



BAL SHRISTI

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Greetings from Mumbai Mobile Creches!

Now that the pandemic restrictions have been lifted, MMC has resumed its work on ground in full measure with numerous activities across all our models. We have organised health camps to screen children and community members for different illnesses and deficiencies, introduced daily English classes in our Bal Palika Teacher (BPT) Training Programme curriculum, a programme that offers a year-long Early Childhood Care and Education training to women from underprivileged communities and given over 30 community women Bal Vikas Sahyog training, our 12-day training course to be child care givers to women from underprivileged communities. We also conducted educational exposure visits for our Day Care Centre children and BPT trainees. Evaluation studies were conducted to assess the impact of Education and Health programmes.

Our Comprehensive Day Care Programmes are also run for children living on Brick Kiln sites. The results from our research studies on Brick Kilns have shown us a need to expand our work at new Brick Kiln sites as well as Source villages, where the workers and their families live after their work at Brick Kilns is completed.

During the initial phase of Covid-19 restrictions, all the activities of children were conducted online. But as the restrictions eased, the older children above three years of age were called at the centres for all the Comprehensive Programmes. Our children were delighted to come physically to our centres and Mobile Bus to enjoy the varied activities after being away for so long. This has also given the working parents much relief as many of them were concerned about their children's development and safety without MMC's direct intervention.

MMC's Reach till March 2022:

Through our **four** existing models- Comprehensive Day Care Centres (DCCs), Care on Wheels, Builder run Child Care Centres (CCCs) and Community Outreach Programme (CORP), we were able to support the holistic development of **3254** children.

We benefitted **1253** children across **20** DCCs-

- **1088** children across **16** DCCs on construction sites,
- **81** children at **two** slum sites,
- **84** children at **two** Brick kilns.

We facilitated-

- **998** vaccinations and **218** Doctor's Visits for children on DCCs.
- **Five** Lokdoots were conducted reaching **650** community members on construction sites

Our 'Care on Wheels', Mobile Bus programme was able to bring-

- Education to **113** children across **six** smaller construction sites
- **17** Doctor's Visits at Mobile Bus sites.

On average, we reached **889** parents, through **180** Chai-Pani meetings every month across all models. These are monthly informal meetings with parents covering a wide array of topics such as malnutrition, tuberculosis etc.

Conducting Health Camps

Children living on the constructions sites face multiple barriers in accessing adequate health care services. Therefore, our Health & Nutrition Programme is designed to provide preventive and curative care to the children. Apart from assisting the parents to access periodic health care services for their children, **19 ear camps** and **17 eye camps** were organised for the children. **1159** and **1216** children were screened for ear and eye problems respectively. **13** children who were diagnosed with poor eye sight and **six** children screened with hearing problems, were referred to nearby specialised medical facilities for further treatment and care.

Notes from the Field

Celebration of Puppet Week



We celebrated our Annual Puppet Week in January 2022 with great enthusiasm at all our centres. The theme was “पपेट्स हमारे अनोखे दोस्त” (Puppets, our unique friends). Safety officers, site supervisors and managers, all attended the Inaugural Programme of Puppet Week at their respective centres. To adhere to COVID-19 safety protocol, only children who were 3 years old or above were called to the centres in small groups and performed theme-based activities like palm printing, animal masks, friendship bands etc.

They thoroughly enjoyed making a variety of puppets such as stick puppets, finger puppets, mask puppets, palm puppets and so on using waste materials. Towards the end of puppet week, children conducted puppet shows at the centres. Videos of children making puppets were also sent to parents of children below the age of three years (crèche babies) so that the parents could watch and make puppets with their children.



Cleanliness Campaign

In January 2022, we initiated a cleanliness campaign at our Patlipada construction site to raise the cleanliness and hygiene standards. To involve the community members on this cleanliness drive, we facilitated many events, such as – Lokdoots in which construction workers performed, drawing competitions for the children, and rallies focusing on hygiene and cleanliness. Community women were encouraged to grow kitchen gardens on their own premises; and health camps were arranged for screening of reproductive and sexual diseases among the women. Sanitary napkins were also distributed among women to promote menstrual hygiene. The Builders supported this entire clean initiative by arranging sufficient dust bins in the labour camp.

Exposure visits

In February, an exposure visit to SOS village in Alibaug was conducted for 31 Bal Palika trainees. The visit's aim was to motivate the trainees to work for the children in need. During the visit, the trainees got an experience of how to communicate with destitute children and creating a positive and familial environment for them. The trainees found this experience eye-opening and knowledgeable as they could relate to it, given their work with underprivileged children at our construction sites. In March, 14 staff members also conducted an exposure visit to Grammangal NGO at Palghar, to get new insights on innovative learning techniques and tools for imparting knowledge among the children in the Balwadi and After School Section.

Annual Sports Day



This year's Annual Sports day was held in March 2022, in association with the Inner Wheel Club of Hiranandani Estate.

Over 100 children aged three years and above from Patlipada-1 and Patlipada -2 centres participated in this day-long programme. It was a fun-filled day for the children with winners of various events receiving attractive prizes.



Participating at MPL-8 tournament

In the month of February 2022, about 52 children, aged 12 to 18 years from our centres, participated in the 8th MCHI Premier League (MPL 8) – a CSR initiative that offered a platform to our children at the construction sites to enhance their interest in sports. For our children, the experience of playing on a big open ground with a proper pitch and cricketing gear was truly unforgettable and they enjoyed this event along with other activities like magic show and tattoo painting. Both, the winners and runner-ups won trophies.

Notes from the Field

English training for the Bal Palika trainees

In January 2022, we introduced a three months spoken English course by English Vani for our BPT trainees. Our main objective was to improve our trainees' ability to speak, read, comprehend and write English simply, and accurately. The other aim of this initiative was to improve our trainees' confidence in their ability to handle classroom responsibilities in an effective manner. All 31 trainees who enrolled in the course, were continuously assessed using a structured tool, and at the end of the course the trainer found that the reading and vocabulary skills of 18 participants had improved. However, the evaluator noted that the trainees still need to improve their ability to understand questions in English correctly. The evaluator would customise documents based on the weak points of the trainees, take revisions the next day, which gave them extra practice to improve their weaknesses in English. The trainees appreciated MMC's initiative to introduce this English course and felt more confident in their spoken English after attending it.

Conducting Bal-Vikas Sahayog Training

Our Bal Vikas Sahayog (BVS) training programme is a short term capacity building workshop for women from underprivileged areas such as construction sites and slums. We conducted a 12-day-long offline course of BVS training programme for 27 women from the Virar and Thane construction sites. We covered topics such as the basics of parenting, healthy child care practices and important milestones for children. The training sessions used several audio-visual aids, and were taught in a simple manner to suit the participants' requirements. All the women received a certificate after the training.

Teaching Aid Exhibition



As in previous years, our trainees enthusiastically displayed their collective knowledge and expertise of Early Child Care Education (ECCE) through a variety of fun filled innovative teaching and learning aids at the Annual Teaching Aids Exhibition, held in March 2022 hosted by our trainees of the BPT programme. The theme for the exhibition was Emotions ('चाही अनचाही भावनाएँ'). Over 100 representatives from different colleges and NGO's in Mumbai attended the exhibition and many of them said that they found it engaging and informative.



Women's day and Safety Week celebration

We celebrated Women's Day in 20 of our DCCs and one CCC. Over 619 women from the community enthusiastically participated in the programme. The Women's Day celebration

included rangoli making competition, games like tug of war, skipping, Spoon and lemon race, musical chairs etc. We also celebrated the National Safety Week in March 2022 along with the builders of the construction sites. Over 1200 construction workers attended the safety week sessions across all the sites. Workers were made aware of many issues such as de-addiction

from substance abuse, Building and Other Construction Work Act (BOCWA) schemes, women's reproductive health issues, importance of using sanitary napkins etc.



Lokdoots (theme-based street plays) and games were also conducted throughout the week to make these sessions participatory.

Abstracts Accepted for Oral Presentation

Our abstract titled 'Evaluation of parents as collaborators in ECCE programme in COVID times' got accepted for an oral presentation at the Virtual World Conference by AECED and Mobile Creches, happening in June 2022 on 'Reimagining and Reshaping Early Childhood Care & Education in the New Normal.' Another abstract on 'Evaluation of an Intervention Aimed at Language Development of Migrant Children below three Years through a Mother-Child Reading Programme' got accepted for an oral presentation at the 14th European Evaluation Society Biennial Conference at Copenhagen, Denmark to be held in June 2022.

Assessment of the Balwadi children for school preparedness

Our Balwadi curriculum emphasises on learning through exploration, the development of independent thinking, and creative expression. The basic components of the education programme for Balwadi kids are – language development through pre-reading and pre-writing skills; understanding and insight into matters of mathematics etc. It is a crucial programme meant to help prepare younger children for formal schools and enroll them into the formal school system. In the months of January-February 2022, an assessment was carried out to get an idea about the school readiness of the children at the Balwadi section of MMC. Based on an established valid tool, 398 Balwadi children from our DCCs were assessed by a team of independent evaluators and found that around 72% children were ready for going to the municipal school for formal education.

THANK YOU

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- We thank the members of Inner Wheel Clubs of Hiranandani Estate- Thane, Tata Group for volunteering and engaging our children and teachers in various educative activities. We also thank the members of the Rotary Club of Hiranandani Estate, Thane for organising sports activities for the children of two of our centres in Thane.
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