

FRIENDS

Newsletter of the Ragpickers Education & Development Scheme (REDS) Bangalore, India
Volume 2 - Issue 1 January 2004

Children's Day – 14th November 2003

November 14th 2003 'Children's Day' was an event that was looked forward to by the children of REDS both in Bangalore and Ranchi. In Bangalore like every year a Mela was organized at the Nanda Football Ground – Austin Town. It was a day of fun and frolic for the children in an attempt to give them a glimpse of childhood they have lost through no fault of their own. Guest for the day were Ms. Sridevi daughter of Mr. Muniswamy, MLA - Shantinagar, Mr. Jabben Taj Salman and the headmistress of Corporation School – Shivajinagar.

The day began with registration and breakfast being served for the children. Nine hundred and three children from the areas and local corporation schools participated. The children were welcomed with balloons being given to each of them. Stalls were put up where chance games were organized for the children. The Sacred Heart Brothers organized games and prizes were given away to the winners. The Augustian sister's organized games like fire-in-the-mountain and musical chairs for the smaller children. The children also enjoyed rides on the merry-go-round and giant wheel, which was put up. Parivar Seva Sanstha was given a stall and they gave information on adolescent health and behavioral changes to children who visited their stall. The last event for the day was what they were all eagerly waiting for – the orchestra. They sang the local hit songs to which the children danced. The day ended at 4.00 pm with gifts and snacks given to all the children.

A Sports and Cultural Event was organized at the **Skill Training Center – Bangalore**. 500 children from the REDS – STC and students from standards 5th – 7th of the local government school gathered to celebrate this day. The inaugural program began with a prayer song by the boys of REDS. Ms. Jayanthi – Education Coordinator, Anekal Taluk, inaugurated the program Ms. Jayanthi and Dr. Rani – Prof. At the UD program, Deepahalli, inaugurated the day with the lighting of the lamp. A cultural program followed where the REDS boys and the School children put on a song and dance program.

Sports events were organized for the girls and boys separately. The Augustine Sisters and the Salvatorian sisters helped with organizing the games. All the children participated in a delicious lunch that was served. The students of the REDS – STC had to test their might against the Marianist Aspirants of Deepahalli in a Volleyball match. The day ended with a concluding program.

At REDS - Ranchi this day was also celebrated as REDS – Annual day. The 6th Annual day was celebrated at St. Xavier School – Doranda. The Rev. Fr. Rector of St. Xavier School not only allowed the use of the school for the program, he also gave six school buses to transport children from the areas we work in. We would like to thank him for his generosity.

Fifteen hundred children and their parents from the areas we work in and other dignitaries participated in the program. The day began at 10.00 am with an inaugural program. Mr. J.V. Francis was the chief guest who inaugurated the program with the lighting of the lamp and children of REDS performed a prayer dance. In his inaugural address he was very supportive of the REDS program and wished us well in our future endeavors.



The children put up a number of cultural programs. Mr. J.V. Francis gave prizes away to REDS children participating in both the Formal and Non- formal education program. Children who stood either 1st or 2nd in their respective classes and centers were given awards. The program ended with a vote of thanks from Bro. Basant Kujur - Director of REDS. A delicious meal was prepared which the children and staff of REDS shared.

Christmas

Christmas was a time of joy and sharing. On 7th December Bishop Cotton Boy's School and on 20th December Jyothi Nivas College invited our children for lunch. 500 children participated in this program. At both places the message of Christmas was shared with the children. Games and cultural programs were organized for them. The day ended with lunch for the children. The children enjoyed themselves and had a lot of fun.

On 23rd December a get-together was organized for the children from REDS who had been admitted to school. Ms. Anu one of the members of the Marianist Lay family and her friends organized a Christmas party for the children. 35 children participated in the games and cultural programs that were held. Ms. Anu sponsored snacks and gifts for the children. This program was followed by a meeting with the mother's of the children. They were given feedback on how they children have performed at school. The issue of savings was also discussed.



Bro. Albert shared with the staff about the carol-singing program. 9 children from Vinayakanagar slum, Bro. Joseph, Thiru and Sr. Theresa were involved in the program along with Bro. Albert. He said that this was a good experience for all of them and thanked Sr. Theresa for her involvement. This year the group went to new areas – religious houses in Cox Town. Rs. 2500/- was collected and gifts were bought for the nine children.

Carol singing was organized at Ranchi too. Children and staff visited different areas of Ranchi to spread the message of Christmas from 15th to the 19th of December. A gathering was organized for the children on 23rd. A cultural program was organized and children sang carols and gave dance performances. Bro. Edward and other Marianist brothers were present at the occasion. Children were given snacks and gifts. Blankets were also distributed to the children.

Christmas get-together was held on 24th December for the boys of REDS – STC. Guests of honour for the day were Bro. Richard, SM and Fr. George, SM. Cultural events were organized and the day ended with lunch.

News in Brief

REDS – BANGALORE

...Street Presence

The ventilation program, a half-day program held once a month for the children in the areas has gained much momentum. This program not only gives the children time to relax & share their problems, it also gives the Street Educators precious time to interact with the children in an atmosphere that is poles apart from the atmosphere at the shop where they come to sell the paper they have collected. In-door and out-door games are conducted to lighten the atmosphere and encourage children to participate. Children are also asked to draw and color. This program not only brings out the talents in the children, it also serves at a therapeutic session, as children are asked to draw pictures of incidents/people who have made them angry or hurt them in that week. This is followed by a serious session. Resource persons are invited to talk to the children on hygiene and health related issues. Discussions are also organized for adolescent boys and girls on topics like "Reproductive health & STD" "HIV & AIDS" "Marriage & Family life"

Together with awareness programs on health issues, children are given an orientation on training programs available. They are taken to the REDS – Skill Training Center at Deepahalli, here the children interact with the staff of the training units and the children, who motivate them to join the center. In the last two months 10 children from the areas have been sent to the Skill Training Center but 4 of them returned. Some of the boys though interested are unable to go immediately since they are indebted to retail shop owners.

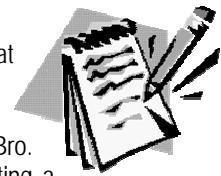
Non-availability of space at Koonapnagar Agrahara meant the play school had to be closed. The good news is that a new place belonging to the Saksharatha Samithi has been identified and they have given permission to REDS to use the room to conduct NFE classes for the ragpicking children and children on the streets.

...Play School

Individual files have been created for each of the play schools containing photographs of the children, their case profiles and monthly attendance. Old clothes that had been collected during the month of November '03 and were distributed to the children. The play school teachers participated in the Chili-Pili Mela – a training program on creative teaching organized by Promise Foundation. All children at the Play school have been provided with slates. A get-together was held for the Play schoolteachers on the 23rd and gifts were given. Children were also given sweets on the occasion of Christmas.

...Non - Formal Education

A new NFE center has been started at L.R. Nagar for Ragpicking children and another center at Ranjedra Nagar will begin in the month of January '04. These centers will offer bridge course to Ragpicking children and children who have dropped out of school to enable them, after 6 months to go back to school. Though the programs at these centers at present in vague, Bro. Joseph who coordinates this activity is working hard at streamlining the activities and creating a definite program. Children at the NFE centers have been provided with slates. In the coming month children workbooks designed by Dr. Azim Premji Foundation will be used to.



...Solid Waste Management

In the last News Letter we had spoken about 'Chintana' - the initiative of REDS to network with other NGOs in the city of Bangalore to address the issue of Bangalore City Corporation starting the door-to-door waste collection service affecting the very source of income of those involved in Ragpicking. A meeting with the organisations will be held in the month of February '04 to discuss this issue and find solution to this problem. This is not the only option available to address this situation. The field staffs have been taking to the children about this problem and motivating them to either go back to school or opt for training. In the past three months 12 children involved in Ragpicking have been motivated to enroll themselves for the Skill Training program at REDS – STC.

...Self Help Group

Developmental programs were organized for the members. On 1st Dec they participated in a rally held by KCDC on AIDS Awareness and on 2nd Dec. they participated in a Rally held by Mobility India on World Disability Day. On 10th Dec. 'Human Rights Day' an Awareness program was held for the members.

Total Number Groups – 62

Total Number of members – 906

Total Savings – 90,203.00

Total Loan taken – 3,75,210.00

Total repaid- 3,30,876.00

REDS – SKILL TRAINING CENTRE

... A total of 58 children are presently undergoing training or attending formal school at the REDS - STC. 45 boys are attending the Skill Training Courses, 13 boys are going to school. 5 children dropped out of the training program.

On 8th December Rev. Fr. David Fleming, SM and Bro. Javier Anso, SM of the Marianist General Administration visited the Units and were given a brief on the program. A new school bus has been given for the use for REDS – Bangalore & Depahalli. Fr. Iggi and Bro Darwin blessed the bus.

... Carpentry

Orders worth Rs. 45,000/- have been undertaken for Sola Fathers and Jayalakshmi Builders. The boys also take care of the minor maintenance work at Deepahalli.

... Welding

Lathe and Fabrication work, and a Cot was made for Jayalakshmi Builders, bringing this unit an income of Rs. 11,000/-.

... Tailoring

The boys are now learning to cut and stitch clothes with sample cloth collected from the market. They have made one set of Uniforms for the children who are going to school.

REDS – RANCHI

The severe drop in temperature was a cumbersome hindrance in conducting activities at the centers. Children were unable to attend either the NFE classes at the center or go to school due to the severe cold. To overcome this problem all the children would be provided with sweaters.

Second terminal examinations were held from 8th to the 18th of December. During this time children going to school were given extra coaching classes in the afternoon at all the centers. Results were announced on 22nd December; except for the children who were not regular to the centers the others have performed well.

... Toki Toki Center

School going children were given sweaters and school bags. A few of the children received scholarship from school and were able to pay their school fees with the money. The children from the center were invited by Carmel School for a Christmas celebration; they received school bags, pencils, erasers, biscuits and soaps as gifts from the principal of the school.

... Doranda Center

75 children were regularly attending classes at the center. Home visits were done every Friday and issues relating to the children were discussed with the parents.

... Mousibari Center

The attendance at the center increased after the distribution of sweaters. 95 children attended classes every day. More emphasis was given to children who were attending formal school. The children participated in the Christmas program organized by REDS. Meetings were held with the parents and issues like migration, savings, self-employment and education of their children were discussed.

... Khadgarah Center

Among the 65 children attending classes at the center only 45 children were regular. Children who were attending formal school were given extra coaching classes. Children who were regular have performed well in the second terminal examination, the results of those who were irregular is not satisfactory. The children participated in the Christmas program organized by REDS.



... Hatia Center

A meeting with the parents was held on 6th December. Children's attendance, saving and tuition for children who will be going to formal school in the next academic year was discussed. Staff visits the homes of the children coming to the center every afternoon.

... Prerna

6 girls are undergoing training in knitting at the center.

Calendar of Events - Bangalore

...November '03

- 4th Nov. Ms. Varija attended a workshop on Innovative Education organized by MAYA
- 14th Nov Children's Day was celebrated.
- 19th Nov Children of REDS – Bangalore participated in the 'CRC Week' program organized by Makkala Sahaya Vani
- 20th Nov Chili-Pili Mela - Play School Teachers participated in a workshop organized by Promise Foundation on creative teaching aids.

...December '03

- 1st Dec SHG members participated in a 'Rally on AIDS Awareness' organized KCDC
- 2nd Dec Play School Teachers participated in a 'Rally – World Disability Day' organized Mobility India
- 6th Dec Play School – 'Teachers Training'
- 7th Dec REDS – Bangalore children participated in the Christmas Program organized Bishop Cotton's Boy's School
- 8th Dec Marianist General Administration visit REDS – Skill Training Center
- 11th Dec Awareness Program for SHG members by Dr. Lalitha – Shivajinagar
"Human Rights Day" program REDS – Bangalore put up a stall at St. Joseph's College of Arts & Science
Orientation on REDS to Marainist General Administration
- 11th Dec Play School - 'Chili Pilli Mela'
REDS area visit by Marainist General Administration
- 13th Dec REDS – Bangalore & STC participate in the YMCA Sports Meet
- 20th Dec REDS – Bangalore children participated in the Christmas program organized by Jyothi Nivas College
- 23rd Dec Christmas 'Get-together' for School going children – REDS, Bangalore
Christmas 'Get-together' for children – REDS, Ranchi
- 24th Dec Christmas program at REDS - STC

The REDS Staff wishes you the best for the
New Year!