as driving, computer programming, para-professional social work, para-medical work, catering and hospitality, for employability and eventual economic self reliance etc.

The Objectives of ESP are -

- To instill amongst the children and their mothers from the RLA the critical importance of a formal education
- To create smooth access to formal education for these children
- To block and remove any hurdles in the way of formal education of these children
- To ensure that all the facilities of formal education are made available to these children
- To ensure that every child of the RLA-based prostituted woman is enrolled in formal schooling right from the primary level if he/she is of the right age
- To offer the option of Open Schooling to the children who were ineligible to be admitted at the primary level because of over-age or other similar factors
- To help these children in every way possible to successfully cross the important milestones in formal education
- To provide need-based remedial education at different levels for these children
- To provide complimentary education to these children

- To provide Life Skill Education over and above formal education
- To provide the services of clinical psychologists, child psychiatrists and psycho-social counselors to the children with learning disabilities and/or behavioral problems that adversely affect their learning and education
- To facilitate maximum learning, curb stagnation in the same standard/grade and dropout rates from schools
- To tackle the issues of maladjustment with the school and other institutes of higher learning
- To protect the children and youth from any perceived treatment of stigma or discrimination
- To encourage these children and their mothers to invest in the formal education of the children
- To provide vocational training or job placement for those children and youth who for some reasons could not pass the 10th standard/grade
- To contribute to the holistic development and education of the children and youth by conducting -
 - Life Skills Education
 - Career Sessions
 - Stress & Time Management Sessions
 - Peer Educators Project Sessions
 - Dancing Feet Sessions (dance tuitions)
 - Other recreational and educational activities
- To instill a sense of ownership and responsibility among the children and their mothers through peer educators and children's collectives
- To routinely interact with the school teachers to discuss the progress of these children and solve the issues of maladjustment if any
- To provide relevant, important inputs and micro-level insights to the policy-making bodies and processes





1. OUTREACH PROGRAM

The outreach component was essential in Prerana's intervention owing to the peculiar, extraordinarily unpredictable, and precarious life of the prostituted women and their children living in the RLAs. The education of the children greatly required the active involvement of their mothers and the ESP strove hard to ensure that. However, the education of the children could not be made conditional to the sustained participation of the mothers.

The ever-changing situation in the RLA was forever potent with shocking surprises and each surprise could affect the education of the child. Sitting and waiting for the children to come to school regularly and retain interest in education regardless of their mother's status (and at times in situations of their mother's disappearance for whatever reasons) would not have worked.

Reaching out to the children, going from brothel to brothel, every morning and evening, was indispensable. This became a permanent activity of the Outreach Team (ORT) right from the beginning.

The ESP could not have been successful without an extensive, vigilant and active outreach component. The Outreach Team of Prerana evolved to meet this requirement.

The team makes regular visits to the brothels to;

- Identify the children who are of right age, but not yet enrolled, and get them enrolled in schools
- Ensure that the children attend school regularly
- Remove the hurdles in their way of attending school regularly
- Accompany the children to school in some cases if the mothers could not drop them to school

- Where necessary bring the children to the Night Care Centre (NCC) after school hours
- Interact and conduct meetings with the mothers
- Encourage the children to attend the Study Classes in the evenings
- Share information about opportunities for curricular and extra-curricular activities offered by Prerana through its centres, and those offered by other organizations in the neighborhood
- Reach to youth who have dropped out of school, encourage and assist them to re-enroll or give alternative options to complete education or enroll in livelihood skills training

2. MIGRATION VISITS - The Extension of Outreach

The sudden disappearance of the prostituted women from Kamathipura and Falkland Road RLA's was not a new phenomenon. It has been noticed in the past as well. Mostly the sex traders used to keep the women and their children circulating among a number of RLAs in and around Mumbai. Prerana's Outreach Team focusing on child tracking used to reach out to such places. Over time the mandate of Prerana's outreach efforts and teams changed and as such its scope was expanded to accommodate the changing circumstances in and around the RLAs.

Since 2000, there has clearly been a visible trend of women moving out and being moved out of the Kamathipura and Falkland Road RLAs to areas which are not conventional RLAs. Even some of the women who have moved their place of residence outside the RLA, are still required to come down to the Kamathipura and Falkland Road RLA's for soliciting purposes. The Outreach Team contacts these women as well. In this document, for operational convenience this shift of residence is termed as migration of the once trafficked women.

An RLA is an extremely dynamic phenomenon that hosts a criminal trade involving considerable financial turnover. The Kamathipura and Falkland Road RLA's were established under the British Rule near the ports for the sexual pleasure of the British sailors and soldiers. They were also set up in the mainland areas where cantonments were set up. The port cities became the centers of subsequent industrial, commercial and political growth. The Kamathipura and Falkland Road RLA's, as one can easily see are hot locations in the real estate market. All around these RLAs the skyline is fast changing with a number of new skyscrapers. Naturally, the land occupied by the sex trade is being eyed by the land sharks, real estate developers and builders. The real estate market is now vigorously working to expel the sex trade and raze the existing buildings to build new corporate offices and swanky high-rise residential buildings. The anti-trafficking action on the part of the police has also added to the closures of many brothels. While the benefits of the change of hands is mostly enjoyed by the owner of the buildings and the occupants (almost always the brothel keepers), the victim women do not get to share the proceeds of the sale. Many of them have been shifted to other places far outside the outskirts of Mumbai.

Whenever during its outreach visits, the ORT learns of the shift of residence of a woman, it makes every possible effort to reach out to that woman, via phone or in person, by gathering all the information needed to find her new address.

The ORT workers of Prerana visit their new residences to ensure proper protection and continued education of their children. This is particularly crucial when the child is not institutionalized and continues to stay with the mother. A migration visit is then conducted to the new place of residence. The agenda of this migration visit is to find answers to the following questions:

- Is the new area safe and habitable for the child?
- Is the child attended to and cared for?
- Is the child's education getting negatively affected?
- Is there a need to find a new school in that area for the child so that his/her education is not negatively affected?

Besides addressing many other issues, an attempt is made to provide a sustained and secured residence (24-hour shelter at the existing facilities of Prerana) to such children when possible, at least during their examinations if not on a regular basis.



3. STUDY CLASSES

School education has changed over time. Besides becoming more and more competitive it has added to the workload of the students that inescapably spills well beyond the schooling hours, making the child work extra back home with parents sharing a part of the workload (although this is typically done to ensure parental involvement in the education process). The large-scale educational systems such as the public sector primary education cannot help but evolve and rigidly stick to a certain pattern that always leaves some gap between the students and her/his class.

The nature of the children Prerana serves, and their only parents (the mothers') existential condition being peculiar and especially disadvantaged, this gap remains un-bridged unless a special structural provision is made. Prerana's Study Classes act as the special provision that not just bridges this gap but tries to accomplish something far beyond the routine coaching classes found mushrooming all over the Indian cities.

At the minimum, the Study Class aims at reinforcing what the formal educational system aims at giving to the students, namely knowledge, skills and attitudes, but it does not end there. The specially trained teachers dedicate hours and exclusive attention to the students grouped according to age and standards/grades.

STUDY CLASS

Runs between 6.00 pm and 8.30 pm, 5 days a week

Starts with the reading of a newspaper

Helps the students complete their home work

Takes a stock of what has been covered in the school on that day and ensures that the students have understood it and there are no gaps or questions left unanswered;

Provides remedial and supplementary education

Engages the students in activities for acquiring a variety of soft skills aimed at bringing out creativity and facilitate the manifestation and expression of their latent talents;

Encourages the students to think 'out of the box'; and Uses the chapters from regular school text books to accomplish the above objectives. This way the regular curriculum gets completed and appropriately reinforced.

While the large-scale public educational systems aim at producing a standard 'run-of-the-mill' product, the Study Class under ESP by contrast helps the students explore and identify their healthy individuality and to cherish and nurture it.



4. TEACHERS' MEETINGS

Needless to say, that teachers play an important role in the development and education of the children. The ESP invests in the teachers and involves them actively in the development of the children well beyond the classrooms. The Teachers' Meetings held at all the centers on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of every month are organized to gather the feedback from the teachers on the overall progress of the children and to check the follow-up.

In these meetings, the teachers are encouraged to discuss different teaching methods. They are helped to understand and adopt a variety of ways to deal with the various behavioral patterns of the children.

The ESP team appreciates the teachers' inputs on the educational needs, development and capacities of the children. These meetings help the ESP team keep pace with and coordinate better with the classroom activities. They foster a team approach to the education of the children. The selection of the topics to be used for the monthly educational sessions with the children, too, is covered in these meetings.

If any suggestions related to the teaching and the Study Class activities are received through the Suggestion Box or during the *Ekta meeting*, then they, too, are discussed in these meetings.



5. MOTHERS' MEETINGS

The Mothers' Meetings that are held once in 2 months serve as a platform to share information and facilitate discussion on various matters that concern the mothers with regards to their children, they are as follows:

- School routine & discipline
- Mothers' interaction with the schools
- Issues of adjustment at the schools
- Effective Parenting
- Information on activities conducted by the ESP and their objectives
- Information on the availability of scholarships
- Behavioral difficulties encountered by the children
- A child's need for holistic nutrition and other health issues
- Counseling on building a healthy relationship with the children
- Providing sustained support to their children
- Anger Management
- Mothers involving themselves actively in their children's educational development
- Giving suggestions to strengthen the ESP



6. EKTA - CHILDREN'S COLLECTIVE

The spirit of Ekta (meaning Unity) is based on a child's right to participate as enshrined in the UNCRC-1989 as the fourth category of child rights. Ekta is a voluntary, democratic and self-regulatory collective of the children of the RLA-based prostituted women from the three RLA's that Prerana works in.

All children of ESP above the age of 12 years participate in the Ekta group meetings. These meetings are based on the principle of equal participation and democracy. They provide a platform for discussion on different issues so as to involve the adolescent and youth in the functioning of the ESP. This process fosters a feeling of belongingness for the children. It also lets them know that they have a say and the power to transform their life and future.

The **Suggestion Box** (SB) was introduced in the year 2000. It's a locked box that is in place for children to anonymously drop-in their suggestions without any peer or adult pressure. It is placed in an accessible corner of the ESP room that the children frequent regularly. The lock is only opened by the staff in front of the children once a month during the Ekta Group meeting where each and every entry is read and openly discussed.

With due acknowledgement of the fact that every child may not feel comfortable to submit to Prerana his grievance or suggestions openly in a group the tool of Suggestion Box was introduced by the ESP team.

The SB provides the children with an additional and confidential channel to voice their grievances and opinions and submit their suggestions for the programs. The children have a choice to keep their suggestions anonymous or to include their identity.

At no point are they asked to disclose their identity when their suggestion comes under the spotlight during the meeting. Going by the inputs in the SB one can observe that the children are very alert, perceptive and expressive. Wherever follow-up is required based on the suggestions, the same is planned and the point is followed up in the subsequent meeting.

A typical Ekta group meeting is characterized by discussions on:

- Planning of activities and forthcoming events
- Individual cases
- Children's interests
- Child Guidance Clinic (CGC), counseling services and reasons for referrals
- Preparation for celebration of festivals
- Planning of the Summer Camp
- Vocational training
- Pulse Polio campaigns
- RLA based activities such as awareness building
- Enrolling children in school and in the NCC
- Suggestions related to the program

Once every 6 months, a Chairperson is elected through elections based on universal suffrage. The Chairperson is responsible for convening the meetings. The aim of the Ekta group is not only to engage the children in their self-development through enhanced leadership, critical problem solving, team building and effective communication but also to help them create and enjoy a supportive environment.

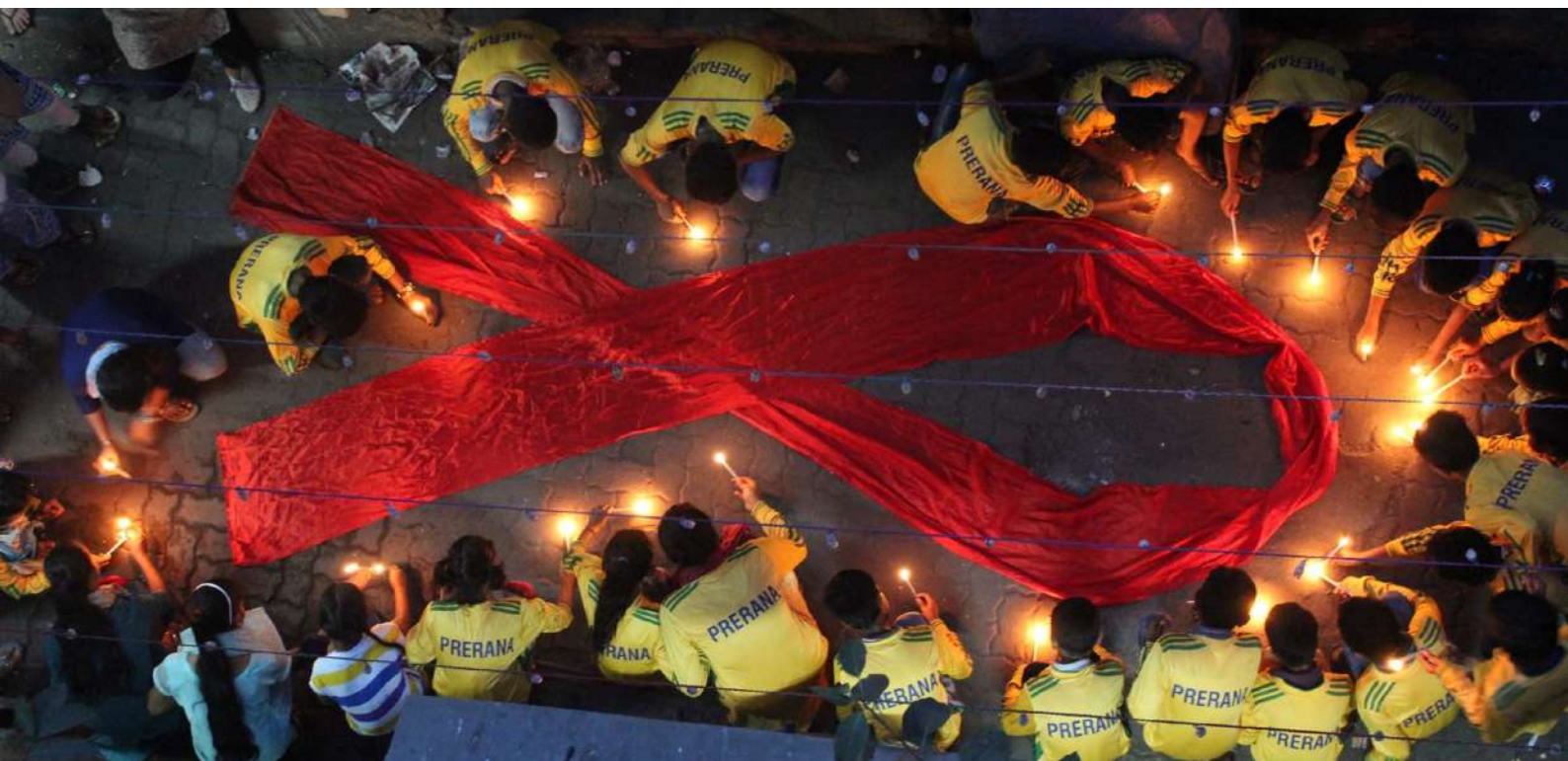
During the six months, if the Chairperson decides to step down, new elections are held. If the Chairperson moves to a Children's Home or any other Shelter/Child Care Institution, then a new Chairperson is elected through a freshly conducted election.

7. LITTLE STARS

The Little Star is a body created within the organization comprising children between the ages of 6 and 11 years. Since the Ekta group is a body exclusive for children of 12 years and above, the Little Star was created with a purpose of providing a democratic platform for the younger children to voice their opinions, ask questions and/or deliver suggestions.

It encourages participation from the younger children to discuss various topics like school issues related to the NCC, study class, nutrition and such others. It has been observed that when the children are made aware of an upcoming Little Star meeting, they come prepared for discussion on the agenda.

The Little Star meeting happens once a month and is supervised by the ESP team and the NCC Supervisors. The session starts with a review of the previous month's meeting as a follow up to gather feedback from the children it then proceeds to listening and understanding each point of view followed by an open discussion on the topics highlighted.



8. PEER EDUCATORS (PE)

The Peer Educators Project is based on the evidence-based premise that a properly supervised and monitored peer influence can help accomplish many tasks especially in the domain of behaviour modification. The creation and engagement of Peer Educators generates a larger support base to any project aiming at bringing about behavioural change. It also trains people (in this case, the children, adolescents and the young adults) in taking on higher social responsibilities.

The Peer Educators Project was set up in the year 2000 at all 3 centers for children between the ages of 13 and 22 years to volunteer to serve as and be trained as peer educators.

Since its inception its major focus area has been addressing issues around HIV/AIDS care and support, handling stigma and discrimination and creating an open platform to discuss prevention of HIV among the peers.

The Peer Educators specifically help other children, youth and their mothers in the RLA by focusing on the followings:

- Disseminating appropriate messages on HIV/AIDS
- Facilitating care & support services and their utilization by sharing of information about services among the peers
- Fostering gender sensitization

- Fighting stigma & discrimination
- Reaching out for early detection and referral
- Serving as a support group to HIV affected children and youth in the Centres
- Creating awareness about children's rights

Moreover, the periodic meets of the PE also provide information related to HIV and AIDS such as:

- Pre-Post test counseling
- Consent and confidentiality in testing
- Myths regarding HIV and AIDS
- Human rights of persons living with HIV and AIDS
- Leadership skills; and understanding one's role as a stakeholder

A team of competent resource persons trains the PE's during the weekly sessions. After they have covered a certain topic, the PEs usually spread awareness about the same in the RLA through street-plays and skits.



9. LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION (LSE)

Life skills education refers to a large set of psycho-social and interpersonal skills that promote mental well being and leads to a healthy and productive life. Health is defined in its broadest sense as a state of complete physical, social and mental wellbeing. The ESP prioritizes LSE since it is a good way to ensure the holistic development of the children. These sessions are conducted twice a month in different age groups (7 to 9 years and 10 to 14 years).



10. CAREER SESSIONS

Career sessions are conducted with children in order to prepare them early on in their life to take informed decisions about the selection of appropriate careers for themselves. This requires timely exposure to information on various career options such as the set of qualifications required to reach those careers and where to get them from. The ESP organizes career sessions for this purpose once every two months.



11. STRESS & TIME MANAGEMENT SESSIONS

Children of RLA-based prostituted women whether living in the RLA or shifted to external shelter facilities/Child Care Institutions come from a traumatized background filled with uncertainties.

As it is, generally all the children, in their roles as students, face extreme examination-related stress due to the highly judgmental nature of the examinations, its decisive role in determining the access to future careers, the cut-throat competition therein and the extreme importance laid on 'doing very well' in those exams. In the case of the RLA-based children, the stress is multiplied. Unlike the mainstream children, the RLA-based children do not get the whole-hearted support of a family. Exam-related anxiety and stress affect them severely.

Excessive stress affects them physically, psychologically, emotionally and even reduces their ability to use their mental capacities optimally. The preparations for the exams and the technique of cracking the exams also have a lot to do with time management. Twice every year, Prerana organizes **Stress and Time Management (STM)** sessions for the children from 7th Std and above.



12. VOCATIONAL TRAINING & JOB PRE-PLACEMENT

At Prerana, every child is encouraged to pursue her/his formal education even after the 10th standard/grade, through to whatever levels he/she aspires and is capable of. Some children for one reason or another cannot manage to continue their formal education in the mainstream system. They are encouraged and actively helped to continue through the Open Universities like Indira Gandhi National Open University or Yashwantrao Chavan Open University.

In the same way, some children do not manage to continue their formal education especially after their 10th exam or 12th standard/grade exam (high school graduation). They are encouraged to take up **vocational training/skill development training** in order to secure a sustained livelihood at the appropriate age. Such children/young adults are then referred for vocational/livelihood training programs.

The ESP also looks for the job placements of these young adults and conducts orientation visits with them before they take up any employment. Partnerships with organizations like the Taj Group of Hotels, Kotak Mahindra Foundation, Tata Consultancy Services, and SoftPro helps these young adults trained in their respective fields and take advantage of the employment opportunities.



13. CHILD GUIDANCE CLINIC (CGC)

It is essential that children who encounter behavioral and/or learning difficulties be referred to the counselor and then if the counselor feels necessary the case be referred to a psychiatrist. The **Child Guidance Clinic** of Prerana fulfils that function effectively. A professional counselor visits the Center once a week at the FR and KP centers and once a fortnight at the Vashi-Turbhe centre. Occupational therapy and speech therapy are conducted, when required, by referring the child to nearby public hospitals. Depending on the need and recommendations of the experts, IQ testing, Children's Apperception Testing (CAT) and Rorschach tests, too, are conducted by referring the child to the nearby public hospitals.



14. DANCE THERAPY

The Dance Therapy is a session conducted once a week in each center. It is a session conducted by a trained professional who is also a part of the organization. It is an attempt to use dance as a physical workout, an art to learn and as a medium of expression.

It is offered to all the children from the ages of 18 months to 18 yrs. Each session has 30 children who are divided into groups age-wise. Children from the ages of 18 months to 5 years attend a session of 30 minutes, while children from the ages of 6 years to 12 years attend a session of 45 minutes and children from the ages of 13 years to 18 years attend a session for an entire hour.



15. BALAK UTSAV (CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL)

The **Balak Utsav** is Prerana's annual entertainment program for celebrating the Children's Day. This is a fun-filled show where children and their mothers participate in big numbers. Participating in the preparations for Balak Utsav is an unparalleled experience in developing individual and social skills. It involves skill building activities from participation, planning, decision making, team working, monitoring, communications and fostering a competitive team spirit. The preparations run over several weeks.

The Balak Utsav offers a platform for the children to show their talents by way of performance and management. It is an extremely rewarding experience for the mothers to witness their children giving a high-quality performance on a public platform and getting rewarded for their various accomplishments. Children who accomplish something extraordinary get congratulated by a dignitary. The mothers are also recognized for their performance to foster the protection, care, development and careering of their children. The Balak Utsav represents a moment of pride, and invokes a sense of accomplishment for everyone involved. It is an event where children and their mothers are felicitated.



16. PICNICS, OUTINGS AND EXPOSURE VISITS

These are a mix of educational exposure and active recreation for the children. The children are taken to factories, corporate offices, media channels and a variety of organizations for the purpose of gathering knowledge and gaining exposure. They are also taken to other places of entertainment and edutainment such as the zoo, aquarium, public parks and amusement parks. Such outings are organized according to age groups. Children participate in the selection as well as overall planning of such outings and exposure visits. As a result, besides having a fun-filled exposure, the children also get trained in performing socially important roles in their adult life.



17. CHILD TRACKING & CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Every child covered under ESP has a unique ID number. That number helps to not only maintain a database but also facilitates the tracking of every child over his/her journey with Prerana. An updated report of the inputs given and progress made by the child is captured in what is termed as the 'individual report'. The individual report of each child is updated every fourth month. Once a month, the ESP team discusses certain cases in the case management meetings that require high attention and support.



18. SUMMER CAMP

The Summer Camp begins on 15th April every year, when the schools close for summer vacation after the final exams. The main purpose of the Camp is to engage the children's minds into activities that fuel creativity and learning so they don't hang around in the RLAs to get exposed to the dangerous activities and influences innate to the RLA. Prerana's Summer Camp is spread over 45 days. It consists of educational visits, competitions and other non-competitive team based activities spread across the city. The planning of the summer camp includes suggestions and ideas of the children, sought in the Ekta group meetings. The staff brainstorms for innovative activities and visits so that it will fuel the interest of the children in the camp making it a joyous experience for them. Together the activities for the summer camp are finalized. Each day has an agenda of activities to be conducted and it is displayed in a chart form to the children. The Summer Camp ends with a prize distribution and celebration of the students.

B | OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSESSMENT

- To understand how the Education Support Program is understood and accessed by the intended beneficiary children
- To assess how much could they recall from the various activities under the ESP they had participated in
- To understand the nature of participation of the children in the programmes under ESP
- To get suggestions and feedback from the children to improve the ESP appropriately

C | DATA COLLECTION METHOD

The tool for data collection was a semi structured interview guide. The interview guide is attached as annexure 1.

Fifteen child respondents in the age group of 11 years to 17 years were interviewed from the three centres namely Kamathipura Area – NCC 1, Falkland Road – NCC 2 and Vashi-Turbhe centre - NCC 3. The children were selected by simple random sampling. Only those child beneficiaries were selected who were the beneficiaries of the Education Support Program for at least 2 years.

D | CONSENT

An oral consent was sought from each child in order to conduct the interview. All the children consented for the interview.

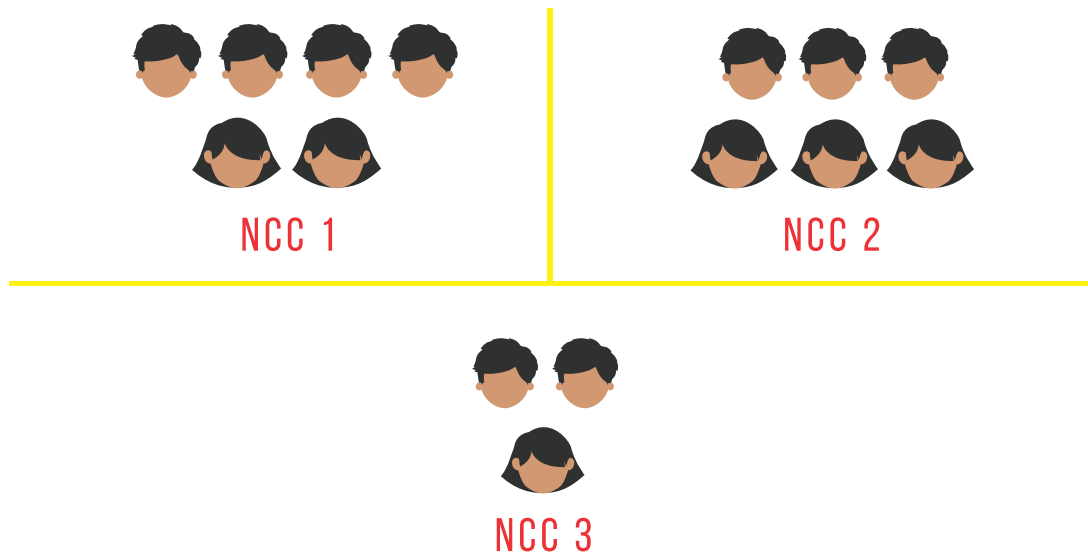
E | VENUE OF THE INTERVIEW

The child respondents were interviewed at their respective NCCs such as NCC 1 – Kamathipura Centre; NCC 2 – Falkland Road Centre and NCC 3 – Vashi-Turbhe centre.

F | PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Centre-wise distribution of children

The number of children participating in the study were 15. There were 4 boys and 2 girls from NCC-1 centre, there were 3 boys and 3 girls from NCC-2 and 2 boy and 1 girl from NCC-3.



Gender-wise distribution of children

The gender distribution of children is shown in the figure 2. There were 6 girls and 9 boys who participated in the study.

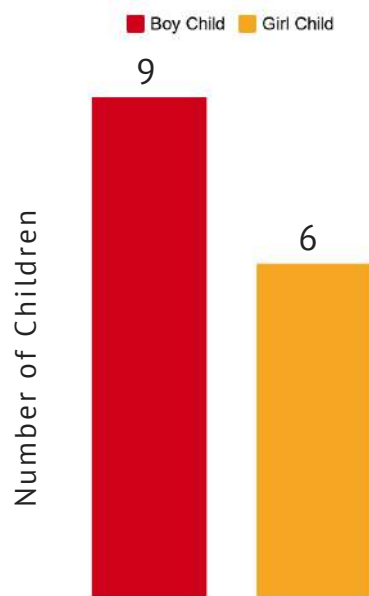


Figure 1: Gender-wise distribution of child participating in the study

Education levels of children

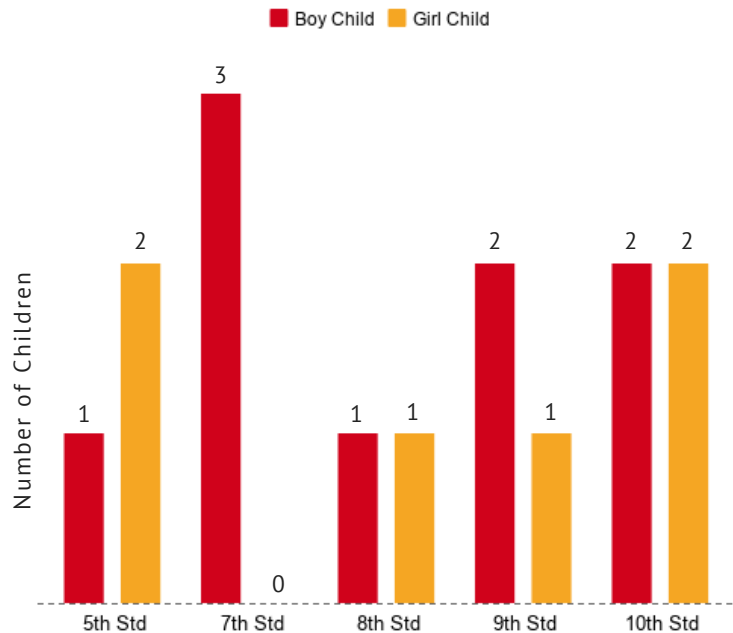


Figure 2: Distribution of children as per their education level

The figure 3 shows the number of respondent children and their educational levels. All the respondent children were attending formal mainstream schooling.

Of the 15 respondents, 2 boys and 1 girl were studying in 5th std. No respondent belonged to the 6th std. 3 boy respondents were studying in the 7th std. 1 boy and 1 girl respondents were studying in the 8th std. 2 girls and 1 boy studying were in 9th std and 2 boys and 2 girls were studying in the 10th std.

G FINDINGS

i. STUDY CLASS

From Protection to Progress

Safety is one of the major concerns when we talk about children who are born in the RLAs. Prerana's intervention in the RLA began with introducing the Night Care Centre to these children. All the children who participated in the interview first benefitted from the Night Care Centre Program and then eventually became beneficiaries of the Education Support Program on having been enrolled in school.

All the children attending the Night Care Centre attend study class starting at 6 pm. The members of the staff come in by 5 pm to organize their lesson plans and plans for the extracurricular activities. A prayer is conducted for about 10 minutes which is followed by an exercise round and then the snacks are distributed. Snacks generally include *chana* (legume), egg *pav* (bread), omelette *pav* (bread), *rasna* (flavoured juice), *poha*, *sabudana khichdi*, *upma*, *chikki*, dates, banana, and egg. After eating their snacks, the children assemble for their curricular sessions.

There are teachers at each Centre to teach the children. Teachers focus on teaching the basics of every subject such as: English, Hindi, Marathi, History, Geography, Sciences and Mathematics.

They help the children understand each subject better. They also help the children with their homework. Some of the children require extra attention. Both traditional means and modern technology are used to teach the children; they are encouraged to be creative, imaginative and innovative. After the study class, children can benefit from the Night Care Centre services on the same premises (Centre).

The next morning, the children who attend the morning section of school (i.e. 7 am), leave for school and the rest of the children who attend the afternoon section (i.e. 12:50 pm), attend the Study Class from 9 am to 12 pm. In this particular study class, the children participate in extra-curricular activities, they receive guidance with their studies and the teachers revise what was taught in school. This includes watching Discovery Channel, and YouTube videos on Animal Planet

They are also given general knowledge, and basic English words that will help the children to associate with words such as: table, mugs, cups, kennel, as well as vowels and multiplication tables. The content is based upon the knowledge of early child education. Children who attend morning Study Class are in the age group of 6 to 12 years.

The average attendance of children attending Study Class from October 2017 to March 2018 for girls in NCC 1 is 14.17 and for boys is 40; for girls in NCC 2 is 21.33 and for boys is 40.33; while for girls in NCC 3 is 13.33 and for boys is 14.17.

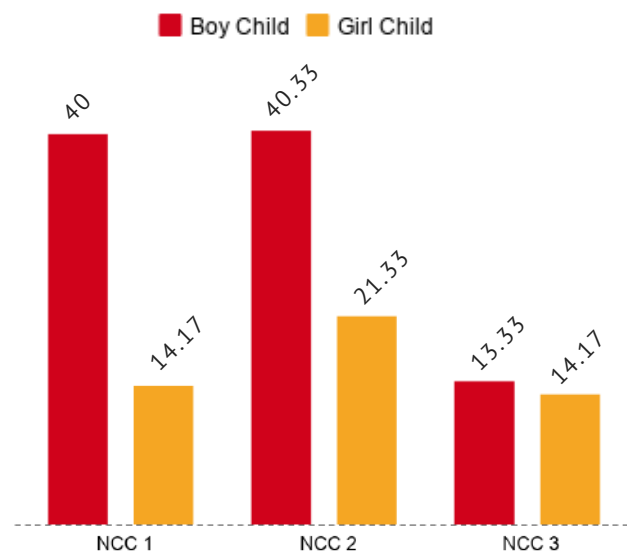


Figure 3: Average attendance of children attending study class at each NCC from October 2017 - March 2018

Children who are studying in 10th std receive special attention from teachers and staff members. A balance is maintained between study and play for children. Some girls, who participated in this assessment, shared that they attend the Study Class during the evening hours and then stay in the Night Care Centre (NCC) as they feel safe and protected in the NCC during the night as against staying in the *basti* (RLA). Later, in the morning, they go and spend time with their mother in the brothel. (During the morning hours mothers don't mind their children visiting them in the brothels as by then all the customers have left the brothel)

Initially, when my mother admitted me in Prerana's Night Care Centre (NCC), I was 8 years old. I eventually started attending Balwadi and Study Class of Prerana. I didn't know how to read or write. The teachers taught me how to read and write. Gradually, I was enrolled in school by Vaishali tai. I would attend school in the morning, go home (brothel) meet my mother, spend some time with her. Then she would come to drop me at the NCC. Then I would attend study class and stay at the NCC. Teacher would explain to me one word at a time. Slowly I learnt English and then I learnt to complete my homework all by myself.

- Sufiyan, 17 yrs, studying in 9th std, Night Care Centre 2; attending NCC since he was 8 years old

I am studying in 10th std. Hindi is an easy subject but I would really work hard for English, Mathematics and Science. The teacher helps me to study these subjects. I also attend private tuitions for these three subjects apart from attending the Study Class at the Kamathipura centre. I want to clear 10th std at any cost.

- Arif, studying in 10th std, availing services of Prerana for 5 years

ii. CHILDREN'S COLLECTIVE & SUGGESTION BOX

I have right to participation and decision making

All the staff of the Night Care Centres encourage and facilitate participation of children. This is carried out through Children's Collective called *Ekta Gat*. All the 15 children shared that there are *Ekta Gat* meetings held minimum once in a month and maximum twice a month. There are also joint *Ekta Gat* meetings conducted to discuss the issues that are collective and a matter of concern in the RLA.

During the interview, the interviewer also inquired if only a few children were given the chance to speak or whether all the age groups get equal opportunity to speak. To this, all 15 children very emphatically stated that each child gets an opportunity to speak and put forth his/her views.

All the 15 children shared that during the *Ekta Gat* meeting, some of the agendas that children discuss are menu preference for the next four months (as the menu is reviewed every 4 months), teaching methodology, concerns about the study class, themes for the upcoming Balak Utsav, concerns about school and the RLA.

One of the children from NCC 3 mentioned that a combined *Ekta Gat* meeting involves children from NCC 1 and 2. The 3 children from NCC 3 shared that the children from NCC 3 are unable to attend the combined meeting since the meeting takes place at Falkland Road (NCC 2) in the evening and travelling from Vashi-Turbhe (i.e. NCC 3 location) is not feasible. All the children from NCC 3 shared that they have Children's Collective named Suraj Gat and they meet once every month.

During the Ekta Gat meeting, we talk to bai (staff) about anyone who has misbehaved or share about child/children who use abusive language towards the other child, or the staff chewing tobacco, while on duty. Then the bai talks to the staff who chews tobacco. Children are encouraged to talk about anything and everything that they feel is bothering them.

- Amrin, 11 years old, NCC 1, attending study class for the past 3 years

All the 15 children very confidently shared that each centre has a Suggestion Box. Children who feel shy, diffident or want to share something but are unable to share their concerns and suggestions in a larger group write it on a piece of paper and drop it in the Suggestion Box. This Suggestion Box is opened once in a month during the *Ekta Gat* and *Suraj Gat* meetings all the notes/chits from the Suggestion Box are read, discussed and solutions are found collectively. Children can choose to remain anonymous and their concerns or issues are still taken up and discussed collectively and solutions are evolved.

There is a Suggestion Box at each Centre. If I want to say something about any problem which I cannot voice openly then I can write it on a chit and drop it in the Suggestion Box. When there is a joint or Centre-wise Ekta Gat meeting the staff member opens the Suggestion Box. They pick up the chits one by one and discuss them and solutions are found.

- Amit, 13 years old, NCC 2, attending NCC for the last 7 years

There is an open house meeting that takes place on 26th January and 15th August every year. During this open house meeting, all the children and young adults who have moved out from NCC and ESP attend the meeting and share their concerns, challenges and progress. We are encouraged to give our suggestions and opinions on the concerns.

- Tanya, 17 years old, studying in 10th std, availing Prerana's services for 9 years

If any child faces problem at the Centre or in the RLA, they bring it up during the Ekta Gat meeting. For example, if someone has hit me then I will talk about it in the meeting. If we have problems at home or if someone is not going to school then we report the same during the meeting and then the teachers take note of it. In the next Ekta Gat meeting, they also update us on what action was undertaken as regards those suggestions.

- Payal, studying in 5th std, availing Prerana's services for 6 years

The *Ekta Gat* and *Suraj Gat* meeting is facilitated by staff members or is conducted under staff supervision.

One of the members of the *Suraj Gat* from NCC 3 centre shared, 'Everything that has been discussed in the meeting is noted down in the register and it is notified to staff members at the main centre (Falkland Road Centre). Then there are *didi's* who come to the centre and inspect the activities held at the Centre, if there is any renovation/refurbishment (physical structure of the building) required then it is taken forward from there.'

The steps are taken, the process and the updates on the refurbishment are then shared with the children in the *Ekta Gat/Suraj Gat* meeting. This also gives an encouragement or confidence to children that their opinions matter. The program encourages children to speak up, share ideas, nurtures creativity. *Ekta gat* and *Suraj Gat* (Children's Collective) meetings are also a platform for the discussion on behaviour modification and emphasis the need for effective communication.

iii. LITTLE STARS

Just like *Ekta Gat* and *Suraj Gat* meeting, there is another group of children who participate in the meeting namely the Little Star meetings. The children between the age group of 6 to 11 years who participate in this meeting are called Little Stars. The objective of the meeting is to help children voice their opinions. This is also a platform for behaviour communication and modification. During the Little Star meeting, children get rewards for their desirable behaviour. Desired behaviour is defined as children who maintain personal hygiene, cut their nails on weekly basis, keep their bags and books organized, wear neat and clean clothes, complete their homework, follow rules at the centre, do not fight, do not bully others, do not use abusive words, take as much food as they want but do not waste it, and progress towards eating healthy/nutritious food. All this desirable behaviour is shared and discussed with the children every month. The children who do not maintain or follow the rules are encouraged to follow and may not get stars (Part of Behaviour Modification system) for not responding positively to the rules.

Behavior modification is based on the principles of operant conditioning, that replaces undesirable behaviors with more desirable ones through positive or negative reinforcement.

Behavior modification is a therapeutic approach designed to change a particular undesirable negative behavior. By using a system of positive or negative reinforcements, an individual learns the correct set of responses for any given stimulus.

*Desirable behaviour means whether you maintain personal hygiene or not, if the hair is properly oiled, if the nails are cut or not. So *didi* (staff of *Prerana*) checks everything. The children whose nails are long, they are given nail cutters for cutting nails and during star system reward, those children get nail cutters as a gift (laughs).*

- Rahul, studying 9th std, availing *Prerana* services for more than 9 years

iv. CAREER SESSIONS

We can do much better with information on career options

All the 15 children shared that there is a career session conducted for children who are in the age group of 12 and above. The topic or field of the career session are shared/suggested by the children and staff during the *Ekta Gat* or *Suraj Gat* meeting. Children also shared that for the last 3 months there was no session conducted because of constraints in finding a resource person. The children shared that this challenge was shared by the staff with the children during the *Ekta Gat* meeting.

Some of the sessions that were conducted in the past were regarding careers in Medicine (Doctor), Interior Designer, Merchant Navy, Police Officer, a career in law (as specific as a Lawyer and a Judge) and Photography. Children also shared that they like listening to these career options because they provide information on qualifications required, how to get there? What are the fees? What is the salary received by the person in that career? Which universities or colleges offer course, degrees and job placement? These sessions are conducted by experts in the respective field.

One of the children mentioned that there are no sessions conducted at Vashi Turbhe centre (NCC 3) but children travel to NCC 2 centre to attend these career sessions.

v. STRESS MANAGEMENT

This is how I keep myself calm

Stress Management sessions are conducted for children who are studying in 7th std and above. These sessions are organized twice in a year. Resource persons who are subject matter experts are invited to conduct these sessions. 4 children respondents who were below the age of 14 shared that they do not attend this session since it is for older children (children who are 14 years and above). The children who attended these sessions and participated in the assessment shared that stress management session is an opportunity to learn how to deal with stress during exams, exam pressure, preparing 'to do lists' during exams, tactics to write exams and need to ensure that the answers are crisp, how to manage or channelize anger etc.

Following children participated and attended the Stress Management session. See the table below:

Sr. No	Dates of Stress Management Workshop	The group that attended the workshop	Number of children/ students attended the workshop
1	29.1.2017	10th std to graduation	43
2	5.3.2017	7th to 9th std	48
3	17.8.2017	10th std to graduation	73
4	17.8.2017	7th to 9th std	37

Table 1: Number of children participated in Stress Management session

Please note: Children who study in between 7th std and under graduation and are living in Night Care Centre, Child Care Institution and Group Home participate and attend the stress management session along with children who avail from the Education Support Program.

Sandeep bhaiya (Resource person) would say that when exams are approaching, we should not start studying the day before the exam. We should study much before and right before the exam we should be calm and revise what we have learnt earlier. With last minute learning, we could hardly remember what we had learnt earlier. We should keep our minds fresh before the exams.

- Pooja, 17 years old, studying in 11th std, availing Prerana's services for last 15 years

Stress Management sessions are for students studying in 7th std and above. Bhaiya (Resource Person) gives us tips on how we can better manage our stress, how to prepare for board exams. Our English is not good so we are given tips to improvise on our English Language skills.

- Nisha, 17 years old, studying in 10th std, availing Prerana services for 5 years

vi. DANCE THERAPY

Dancing Feet

Dance is a form of expression. At Prerana Dancing activity takes place minimum twice a month and maximum four times a month. All the children during the interview shared that they not only like dancing since it is fun but they use their dancing skills in creating awareness in the community (RLA) on various issues. Some of the issues that they have campaigned and created awareness are about HIV and AIDS, not selling tobacco products to children below the age of 18 years, child trafficking, children who go missing and many more.

During the interviews, children also shared that first, they receive enough knowledge from the *didi* and *bhaiya* (staff members of Prerana or volunteers/interns) regarding the issue and then, they along with the staff, sit and prepare the script.

Children who are passionate about dancing or interested in making a career in choreography, are provided with opportunities, shared 2 boys. When enquired about the importance of dancing in their daily life one of the boys shared '*it helps me channelize my energy and control my anger*'.

We use dance as a medium to spread awareness about HIV and AIDS, stigma and discrimination related to HIV and AIDS in the community and many different places during the Ganesh Chaturthi festival celebration.

- Amit, studying in 7th std, availing Prerana's services for 7 years

In one of the Ekta Gat meetings, one child shared that he gets tired after dancing and therefore chose to say “No” to the dancing activity.

- Firoz, 13 years old, studying in 7th, availing Prerana’s services for 2 years

All 15 children shared that there is a Children’s Festival (cultural event) popularly known as “Balak Utsav” among the children of Prerana. This annual festival takes places usually in the month of December or January every year. There is a committee comprising staff from Prerana and children that collectively decide the theme and plan this event. Besides dances, some children perform magic shows or showcase their singing talent. Children and youth who have achieved success in education and vocational training are felicitated. Similarly, every year a few mothers are selected and felicitated as an “Ideal Mother” for their involvement in raising their children, for fighting all the odd to ensure that their children are protected and their dignity is restored. Children and young adults practice dance as per the theme and present it to the audience comprising mothers, children who are now young adults and moved out from Prerana, and other guests. On 17th December 2017, Children’s festival was organised at Kamathipura Municipal School. The theme for the 2017 Children’s Festival was “Incredible India”.

vii. RESIDENTIAL AND SUMMER CAMP

Camping during vacations is something we all look forward to

All 15 children shared that summer camp is organized to provide children with constructive activities during the summer holidays. In the absence of such activities it is observed that during holidays with a lot of free time in hand, children and young adults tend to wander in the community (RLA) and get lured into harmful and destructive activities. During the summer, there is a non-residential camp which is for 6 weeks where children get a platform to showcase their latent talents, participate in numerous activities, receive exposure to new ideas and explore their creativity etc.

During the interview, all 15 child respondents shared that the purpose of the Summer Camp is to keep children away from the negative influences of the RLA. They stated that it was unsafe for children to wander in the RLA especially in the evening without any responsible adult supervision. In absence of any constructive activities the children tend to roam around and become vulnerable to harm, abuse and various forms of exploitation.

While responding to the questions children used terms such as “roaming around in the RLA”, “not a good thing” and “unsafe in the evenings”.

The Summer Camp begins at 11 am and continues to 4 pm. There is a break at 4 pm. Then we can eat snacks, those who want to go and visit their mothers in the basti (RLA) can go and return and then at 6 when everyone is back we start with another round of activities. We play different games in the morning and in the evening. Once we played a game where we had to light 4-5 candles with only one matchstick. At the end of the Summer Camp

the winner gets prizes and gifts. We also go for an outdoor camp, on the last three days.

- Jay, 11 years old, studying in 5th std, availing Prerana's program for 6 years

One of the child respondents from NCC 2 shared that during the summer holidays children live at the brothel (to the child it is home) and have no school. Learning the fact that they can be lured into any unsafe situation, the mother prefers that her child stays at the NCC. Children also shared that when there is holiday they cannot stay with their mother and, therefore, roam in the RLA, go to the nearby garden to play or ride their bicycle.

We get two months of holidays, i.e. April and May. During these holidays, children tend to be influenced by men and other young peers who are unattended or without any adult supervision. Since the school is closed the children do not study and tend to forget what they have learnt. By coming to the NCC children get to participate in numerous activities as well as study. This helps us to stay away from the 'bad' company.

- Pooja, studying in 11th std, availing Prerana's services for 13 years

One of the child respondents recalled that there are snacks given during the Summer Camp. Some of the snacks provided to children are *pani puri*, *sevpuri*, chinese *bhel*, banana and egg, *bhurji pav*, sandwich. There is also an activity called Khana Khajana, where children are given a small amount of money and are asked to prepare low-cost food, without using fire and present it to staff members. There is one staff allotted to each group for supervision and to ensure safety. The process of choosing a menu is democratic. This activity also teaches them money management and budgeting.

Another child shared that at the NCC 1, there is limited space and therefore they go to a nearby public playground to play games and conduct outdoor activities. Yet another child from NCC 3 centre shared that they do not have open ground and, therefore, the majority of their activities at the Centre are indoors. There is a public playground which is away from the Centre.

The 3 days Residential Camps are also organized during the summer months. The purpose of the camp is to take the children out of their regular routine and organize visits to places that will give them exposure and real-life experiences. '*Safety and protection of children are the highest priority during the camp*' shared one child. While interviewing the children, they shared that in the year 2016, the Residential Camp was organized at Malad JJ Nursing Home.

In the year 2017, the Residential Camp was organized at Panchgani located at Mahabaleshwar, a famous Hill station. The schedule of the camp is prepared with the participation of the children and with the involvement of the staff. Some of the activities that were planned during the 2017 Residential Camp were a visit to the Mapro factory, games, sessions on personality development, a visit to BelAir hospital - understanding their work with HIV positive persons, sessions on First Aid and lots of recreational activities.

viii. PSYCHO-SOCIAL SUPPORT

I have a didi who understands me

The mental health of all the children is a crucial component at Prerana. Children are vulnerable to a variety of traumas and assaults in the RLA and one can never predict how the environment of the RLA affects the mental status of the children living there. During the interviews, the questions about what kind of psycho-social support is provided to the children at the Centres were asked to all of the children. Children promptly shared that they have a *didi* (*didi* is associated with a Counsellor and to the staff of Prerana) to talk and share. There is also *bhaiya* (*bhaiya* is associated with the male staff of Prerana).

All the children stated that the counsellor is a person with whom they can talk and share anything and everything and the *didi* (Counsellor) maintains confidentiality. Children at all the Centres willingly meet with a counsellor. They approach the staff of Prerana themselves and inform them that they would like to meet with a *didi* (Counsellor). After sitting on one to two sessions, the staff of Prerana follows up on the child and gives feedback to the counsellor.

If something is bothering me, then I can tell Counsellor didi. We can talk to her alone and she maintains confidentiality. She helps us find solutions and if there isn't a solution then she talks to us about it and mutually we find a way to deal with the problems.

- Firoz, 17 years old, studying in 10th std, availing Prerana's services for 5 years

All the children shared that they can talk to any staff/social workers (with whom they feel comfortable to talk) about their problems and concerns. They also shared that there are individual sessions conducted with the children (these sessions are different from the counsellor's session). Children shared that there was no counsellor for four months (June to September 2017). They also added that during these four months it is the Social Workers (staff of Prerana) would conduct individual discussions with children.

I and all the children at Prerana are aware that we can talk to Reehan bhaiya, Vaishali didi or any staff that sits in the office, any time and regarding anything that bothers us. They always listen to us.

- Aarti, 14 years, studying in 8th std, availing Prerana's services for the last 3 years

All the 15 child respondents during the interviews shared that they like talking to a counsellor and sharing their concerns. They are confident that the counsellor will keep the matter confidential unless it's a life and death situation. All the 15 children also added that counsellor will take them into confidence and then share the matter with the concerned person if it is very serious.

ix. PEER GROUP

Let's create a movement (campaign)

Peer Group is an activity where children in the age group of 12 to 18 years participate in creating awareness about social issues in the red-light areas and other slum communities. The means of creating awareness are dance and drama performances, performing flash mobs on the streets, street-plays and many more. For the last 3 years, the peer group has been creating awareness about HIV, AIDS and child trafficking - 'Every 8 minutes a girl child goes missing' and the latest is an anti-tobacco campaign - 'No selling of tobacco to children below the age of 18 yrs'.

At Peer group, we spread awareness about HIV/ AIDS and stigma discrimination. The initiative began in 2001 when our bhaiya and didis (then peer group) saw the problems in our locality and thought of taking some action. So, at first, the group began awareness program in our locality (RLA) about HIV/AIDS but later we got to know that lack of information is not only a problem in our locality but also in other areas. Therefore, we started awareness programmes on HIV/ AIDS and stigma and discrimination in different areas.

- Jay, 11 years old, studying in 5th std availing Prerana's services for 6 years

The peer group campaign is carried out throughout the year, that is, during Ganesh Festival holidays and Diwali Festival celebrations, at Children Homes across Mumbai, and other institutions that invite our peer group to create awareness on HIV and AIDS.

11 of 15 children shared that they are also members of the peer group and attended a visit to Snehalaya, a Child Care Institution that works with people living with HIV/AIDS, located at Ahmednagar (a district in Maharashtra), Bel Air Hospital. The group also visited a shelter facility in Nashik (City in Maharashtra). The rest of the four children shared that they do not qualify for being part of peer group but they look forward to it.

These eleven children also shared that before disseminating the information to the public on HIV/AIDS, not selling tobacco to children below the age of 18 years and child trafficking - they were given detailed information and an orientation on the issue. *Bhaiya* and other older children, collect information and based on that information the children and Prerana staff create a script for dance and drama performances.

It is then demonstrated in front of the other staff and children. This exercise is participatory involving learning and the dissemination of the information at the same time. Three children from NCC3 shared that they couldn't participate much in creating awareness at NCC 1 and 2 but they actively participate while there is campaigning at NCC 3 centre and in the Turbhe RLA.

X. SCIENCE CLUB

Experiments are fun to perform

Most of the children shared that they like Science Club activities as the children get to participate in a plenty of 'hands on' science experiments. Children also informed that the Science Club activities are not conducted by in-house staff but a group of people from a Pune-based organization named Sunday Science School (SSS) who visit the centre and engage children to perform experiments. The SSS also brings the experiment materials for children to have a hands-on experience. There is a blend of theory and practical learning during the session. Additionally, there are volunteers that screen sci-fi films and engage children in discussions thereupon.

The experiments that are taught to children are from the daily life experiences. For example, how does a metro train function? What is photosynthesis? How to generate electricity from potatoes and citric fruits? How to make kaleidoscope and use it?

All the children also shared that during the Summer Camp, there are topics chosen by the children and put into a ballot box. Then all the children are divided into groups and the group leader has to pick the topic. Once the topics are chosen, children get about 2 hours to prepare the experiment and showcase it. 2 staff act as judges and give marks to the presentation based on the knowledge and participation of the group. Children are also encouraged to bring in their own experiments during this process.

In Science Club we learn about science experiments. We perform science experiments through different means, like last year we experimented with magnets, how metro functions, we used balloons and tried holding it above the candle and it wouldn't burst. Such experiments are fun to perform.

- Amit, 13 years, studying in 7th std, availing Prerana's services for 7 years

Sometimes the bhaiya and didi show us a sci-fi movie, for example, we watched the movie "The Core", we also made cars using motors, wires, LED, magnet etc. We have kept everything here (at the centre). If there is another science session then we take the experiments out again. We make different things with these experiments.

- Sufiyan 17 years, studying in 9th std, availing Prerana's services for the last 8 years

One child emphasized that the children who are regular to Science Club get an opportunity to attend exposure visits. As part of exposure visits the children are taken to places like a museum, Nehru Planetarium, Nehru Science Centre, Science Centre located in Pune, Mapro Jam Factory and many such places that will give them information. All the children shared that they like such activities and visits.

Children also shared that for the previous 6 months (from September 2017 to January 2018) there had not been any sessions because resource persons were not available.

When asked how did they know that? The children shared that they were informed accordingly during one of the Ekta Gat meetings. Child participation and involvement in decision making is a very crucial component at Prerana. Staff members go to the children and inform them regarding the progress and also discuss the end result of the activities. This leads to the children's sense of responsibility and right to be informed.

xi. PRERANA CHOIR

Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti

'At Prerana we have many extra-curricular activities' shared one of the child respondents. Children participate in many activities and one of them is 'singing'. The singing activity is organized once a week, sometimes on Wednesdays or Thursdays. There are about 18-20 children who participate. There are volunteers from Song Bound who come and teach singing. 8 out of 15 children shared that they like singing because it makes them feel better and it helps them to relieve stress. Children sing songs in English and in Hindi.

Two children also shared that they didn't like singing earlier but after attending the session they began liking and participating in it. Children added that after a series of sessions and mastering a song, they get to perform in front of an audience. This motivates them to do better. 'This also enhances our confidence', shared one of the girls. About three boys shared that children get an opportunity to sign up for the activity. There is no compulsion on choosing any activity.

The singing activity takes place at the NCC 2 centre. When asked why it only happens at NCC 2 centre, this child responded that there is a space crunch at NCC 1 and there is lot of space at NCC 2. Children are escorted by staff members on the day of the singing activity.

I know there is singing activity but I don't want to participate in it. We are informed during Ekta Gat meeting about the activity. The children who want to participate they raise their hands (they sign up for the activity).

- Amrin, 11 years, studying in 5th std, availing Prerana's services for 3 years

I started liking singing after I came here. When I was new here (at NCC) I did not know what takes place at Prerana. But gradually I found out. I found out that there are singing classes here (at NCC), and I asked Vaishali bai and she said I can go and attend the same. Then I started attending the classes. Tamara didi taught us singing. After I started attending singing activity regularly, I began enjoying it too. I had never learnt singing earlier. They wouldn't teach us singing in school either. So now I enjoy it.

- Aarti, 14 years, studying in 8th std, availing Prerana's services for 3 years

One of the children from NCC 3 shared that he only sings in Church and not at the Centre. He also emphasized that there is no major singing activity conducted at the Centre. Another child from NCC 3 shared that there was a staff member that conducted the singing activity but since she left, there was no singing activity.

The singing activity took place at NCC 3 when there was another staff named Kavita didi. After she left, there was no singing activity. She used to make us sit together and sing Marathi songs. We have discussed during the Suraj Gat meeting that we would like to participate in singing activity.

- Nisha, 15 years, studying in 10th std, availing Prerana's services for 4 years

Children repeatedly shared that all the children at all the Centres are encouraged to participate in extra-curricular activities and not just studying.

PUPPETS SHOWS, QUIZ COMPETITIONS, xii. STORYTELLING & NEWSPAPER READING ACTIVITY

All the children shared that there are various methodologies used to inculcate value-based education. The means used are puppet shows and storytelling. Basic information like maintaining personal hygiene, being polite and humble, being caring and helping, empathizing is discussed with the children.

Children who belong to the age group of 14 and above get an opportunity to work with the teachers and prepare their own story. The children come up with topics and share it with the staff. One of the children shared examples of how they write scripts and perform in front of the children.

Children along with the teachers participate in conducting puppet activity on topics such as exam preparation, personal hygiene etc. The topics are suggested by children and staff members.

- Sufiyan 17 years, studying in 8th std, availing Prerana's services for the last 8 years

Children also make puppets by recycling objects - 'best out of waste'. Occasionally two children volunteer for the activity and under the supervision of the teacher prepare the storyline and present the idea. Then the two children perform the puppet show and share their learning. Children also shared that during the monsoon, winter and summer seasons, teachers and staff conduct a session teaching the measures that should be taken with regard to health care, using a puppet as a tool. Towards the end of the session, there is a discussion around the message. Staff members also read out stories to children and discuss the messages understood by the children, added the children. These activities are conducted before the study class and not during study class, stated a child.

Quiz Competition

Quiz competition is another activity that takes place every Friday from 8 pm to 8:30 pm. All the information and knowledge disseminated during every week is then taken up in a quiz competition with children. Some of the children are divided as per the age group 6 to 10 years and 11 years and above. First, basic information is taught to the children and then a quiz is devised around that particular information. Children are divided into 3 to 4 groups and each child gets an opportunity to answer within the group. There is a spirit of healthy competition created among the children. The group that answers the majority of the questions gets a star which is then added in the behaviour modification result.

Quiz competitions are held every Friday. Children wait for the competition as it is fun to compete and receive points, which is then added to our star system sheet (Behaviour Modification). There is sportsmanship. From Monday to Thursday, we read newspapers and discuss other general knowledge information. On Friday, bhaiya and didi ask us questions on the information shared with us during the week or month. Therefore, it is fun to participate as we have had some prior preparations.

- Manish , studying in 10th std, availing Prerana's services for the last 3 years

One child from NCC 3 shared that he couldn't attend any quiz competition as he is unable to come to the Centre while the quiz competition is taking place. When asked why he couldn't come for the quiz competition he shared that since he goes for private tutorials he is unable to attend the quiz competition. Whereas other children shared that they participate in quiz competition just like children at NCC 1 and NCC 2.

Other questions asked to all the children were whether they benefit from the quiz competition, to which 8 out of 15 children shared that they like the quiz competition since (a) they find the process enriching (b) they get to learn a lot (c) their general knowledge increases (d) they all enjoy the competitive spirit.

Newspaper reading activity

'Reading the daily newspaper is an important activity for us', shared many child respondents. The day's newspaper is read out at all Centres immediately after the daily prayer. All the children shared that the newspaper in three languages mainly Hindi, Marathi, and English are read. The initiative is taken majorly by older children along with the teachers. Selected articles are read to the children, not the entire newspaper. After reading the newspaper there is a discussion that takes place with the children. The news articles are then analysed collectively.

I along with Mahesh bhaiya read the newspaper in Marathi and then explain it to children. Reading newspaper helps us to understand about current situation in the country.

- Pooja, 17 years old, passed 11th std, availing Prerana's services from 15 years

The newspaper reading exercise takes place for around 15-20 minutes. Some of the highlights of the news that children shared included: (a) a boy studying in Ryan International School was murdered (b) demonetisation – its merits and demerits (c) daily events, sports (d) the super blue blood moon. All the children from NCC 1 and NCC 3 shared that majority of children that attend the Study Classes understand Hindi, therefore, teachers and elder children read out the news in Hindi.

There are times when didi (staff of Prerana) reads the newspaper and then asks us to read it aloud. The language of the newspaper is in Marathi and those who do not understand Marathi language, didi explains it to them again. Everyone gets a chance to read the newspaper article turn by turn.

- Amrin 11 years, studying in 5th std, availing Prerana's services for 3 years

Story telling activity

Much like the Puppet show storytelling activity is used as a means of disseminating a value-based message. It takes place on alternate days or as planned in a week. All the children shared that the stories are brought in by teachers and only children below age 14 years attend the activity. Additionally, each story has an ethical message which is discussed with the children.

Among the children who were interviewed for the assessment, the children who were above the age of 14 didn't talk about storytelling activity much. They shared that storytelling activity is for younger ones and not for them.

Storytelling is for younger children. I remember it when I was a child, I used to attend the activity but as I grew older I stopped attending. Instead, I spend time studying.

- Suraj 15 years, studying in 8th std, availing Prerana's services for 3 years

xiii. LIFE SKILL EDUCATION (LSE)

Life skill education is one of the important components of ESP and NCC. All the 15 children added that there are life skill education sessions conducted with children at all the Centres. The sessions are conducted by the in-house staff.

One of the girls very confidently and fearlessly spoke out, "Only I can touch my body and no one else. Only my mother can touch me, a doctor can touch me but in my mother's presence".

- Amrin, 11 years old, studying in 5th std, availing Prerana's services from 3 years

Life skill education sessions are conducted at each Centre. The age group that attends the LSE sessions are as follows.

Sr. No.	Age group	NCC	Girls participating	Boys participating
1	11 years and above	NCC 1	3	11
2	13 years and above	NCC 2	8	5
3	9 years to 12 years	NCC 2	6	5
4	11 years and above	NCC 3	4	7

Table 2 Gender-wise distribution of children availing Life Skill Education Services

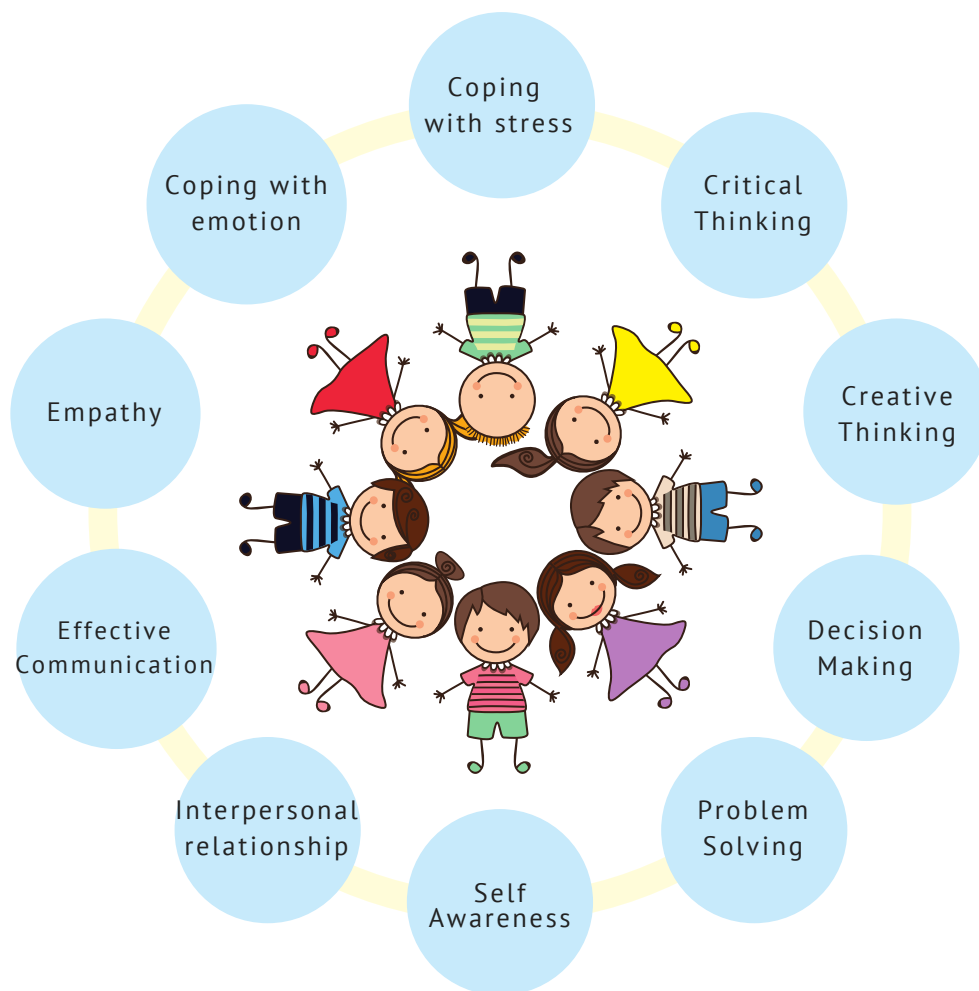


Figure 4: 10 core Life Skill Education

Some of the topics that the children shared during the interview are; communication, anger management, stress management, knowing myself, body mapping, decision making, gender, interpersonal relationship and creative – “out of the box thinking”. The medium of conducting the sessions are games and other activities. One of the boys shared that he likes attending life skill education because it is more of activity and no lecture.

Didi conducted a game named Chinese whisper. During this game, we whispered a sentence in the ear of one child who was sitting next to me, this child will then whisper the same to another child and so on. The exercise will continue till the last child in the circle listens to the statement. The result is that altogether a different statement is narrated by the last person. From this exercise we learnt the importance of communicating clearly, listening and asking if we don't understand what is communicated.

- Sufiyan 17 years, studying in std 9th, availing Prerana's services for the last 8 years

CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS

xiii. SHARED BY CHILDREN

All the children shared that they like all the activities that are held under ESP. They appreciate that there is high participation of children in all the activities and that the children get an opportunity to take the lead.

All children shared that they want to be part of ESP until they reach the point where they no longer need Prerana's support, where they have decided on their career path and have a job and can sustain themselves. The suggestions given by the children are as follows:

- The place at NCC 1 Centre is small making it difficult to study because all children sit in one room. Therefore, there should be more rooms for studying.
- There should be a dedicated teacher at NCC3 who can teach subjects like Mathematics, English and Science to students who are in 9th and 10th std.
- Study tables should be arranged for children in the study class.
- If a teacher is showing a video then it will be clearly visible to all children, if it would be on a large screen and not on a laptop screen. A projector and a large screen are required. The frequency of dance therapy, singing activity and drawing activity at NCC 3 should be increased.
- If teachers can be more creative in teaching it will help the children learn better.

There is only one teacher here (at NCC 3 centre), so even the teacher finds it difficult to pay attention to students from all classes. It would be better if there was a dedicated teacher specially for teaching Maths, Science, and English. I feel like maybe because there are only a few students here (at NCC 3 centre) from the 9th and 10th standard that is why there is a problem. There are only 2 students from 10th. It is really important that we improve our Math and English because we have to give our board exams soon.

- Manish, studying in 10th std, availing Prerana's services for the last 3 years

H | CONCLUSIONS

The overall exercise was successful in enhancing our understanding about the way in which the children understand the Education Support Program. Primarily, how much do they understand and the manner in which they access those services? The exercise helped us to understand what the beneficiary children could recall from the activities they went through under the program. It threw light on the nature of their participation in the program. The children gave several suggestions which will go a long way in revising the program, in order to make it more effective.

The fact that children are able to voice their opinions by different means results that there is child participation. The program revolves around children, enhancing their quality of life and providing with opportunities to study, learn and flourish. The program does not have a top-bottom approach but a participative perspective during the implementation. Children have suggested creative teaching, bringing in technology, more number of science activities and exposure visits that will help them in learning.

ANNEXURE

Interview guide for Assessment of the Education Support Program

1. Ice breaking game with the child
 - a. Name of the child
 - b. Studying in std _____
 - c. What are your hobbies?
2. Balwadi
 - a. Is there a Balwadi at Prerana?
 - b. What time is the Balwadi conducted?
 - c. Did you attend the Balwadi?
3. Study Class
 - a. Is there a study class at NCC?
 - b. What is the duration of the study class?
 - c. What do you learn at study class?
 - d. Is there a teacher at study class?
 - e. How many teachers are there at study class?
 - f. What does the teacher teach?
 - g. How does the teacher teach?
 - h. Does the teacher use any innovative method to teach?
 - i. What all do you do at study class?
 - j. Do you get food at evening study class?
 - k. What all food items do you get?
4. Ekta Group
 - a. Is there a collective at NCC?
 - b. What age group of children are the members of the group?
 - c. Is there any criteria to be selected at Ekta group? If yes, why? If no, why?
 - d. Is there any platform to discuss the issues of children?
 - e. What are some of the issues and concerns that children discuss?
 - f. Who moderates the discussion?
 - g. What happens at the end of the discussion?
5. Little Star Meeting
 - a. What is little star meeting?
 - b. What is the purpose of the little start meeting?
 - c. What happens at the little start meeting?

- d. Why do you get gifts?
- e. What all gifts do you get?
- f. How does the teacher/staff decide to give away the gift?
- g. What is the process of getting stars?
- h. When is the meeting conducted? How many times in a month is the meeting conducted?

6. Career Sessions

- a. Are there career sessions conducted at the centre?
- b. What all career sessions have been conducted in the past 6 months?
- c. How does the staff decided as which career session to be conducted?
- d. Does the staff conduct the session or get a resource person to conduct the sessions?
- e. How many times in a month a career session is conducted?

7. Stress Management Session

- a. Is there a stress management session conducted at Centre?
- b. Why is there stress management session conducted?
- c. Have you attended any stress management session?
- d. Who conducts the session?
- e. What is the learning that you have gained from the stress management session?

8. Dancing feet

- a. Is there any dancing activity at the centre?
- b. Who conducts the activity?
- c. What do you do after learning a particular dance?
- d. Has the dancing activity helped you in any way? If yes, how?

9. Residential and Summer camp

- a. Are there camps conducted at the centre?
- b. What all camps and where is it conducted?
- c. What do you mean by residential camp?
- d. What do you mean by summer camp?
- e. Are the activities of both the camps similar?
- f. Who decides the activity for the camp?
- g. Does the staff/ teacher ask you for suggestions?

10. Counselling services

- a. Are children provided with counselling services at centre?
- b. When is the child referred for counselling services?

- c. Have you ever availed counselling services?
- d. Would you like to share some as why were you referred to a counselor?
- e. Does the staffs talk and interact with children in the absence of counselor?

11. Peer Group

- a. Is there any group apart from ekta group?
- b. What is peer group?
- c. Who are the members of Peer group?
- d. Do children willingly participate in peer group?
- e. What all activities are conducted under peer group?
- f. Where are these activities performed?
- g. What all themes and topics have the peer group worked upon?

12. Science Club

- a. Is there any club called science club?
- b. Who facilitates science club?
- c. What all activities are conducted under science club?
- d. Do children get the material from home or the staff provides it?
- e. Please name your favorite activity?

13. Song Bound/ Prerana Choir

- a. Is there any singing activity at the centre?
- b. Who conduct singing for children?
- c. How many times in a week do children practice singing?
- d. Do you perform singing on any platform?
- e. Why do you think singing is important?

14. Puppet Show

- a. What all themes/ topics are conducted with a medium as puppet show?
- b. Who conducts puppet show?
- c. Do children get a chance to participate?
- d. What topics have children covered and how?

15. Quiz competition

- a. What is quiz competition?
- b. Who ask questions?
- c. Do all the children get to answer or only few answer?

16. Newspaper reading

- a. Is newspaper reading conducted at the centre?
- b. Which language newspaper are read and by whom?

c. Does all children get a chance to read the newspaper by coming in fore front?

17. Story telling

a. Do staff/teachers share stories with you/ children?

b. What stories and topics does the staff/ teacher share?

c. What are some of the moral of the stories that you have learnt?

18. Are there any other things that you would like to talk about ESP?

19. Are there any suggestions and feedback that you would like to share?

