

Mentorship movement

Concept note

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Theme: Mentorship movement for Children between 8 & 15 years of age living in KBK (Korapur-Balangir-Kalahandi) region of Odisha State.

Background: Govindalaya studied into aspiration levels of the Children between 8 & 15 years of age living in KBK (Korapur-Balangir-Kalahandi) region of Odisha only to be shocked. About 42% Children in this region do not have any dream; majority in the rest aspire to do jobs they find someone in their family doing (say jobs related to implementation at bottom level only or menial jobs); very few i.e. about 2% aim at doing something innovative, enterprising and meaningful (such as policy making). Such findings led us to investigate into causative factors behind such low level of aspiration. We realized that such pitiable condition of Children is primarily due to lack of (i) role models in their vicinity, (ii) courage to think, (iii) exposure to world of knowledge and (iv) exposure to people exposed to world of knowledge.

Realization: Children of this area are in acute need of Mentorship – by people who have demonstrated strength in fighting adversity, professionals, people who are self employed, courageous, bold and brave, people exposed to knowledge society, people with strong identity and a positive mindset, people making progress in whatever they do and people with some interesting and inspiring stories to share with Children (known as Mentors)

Proposal: to commence a pilot project to connect Children of this region with Mentors through phone.

Methodology: (i) to identify middle aged mentors (between 35 and 45 years of age) hailing from KBK (Koraput-Balangir-Kalahandi) region living in Cities of opportunity in India and abroad and persuade them to be mentor for one Child in KBK;

(ii) to identify Children in KBK who are in need (known as Mentee), convince them to avail mentorship and persuade parents to understand and enable mentorship; for this purpose we will use Teachers as change manager.

(iii) to introduce one Mentor to one Mentee (Child) by exchanging profiles amongst them and to facilitate a fortnightly 10-15 minutes telephonic conversation between the two to boost aspiration levels of the Child;

(iv) to schedule teleconference between the Mentor & the Mentee according to mutual convenience of the two with consent of the Child's parents and to notify such schedule in advance.

Guidelines: broad guidelines shall be framed by Govindalaya indicating topics of conversations (between the Mentor & the Mentee) including health, physical activities, behavior, education, general knowledge, sports, extracurricular activities, Communication and likes. Further, Mentors would be requested to spend 70% of their time in listening to the child and 30% to guide or share.

Safeguards: Govindalaya would ensure that the age gap between Mentor and the Mentee is not less than 15 years. Initially the conversation would be under supervision of parents of the Child and / or representative of Govindalaya and primarily in simple Oriya.

Immediate Goal: to (i) get exposure for Children of KBK region to world of knowledge through a person doing well in life, (ii) to acknowledge Mentors as sons & daughters of the soil and keep them connected to KBK for Children's cause.

Ultimate Goal: to enhance aspiration level of Children in KBK region.

Evaluation: Periodical evaluation shall be done by Govindalaya on the basis of documented inputs of all stake holders (i.e. parents, teachers, Children, Mentor, and peer group) and objective assessment of progress in child.

Duration: initially the programme will be of 9 months. Depending on outcome, extension or continuation of the programmes shall be decided. At the end of the programme 'best Mentor' and 'best Mentee', 'best parents' and 'best facilitator of mentorship' shall be acknowledged and rewarded suitably.

How can one be a part of this programme:

Persons (female or male) of KBK region in general who are living away preferably in some Metro City in India or abroad and leading a comfortable life can volunteer to be a Mentor. Interested persons can write a mail to us informing (i) name, (ii) present address with contact numbers, (iii) permanent address in KBK with contact number, (iv) present occupation, (v) qualification, (vi) e-Mail Id. And (vii) a half page note about how they raise to their present level.

Persons living in KBK may also recommend persons living away by informing us the above particulars. We will contact them and persuade to spare some time for this noble cause.