



Reach Out

Community Outreach Special

Shriram Foundation has a history of being involved pro-actively in all the communities where our projects are seated. Earlier it was thought that reaching out to the local community would enable them to understand our initiative better and cooperate while reaping the benefit of our presence. In recent times, we seem to have insights on the indigenous knowledge and resources that are available in these communities and that are aiding our own deeper understanding of their needs and capabilities.

“Our interest in the times to come lies in empowering the communities with apt information on children and their requirements, so that provision for children’s needs is considered on a priority basis, rather than spending on other unproductive expenditure.”

Our thoughts on this initiative have graduated from philanthropy to responsibility and learning. This shift has helped us plan programs with their involvement and take feedback from them as well.

We also respect their local culture and tradition, while sharing our concerns on some forms of blind beliefs and social evils that tend to affect children's future. This has been received positively by village elders in many places.

Overall community health and well-being will be our focus during our presence in the projects and the community, towards this end we have recruited a Village Health Nurse (VHN) in one of our schools. Our initiatives will continue till these communities are self sustained and we can then plan to wean out and move into areas where education and community development programs have not been effective or served their purpose.

*Board of Trustees
Shriram Foundation*

Celebrating Republic Day

Republic Day, 2013 was celebrated in a different vein at Sri Sri Vidya Mandir Matriculation School, Anaikoil.



After flag hoisting ceremony at the school, students took out a rally in nearby community to raise awareness about the physical, psychological and social ill-effects caused tobacco and alcohol. After the rally, students got together in the community hall of the village and staged a skit titled 'Alcohol ruins family' for the local population. 8th and 9th class students performed a mime about the public nuisance and sang a song on the ill-effects of tobacco respectively.

These fine performances were small initiatives by students and teachers to not let their ideas stay within the four wall of schools, but instead have a wider outreach.



Parents' Training for Montessori Environment at VSR

Since inception, VSR school has been struggling to find permanent teachers for the Montessori environments of the school. Despite many efforts school has never been able to find a permanent solution to this problem.

Hence, after due consideration, it was realized that the best and 'sustainable' solution to this problem could be to train parents (of students studying at the school) for Montessori environment. Thus, started the 'Training for Parents' program on December 1, 2012.

Parents' program on December 1, 2012.

Training sessions are being conducted every alternate Saturday of the month by trained Montessori trainers.



Shri Ranganathar Self-Help Group

Shri Ranganathar Self-Help group was formed by Shriram Vocational Training Centre on December 29, 2012. It is started with the aim to provide job opportunities to women in the nearby communities.

Presently, all 12 members are actively participating in various activities of the group. They are given opportunity to work in the unit according to their preferable timing. With the aim to reach out to wider group in the community, members are also given an option to work from home.

Members will be given professional training in food processing, candle-making and preparation of household chemicals. Simultaneously, Vocational Training Centre will work on getting orders for production of paper bags, cloth bags, ready-made garments and other viable local orders.

Challenges of working with Community

Evening fine art classes started in Sri Sri Vidya Mandir (SSVM) School, Anaikoil, had to be shut down. These classes were conducted for students who do not study at SSVM. After few classes, it was reported by the children that the headmistress of a nearby government school had asked them not to go for these classes. SSVM's school authorities later checked with the headmistress herself and found that she did not allow them to go because they were not finishing their homework. SSVM hasn't succeeded even after repeated attempts at bringing those students back to evening classes.

This incident shows that when it comes to any community intervention; the stakeholders are many. One has to consider all these stakeholders and their perspectives before initiating any action. SSVM is looking forward to engaging with all of them again and re-initiate the evening classes. It is too important to let go.

Shriram Foundation was established in 1993 as the charitable arm of the Shriram Group, a pioneer in financial and investment services, to offer holistic education, running schools in rural areas and aiding start up and running of small rural schools

For more information visit www.shriramfoundation.org