

SPORTS FOR UNITED RESILIENCE

Inculcating life skills through sports and popular Indian games



Childhood Development through sports and games: An Initiative by CHETNA & Toybox

It was in the year 2019 when CHETNA (Childhood Enhancement through Training and Action) and ToyBox both the reputed Non-Governmental Organizations in India and the United Kingdom respectively talked in length about the possibility of joining hands, initiating a pilot project called SURE (Sports for United Resilience). The idea stroked when it was visualized that sports can do a miracle in the life of street-connected children. A lot of discussions were held and it was thought that probably the slums of West Delhi would be best suitable to initiate this pilot project.

To initiate the project theory of change and other documents and concepts were made; a lot of test researches were done, the list of International sports was seen and scrutinized, and finally, both the organizations agreed that to begin with, the focus should be on four games namely kho-kho, cricket, kabaddi and Indian street games. The purpose of choosing these four games was to let children understand the gender dynamics, team building, how to play in lesser space, how can you attract the attention of the communities and passerby, and how to develop resilience in each of the beneficiaries of this project.

To begin with, 8 locations were identified and the modest of oriented agreed was that the team of 7 members work in the areas identified and a total of 400 children will be a part of this project. The age group was sort between 12-16 years and the status was a child should be working in a difficult situation and out of school. Since its inception, the results have been astonishing and at present, so many children are part of it. Even during the corona regime, children show enthusiasm. It was highly evident that the children who were a part of the SURE project are showing good resilience post-COVID.



"Sport breaks down barriers, promotes self-esteem, and teach life skills and healthy behavior." -Jacques Rogge

Learning by doing through Residential Workshop for Educators



Sports are not only a source of entertainment but it is an effective tool for the growth and development of children. Sports inculcate various life skills in children such as leadership, strategic planning, building teamwork, improving communication skills, and builds self-confidence. CHETNA with support from Toybox, implemented a pilot project SURE (Sports for United Resilience) in the slums of West Delhi which focuses on building resilience in street and working children through sports. To ensure the successful execution of the project, it is vital to acquaint the team members. In this regard, the team organized a two days capacity building workshop for its team members in Zorba the Buddha, New Delhi. The purpose of the workshop was to equip the team members with the skills and knowledge about the importance of sports for the development of children, to help them to have better clarity and deep understanding about the project SURE. The workshop was headed by Mr. Sanjay Gupta (Director of CHETNA) and facilitated by a team member.

On the very first day of the workshop, Mr. Sanjay Gupta inaugurated the workshop by delineating the agenda of the workshop and objectives and activities of the SURE project. Various activities were conducted where team members revisited their childhood by demonstrating some games and ponder on the importance of sports in our lives. A presentation was made on sports for development to the team members for a better and clear understanding of sports. A debate was also conducted on the topic “***Sports can be an effective tool for imparting life skill education to street children***”, in which a lot views came up in the favor and against the topic. Day 01 was concluded by discussing the roles and responsibilities of an educator in implementing the games.

The second day of workshop was initiated by the recap of first day, and then an activity was conducted for a better understanding teaching life skill through sports. For a comprehensive knowledge of the project SURE a presentation was made stating its objects and purpose.



A sports session was undertaken under the guidance of Mr. Rohit Bisht, Sports Coach and Mr. Suresh Bisht, Sports Manager. Resource mapping and future action plan was also discussed on the second day. The activities which were conducted during the workshop to achieve its objectives were well thought of as the Educators experienced joyful learning and enhanced their knowledge about different games along with their rules and importance.

Combating Gender Discrimination



Gender equality has been an age-old debatable issue. Since times immortal, gender issues have persisted in society. Women have been marginalized and subjugated in every field. But as the world progressed, people demanded gender equality and after a lot of feminist struggles, there was a decline in gender issues to some extent. In this 21st century, there is no field untouched by women and especially in sportswomen have left their commendable mark. Advocating gender equality through sports is the best way in combating gender discrimination.

The increasing gender violence and harassment in India, has imposed a serious threat on the safety of girls, especially the street girls are the worst sufferers of these harassments and violence. To give these girls a little sense of security, CHETNA along with the support of Toybox organized a three days self-defense workshop in November for street girls with the partnership of Delhi Police. Learning self-defense techniques is the need of an hour.

Around 400 street-connected girls actively participated in the workshop and learned about the self-defense techniques.

“After participating in self-defense training, I feel very self-confident. Now I feel equipped and I can take strong action against eve-teasing. I learned about the upper punch, middle punch, and lower punch” this was stated from one of the participants. Girls showed a keen interest in learning self-defense techniques and also they were motivated to form their families and peers. “It is a great initiative to teach girls self-defense techniques. Girls will be able to protect themselves.” stated one of the participant’s brothers. Girls were encouraged and given certificates by Delhi Police.

A fun-filled week of learning

A sports week was organized under the SURE project, where beneficiaries of West Delhi actively participated in many games. During the sports week kabaddi (is the most popular traditional game of



India. It combines the characteristics of wrestling and rugby) and kho-kho (a popular traditional tag game of India) matches were also conducted in which children enthusiastically participated. The objective behind organizing the sports week was to encourage the participation of community people to relive their childhood memories and to make them realize the importance of sports and its learning’s in a child’s life.

During the sports week, several races were organized in like spoon

race, sack race, etc. Children were divided into two teams and a match of kho-kho and kabaddi was organized between two education clubs. The winning team was rewarded with medals and trophy. At the end of the week, a brief discussion was held on the outcomes and learnings of the games.

Jersey: a symbol of building team spirit

All the beneficiaries of SURE were given jerseys during the sports week in order to maintain the integrity of sports and build a sense of team spirit amongst children. The jerseys were in four colors blue, green, orange and yellow. Children were advised to wear these jerseys while playing so that they can easily identify their teams.

Children showed more enthusiasm and eagerness in playing after receiving the jerseys. They were able to build a stronger relationship with their team members. These are little tools of encouraging and motivating children to strive for better things in life.



“Where there is a will, there is a way”

Fifteen years old Sunny hails from a small-town Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. For the past twelve years, he is residing in the slums of Nehru Camp with his 6 family members his parents, one brother, and two sisters. His father is a rickshaw puller and his mother works as domestic help in many households. Sunny also works as labor to support his family financially. Through SURE's intervention, he constantly comes to the education club. He actively participates in all the activities.



Prior to the lockdown, his family went to Haryana to visit his Grandmother and they got stranded there due to the impose of the lockdown. The family did not have any source of income; even his grandmother did not have enough money to support the family. His family problems increased manifolds during the span of lockdown. Initially, for a few days, they survived on the savings, but gradually as the days passed the family was in dire straits. His family was left with little finances, so they had to borrow money from their relatives to keep the wheel of life turning. During the lockdown, Sunny's grandmother fell sick and was on complete bed rest. Sunny being the eldest and a responsible child took care of his grandmother. Looking at the miserable condition of his family, he started selling vegetables and earned a handful of money to meet out the medical expenses and basic requirements of the family. Sunny from his optimistic and courageous act set an example that no problem is bigger than the solutions. If we are determined to solve problems, we can easily find solutions.

Presently, after the lockdown uplifted Sunny and his family has returned to Nehru Camp. His family's condition has improved slightly. His parents have resumed working. But his father spends his earnings on drinking alcohol which has created many problems for the family. His mother is now the bread earner for the family, Sunny his also searching to get a new source of income. Meanwhile, he has resumed his studies and also plays games with his friends.

Building stronger personalities

Suman, a 15 years old girl hails from Gujarat, from the past ten years they have residing in the slums of Raghuveer Nagar. Suman's family comprises 7 members her parents, her paternal grandparents, and two younger siblings. Her parents sell steel utensils in exchange for old clothes. Prior to her intervention with SURE, she was an introvert and a shy person. She did not interact with people and stayed at home. She is a beneficiary of SURE and constant



comes to the education club. She actively started taking part in all the activities but her favorite sport is Kho-Kho.

As the lockdown took a heavy toll on everyone's life, the disadvantaged sector of the society was the worst victim of COVID-19 consequences. Suman's family was starving as they lost all the source of income and there was a drought of ration and food. Suman took the responsibility of feeding her family on her tender shoulders. After a lot of struggle, she had a stand-in long queues under the scorching heat to get a two-course meal.

Since she has a large family size, the food she accumulated was never sufficient for the whole family. Sometimes, Suman lied and compromised her food for her grandparents and had to sleep empty stomach. Her compassion and comprise towards her family are commendable. At such a tender age, she has become responsible and carried out her duties efficiently. Her transformation from an introvert person to becoming strong and bold helped her family to get a sigh of relief during the crisis. Apart from this, she also played games that she learned in the education club with her friends to keep the environment positive. As the lockdown uplifted, there has been no drastic change in her family's condition. Her parents have resumed working but the earnings are not as much as it was before the epidemic started. However, Suman concentrates on her studies and plays games with her friends. She also helps her friends in studying and also she became a bridge between the educators and the students who lack access to smartphones.



Pilotage for educators: Local Street Games manual

In early India, games and sports were very much concerned about the development of the physique and were considered as recreational activities. Local street games are the most popular games that have been played by various generations and it has been passed on to the next generations as a legacy. These games are not only the source of recreation and entertainment rather they are essential for the mental and emotional development of the people. There couldn't be a better way of imparting life skills to children through sports.

SURE is a pilot project which focuses on imparting life skills to children through local street games. After rigorous research by our team members, 20 popular street games were identified which helped in the development and overall growth of children. This local games manual is pilotage for the educators to conduct games in any community. It is recommended to thoroughly read this manual.

It contains 20 popular street games with a play method and rules. It clearly states the instructions that need to be followed by the instructors and at the end of each game, there are motivational quotes by famous sports personalities to boost their confidence and encourage the participants.

Another milestone of SURE



It contains 20 popular street games with a play method and rules. It clearly states the instructions that need to be followed by the instructors and at the end of each game, there are motivational quotes by famous sports personalities to boost their confidence and encourage the participants. The objective of conducting this baseline survey was to determine the level of confidence in street-children to determine health and hygiene status, to build resilience, to know about their views on education and sports, and determine various protection mechanisms. The survey was done on a simple random sampling method and 240 children participated in the survey. The whole baseline survey was successfully conducted by Pooja Singh.



Media presence

Games and sports have impacted the lives of our beneficiaries in several ways. The self-defense workshop conducted by CHETNA and Delhi police resulted in fruitful for the street-connected girls. Self-defense is a tool for women empowerment. Every girl needs to be more empowered to protect themselves from the odds of society. With great pride, our two beneficiaries who participated in the self-defense workshop went to Noida and trained self-defense to 50 other girls. They were the victims of eve-teasing and harassment, after learning self-defense in the workshop these girls took the initiative to train other girls for protecting themselves and making the society more empowered. Pooja and Poonam have become a role model for many other girls.

पूजा और पूनम बनी लड़कियों की सेल्फ डिफेंस ट्रेनर


नोएडा। पूजा और पूनम ने मिलकर लड़कियों को सेल्फ डिफेंस बनाने के लिए स्वयं सेल्फ डिफेंस ट्रेनर बन गयी। पहले खुद उन्होंने पश्चिमी दिल्ली की सड़कों पर मनचलों के ताने सहे। फिर चेतना संस्था और दिल्ली पुलिस की मदद से सेल्फ डिफेंस ट्रेनिंग ली गई। उसके बाद अब दोनों मिलकर लड़कियों को सेल्फ डिफेंस बनाने के लिए ट्रेनर बन गयी। एक कार्यशाला में पूजा और पूनम दोनों की मुलाकात नोएडा की लड़कियों से हुई। और इन 50 लड़कियों को सेल्फ डिफेंस ट्रेनिंग देने का बीड़ा पूजा और पूनम ने उठाया। अब दोनों मिलकर लड़कियों को सेल्फ ट्रेनिंग दे रही हैं। ये ट्रेनिंग अभी गुरुवार और शुक्रवार को भी चलेगी। पूजा और पूनम अन्य लड़कियों के रोल मॉडल का कार्य कर रही हैं।



A sigh of relief during a pandemic: ration, stationary, and hygiene kit distribution



The impose of nationwide lockdown to prevent the outbreak of COVID-19, has severely affected the lives of people living in downtrodden and marginalized communities. The world is going through a huge transformation from all walks of life. The breakthrough is in the field of education which has left a big question mark on imparting education to street-connected children. Furthermore, the problem also arises in maintaining hygiene and cleanliness to the stratum of society that lacks access to the basic means of hygiene. In these unprecedented times, the Government and NGOs are the only helping hands that provide some relief to these people. Looking at the miserable conditions, CHETNA along with the support of Toybox in West Delhi has been persistently fulfilling the needs of these children and their families by distributing ration, hygiene, and stationery kits. After a successful drive of ration distribution, the need of maintaining hygiene and cleanliness and supporting children with stationary was taken into consideration. These kits were distributed after keen observation and list provided by our team members to the most deprived children in their communities under the supervision of CHETNA




workers and with taking all the precautions and following social distancing. Under this drive, 8 locations of West Delhi were covered. Each ration package contained wheat flour, rice, pulses, sugar, salt, and some spices. The stationary kits contained notebooks, pens, pencils, whereas hygiene kits contained soap, masks, sanitizers, toothbrush, toothpaste, etc

Educator's perspective

Our educators are the driving force of SURE. Some glimpses of their perspective. Our hard-working and dedicated educator Radha stated, *“When I heard about SURE, I was amazed how sports and games can help in inculcating diverse life skills in children and transform their personality. Initially, I was skeptical about how will I execute these games, since I never played the chosen games like Kho-kho, kabaddi, and cricket, I have always been a spectator. But I resolved to learn these games before executing them and the process of learning was fruitful and fun.”*

“When I heard about the SURE project, I was enthusiastic and keen to teach children life skills through games and sports. I was confident in executing these games since the learning becomes better when it is conducted through games and children pay more attention and show interest in learning. Although the community's perspective was not very positive our team overcame all the obstacles” stated our educator Kavita.

One of our educators Ravi, said *“I was extremely happy after knowing about SURE. Although I had to face many problems while executing, children were well aware of the games like kho-kho, cricket, and kabaddi but they never played it professionally without following all the rules and guidelines. It was difficult to make their parents realize the importance of sports and games in their overall development.”*



Spreading colors into the lives of street-connected children

Holi is a popular ancient festival of India. It is a festival of colors. The festival signifies the good over evil. It mostly falls in March. Our educators relentlessly work hard to provide knowledge and shape the lives of street-connected children. There couldn't be a better way to celebrate the victory and fill colors into each other's life than by celebrating the festival of Holi. Our educators celebrated Holi with children in their respective education clubs.



A visit to the police station

The encounter of street-connected children and police is frequent. To make the encounter friendly and to bridge the gap, children under SURE project visited Kirti Nagar Police Station. They met constables and came to know about ways in which they can empower themselves. Children felt safe and secure after the visit to the police station.



Support Group Meeting

The Support Group meetings are conducted every month under the SURE project. The main objectives of these meetings are to instill observational skills in children and to make them realize the importance of education and sports in their lives.



These meetings are headed by the leaders of Badhate kadam. In these meetings, the problems of children are discussed which is faced by them daily, since CHETNA firmly believes in “Everyone has to fight their own battle” the solutions to their problems are diligently proposed by our Educators which are implied by children.



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