



Padala Charitable Trust (PCT)

Student Empowerment Training Programme (SET)

www.padalacharitabletrust.org

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Purpose

The purpose of this document is to outline the details of a new initiative from Padala Charitable Trust to empower the students with simple but valuable techniques related to their study, ethical values, practical issues in life, inspiring stories of the current generation etc.

The idea is to mentor the school/college children in rural areas to strengthen them and make them realize their own potential. Once we are able to create a positive attitude in them, no matter what happens, they will SUCCEED in life.

Current System of Education

Today's education system in INDIA needs lot of transformation. Majority of the government run schools/colleges lack the basic amenities and qualified teachers. We do not see any hours dedicated to subjects like moral science any more as it used to be in olden days. The issues with some corporate schools/colleges are little different. They do seem to have better facilities & more qualified staff compared to the government schools/colleges but still the priorities do not necessarily include proper counseling of students on much needed subjects like positive thinking, value based education, practical life, social responsibility etc. There are few corporate colleges that occasionally hire professionals to educate the students on these subjects. But in many other schools & colleges there has been very unhealthy environment developed in the recent past. Moreover, affordable quality schools are not available in quantity.

Because of the way our education system has been developed, students are not encouraged to think and develop their own solutions to any problems. Many of the students do not even ask single question during the class mostly because they are not encouraged to do so. Parents, most of whom are earlier products of this system are also more interested in their children **exclusively** devoting their time and energy to score high marks/ranks in examinations and nothing more. To make some changes in this kind of rigid and learning-unfriendly environment is not an easy task. However, it doesn't mean that we can not do anything.

Today's Burning Issue

Lately, we keep hearing about several very unfortunate incidents of suicides by college students & atrocities of various levels on girls.

Here are some very interesting & alarming statistics reported:

2007 Report from National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), INDIA:

- 1) The suicidal rate is 14 per hour & 1,20,000 per year
- 2) Two thirds of these people are below age 40.
- 3) Andhra Pradesh state ranks 2nd after Maharashtra with a 12.1% suicidal rate (*Chhattisgarh has the lowest suicidal rate of 3.9%*)
- 4) Family Problems (stress) is found out to be the major cause and poverty is the least cause
- 5) People with Primary Education level topped the list (25.2%)

WHO (World Health Organization):

- 1) In the last 45 years suicide rates have increased by 60% worldwide. Suicide is now among the three leading causes of death among those aged 15 to 44 (male and female). Suicide attempts are up to 20 times more frequent than completed suicides.
- 2) Although suicide rates have traditionally been highest amongst elderly males, rates among young people have been increasing to such an extent that they are now the group at highest risk in a third of all countries. Youth suicide is increasing at the greatest rate.
- 3) Mental health disorders (particularly depression and substance abuse) are associated with more than 90% of all cases of suicide.
- 4) However, suicide results from many complex socio-cultural factors and is more likely to occur during periods of socioeconomic, family and individual crisis (e.g. loss of a loved one, unemployment, sexual orientation, difficulties with developing one's identity, disassociation from one's community or other social/belief group, and honour).
- 5) Nearly 30% of all suicides worldwide occur in India and China
- 6) It is estimated that these rates will be doubled by 2020 if nothing is done.

How shame on us to allow these things to happen in the first place? Everyone in the game needs to take equal blame including the students, parents, teachers & school/college administration. Clinical psychologists say, 99% of these forced deaths can be avoided with a second thought and/or simple counseling.

Our students are power-house of latent talents. We need to awaken the sleeping genius within them at a tender age.

SET (Student Empowerment Training) Programme

This Programme is a new initiative developed at PCT to create a positive energy in the young minds of the current system of education. To be short enough, the goal of this Programme is to inform (*as many as possible*), reform (*as much as we can*) and transform (*as best as we can*) our student minds!

This Programme addresses the following subjects:

1. True Education (*not just scoring high marks & ranks – there is much more to it*)
2. Positive Thinking
3. Efficient Study Techniques & Time Management
4. Winning Strategies & Goal Setting
5. Practical Life after college (*may not be as beautiful as we dream in our class room*)
6. Social Responsibility
7. Life Cycle from Birth to Death (*how to make it most successful AND meaningful*)

Programme Objectives

Here are the primary objectives of the Programme:

1. Increase the awareness of 'True Education' among the children/students
2. Change the mindset of Rural Children/Youth through Self esteem enhancement
3. Make them aware of several possibilities that await them
4. Inspire them to dream high and work hard enough to make the dream a reality
5. Train at least one interested teacher per school and encourage him/her to continue the Programme in the following years
6. Measure the success rate of the project

Programme Approach

Content & Audience

Some of the subjects that were mentioned above may not be relevant to some audience. For example, children at High School level need not be talked to about Social Responsibility as much as to college level students. Similarly, more emphasis needs to be given while speaking to the girl students on practical issues especially after major events in life like marriage, children etc.

Hence, one of the most critical aspects of this Programme is to tailor the content to the intended audience. There must be a unique version of the content for each set of people.

Visual Aids

Though the Programme is in the form of oral presentation there will be several visual aids used since **A picture is worth a thousand words** and an image is more influential than a substantial amount of text or speech. Similarly, the content will also have few video clippings with **real stories of real people**.

Presentation Timing

Here is the current timing we have come up with:

Level	Presentation Timing per Session	No. of Sessions
High School (Up to X Std)	3 Hrs	1
Junior College (Intermediate)	3 Hrs	2
Degree & PG	4 Hrs	2

Programme Reach

The very goal of this Programme is to reach & empower as many children/students as possible from rural areas. To start with, a small cluster of schools will be identified. Once we review our own experience, the feedback from the children/teachers/parents and lessons learnt, couple of more clusters will be identified to be worked on.

Programme Timelines

The initial ground work has been completed with respect to finalizing the Programme objectives and identifying the immediate requirements. The detailed time lines need to be worked out based on meeting the immediate & long term requirements

Programme Financials

N	Requirement	Approx. Cost	Sponsor	Comments
1	Laptop	USD 600 (INR 30,000)	PCT	Laptop is the most essential requirement for this Programme
2	Electronic Storage Media CDs/DVDs/Flash Drive)	USD 100 (INR 5000)	PCT	Required to save the Programme content and other information
3	Stationary Expenses	USD 100 (INR 5000)	PCT	PCT will reimburse the stationary expenses until the Programme reaches to a self sustainable status.
4	Travel Expenses	Depends	School/College	The school/college will need to provide the basic travel expenses depending on the distance to be covered by the presenter. PCT will help in this on a need basis.
5	LCD Projector (May not be required for Pilot Projects)	USD 800-1000 (INR 40000-50000)	Looking for Sponsors	High quality Projector is essential to effectively present the Programme to larger groups
6	Speaker System	USD 100 (INR 5000)	Looking for Sponsors	Best quality speaker system is required to address bigger gathering
7	Printer (Optional for now)	USD 100 (INR 5000)	Looking for Sponsors	
8	Maintenance Expenses for Sustainability	Depends	School/College	The intent is to collect nominal remuneration from the corporate schools/colleges for this Programme and offer free training to the government schools/colleges

Programme Evaluation & Success Rate

For any Programme to be successful, frequent evaluations are critical to help extend the reach further and also make required amendments to the Programme content.

Here are few thoughts how we can evaluate the success rate of this Programme:

1. How many schools/children/students have been served and for how long? – **Quantitative**
2. How do the schools & children benefit from the Programme over a short term & a long term? – **Qualitative**
3. What specific feedback is given by the audience in terms of ‘good parts of the Programme’?
4. What specific feedback is given by the audience in terms of ‘bad or need-to-improve parts of the Programme’?
5. What specific lessons have we learned with respect to
 - Concept of the Programme
 - Content of the Programme

- Mode of Presentation
- Timing of Presentation
- Illustrations used in the Presentation
- Visual Aids used in the Presentation
- Question & Answer Sessions with the Students

The bottom line is, we need to measure our success based on the **impact** we make on the people we serve — our students. When we see a change in the way students, teachers, school administrators and parents view the school/college education not as a final destination but as a launch pad to career success then we know we have made a dent and helped our people to create a cultural shift.

Programme Team

Person	Location	Role	Contact Number	Contact Email
Rajyalakshmi E (Raji)	Hyderabad, AP INDIA	Programme Lead <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Content Preparation • Presentation • Evaluation 	094926 03778	rajyalakshmi.e08@gmail.com
Suryaprasad P (Surya)	Chicago, IL USA	Programme Coordinator / Liaison <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documentation • Provide Required Tools • Identify the Schools / Colleges • Overall Communication 	001-219-308-2760	padalasurya@yahoo.com
PCT	Yeleswaram, EGDIST AP INDIA	Programme Sponsor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Support 		pct2050@gmail.com www.padalacharitabletrust.org
Smt Umabala B MA (English), MPhil, PGDCA in Teaching, (PhD)		Programme Advisor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Content Review • Feedback 		umabala.b@gmail.com

Partnership

We were approached by some individuals and organizations to partner with on this Programme. Few people even proposed a business model to make this Programme a self sustained in the long run.

However, until we have tried at least two/three pilot projects, we have decided not to partner with anyone. We want to see how far we will be able to reach ourselves with our existing capabilities. We will for sure invite others to join us once we believe that the Programme works the way we expect and we need more hands to extend our reach to benefit more audience. **We believe in “Start Small and Finish BIG”.**

Experiments on this subject by the Programme Lead, Ms Raji

Here are the first few experiments done on this subject by our Programme lead at various colleges over the last few years. This first hand experience has helped us a lot in tweaking the content and also understanding the students better.

N	School / College Name	NO. of Students Addressed	Level of the Audience
1	Z.P.High School, Unagatla Date: Aug 2005	60	7 th , 8 th & 9 th Std
2	Aditya Junior College, Aditya Degree College, Aditya PG College, Kakinada, Rajahmundry; Contact: N. Lakshmi Rajyam, Director Date: 2003-2007	5000 (Over the period of 4 years)	Intermediate, Degree, MBA
3	Eeswar Engineering College, Piduguralla; Contact: Mr. Murthy Date: Dec 18th 2009	400	B.Tech & B.Pharm
4	Sana Engineering College, Kodada, Hyderabad; Contact: Mr. Vasu Date: Dec 26th 2009	2600	B.Tech, B.Pharm, Polytechnic, MBA, MCA
5	Sri Medha Coaching Institute, Rajahmundry Contact: Date: Jan 1st 2010	120	Intermediate & Degree (CA Coaching)
6	Sarada Vidyalayam of Sankurathri Foundation Kakinada Contact: Dr Chandra Sekhar Sankurathri Director Date: Jan 21st 2010	100	8 th , 9 th and 10 th Standard
7	Aditya Jr College & Aditya Degree College Kakinada Contact: Date: Jan 26th thru 29th 2010	1000	Intermediate & Degree

Response from the Students BEFORE, DURING & AFTER the Presentation

Before the presentation they were expecting this to be another routine communications class and hence did not show much interest (especially engineering students).. However, 20 mins after the presentation was started, they were all forced to pay full attentions towards the presenter. At the end, most of them gave very good feedback with a mention about the various clippings that were shown in the presentation. Many girls have shared that their confidence level has gone up.

Were there any questions during / after the presentation?

Actually there were NOT many questions during the presentation. However, several students did come in person after the presentation to ask questions on career guidance, improving soft skills etc.

Good things identified with this experiment?

These visits have really helped the presenter come up with more confidence and better material. There were some remuneration offers by the college administration though we never asked for. We have of course denied these since we wanted to try these experiments at our own cost.

Excerpts from Students' feedback sessions

- 1) Very impressive presentation with great inspiring video clippings
- 2) Time Management techniques offered are very good
- 3) The session helps everyone to focus on specific goals even in the hardest times in life
- 4) Great motivational presentation by an youngster to other youngsters
- 5) Learnt quite a lot from the session especially not to worry a lot for small things in life like scoring less in the exams etc.
- 6) The session has injected me lot of positive energy and now I know I am prepared for any challenge in life