## THE PROMISE FOUNDATION.

## **ANNUAL REPORT 1998 - 1999.**

#### 1. Introduction

The basic aim of all The Promise Foundation's programmes, is to enhance the emotional well being of children and youth who come from socially and economically disadvantaged homes.

The *primary target group* of the programme is children and adolescents who are vulnerable to failing and dropping out of school, becoming child labourers, developing anti-social attitudes and being underemployed or unemployed when they grow into adulthood.

The secondary target group of the programme is the teachers and parents of these students.

# 2. The Stimulation Intervention Programme – SIP: (3 to 6 year old children)

#### 2.1. The Promise Foundation Shishukendra

Children from poor homes attend Corporation and Government schools, because education in these schools is free. These schools are available only for children above the age of 7 years. Although the government has started free pre-schools, they are not easily available. Children who do not attend pre-schools or anganwadis are taken by parents to their work spots and they are left there to play and are often unsupervised. As a result, when children finally enter the government primary school (at age 7 years), they are not adequately prepared. They do badly and many of them fail.

The Promise Foundation's Stimulation Programme, is a special, low cost teaching-learning pre-school programme, that is suitable for children in the age range of 3 to 6 years. Until 1998, we were only able to conduct training programmes for teachers from other organisations. Since we did not have a pre-school of our own, we were unable to demonstrate our methods to others who came to learn from us. The need for our own pre school was an urgently felt need. In August 1998, we were able to start our own Shishukendra (pre-school).

The success of the Shishukendra, has been seen at two levels:

• The Promise Foundation Shishukendra has become the model pre-school for the government department of Women and Child Welfare as well as for many other voluntary organisations.

We are now able to use our own Shishukendra as the training ground for the teachers who
come to The Promise Foundation to learn the skills of conducting an efficient and child
friendly pre-school.

# 3. The Programme for Assisted Learning – PAL (*Primary and Middle School Children*)

This programme is for children in primary and middle school, who are at risk to failing and dropping out of school. The schools we reached through the PAL programme this year are as follows:

- 1. Adugodi Government Middle School
- 2. Ejipura Government School.
- 3. Viveknagar Higher Primary Corporation School
- 4 Vivek Nagar Kannada Government School
- 5. Kormangala Government Model Boys Primary School

All schools in the PAL programme are either government or corporation schools located in South Bangalore.

#### 3.1. PAL Time Table:

#### 3.1.1. Small Group Programmes:

We negotiated for 2 hours a week in each of the participating schools. The target group of children are from Std. 4 and 5

1. Adugodi Government Middle School	Monday	3 - 5 p.m.
2. Ejipura Government School.	Tuesday	11.30 - 1.40 p.m.
3. Viveknagar Higher Primary Corporation School	Wednesday	9.45 - 11.45 p.m.
4 Vivek Nagar Kannada Government School	Thursday	10.00 - 11.45 a.m.
5. Kormangala Govt. Model Boys Primary School	Friday	9.30 - 11.00 p.m.

#### 3.1.2. Large Group Programmes:

The large group programmes are planned on a monthly basis. The target groups are from Std. 3, 4, 5 and 6.

#### 3.1.3. Special Children's Day Programme:

All 500 children from the five participating schools who come under the PAL programme participated in a day of stimulation and fun on the 12<sup>th</sup> of November: *Details on page 10*.

#### 3.2. Pre-Intervention Screening

#### 3.2.1. Procedure:

All students were taken through the initial assessments to establish their pre-intervention levels of functioning at school. The Promise Foundation's Literacy Assessment Battery (LAB) was used to screen children. Screening was conducted through the following steps:

#### **Step 1:**

The teachers were asked to identify the children based on the following criteria:

- Those under performing in the class.
- Those with behavioural problems
- Those likely to drop out

#### **Step 2**:

Individual literacy assessments was done on these children, to assess their class-level on arithmetic, reading, writing and spelling skills. Assessment was done based on their curriculum, as follows:

- Arithmetic -Recognition of numbers, basic arithmetic functions.
- Reading- Letters and words
- Spelling- Vowels, Consonants, Spelling, Sentences.

#### **Step 3:**

A total of 135 children in the five schools went through this form of individual assessment. Based on the consolidated scores on the literacy assessment battery, the children were assigned to four ability groups:

<b>Consolidated Score</b>	Group	Characteristics
0-20%	I	Highest Risk of drop-out; will need more
		than three school terms (1 academic year) of
		intensive work.
20% to 40%	II	Rapidly slipping and may need more than
		two terms of intensive work.
40% to 60%	III	Can be mainstreamed with approximately
		two terms of intensive work.
60% and above	IV	Mild difficulties.

#### **Step 4:**

In most schools students from group I to group III were short listed to attend the intensive inputs programme, as they had severe skills deficits requiring immediate inputs. In some schools on the specific request of the teachers students belonging to Group IV were also taken into the Intensive-small group programme.

A total of 129 children have been taken into the intensive, small group inputs in the PAL programme. The school-wise breakup is as follows:

	Name of School	Boys	Girls		Total	
1.	Adugodi Government Middle School	19	8		27	
2.	Ejipura Government School.	7		13		20
3.	3. Viveknagar Higher Primary Corporation School		14		32	
4.	Vivek Nagar Kannada Government School	16	17		33	
5.	Koramangala Govt. Model Boys Primary School		6	11		17

Individual Case Records are being maintained with regular PAL assessments.

#### 3.2.2. Screening Results

- Children who obtained the lowest scores on the screening tool were identified for *small group intensive inputs*.
- The rest of the children were targeted through *large group/ whole class interventions*.

#### 3.3. Programme details and hours of input.

Regular classes began after all assessments were complete. A sample of teaching targets and methods used are presented below:

#### 3.3.1. Intensive, Small Group Programmes:

Subject	<b>Teaching Targets</b>

Arithmetic: • Recognition of Numbers 1-100 (sequentially and randomly)

• Recognition of the plus sign

• Concept of addition

• Ability to add on fingers

• Ability to work out single digit addition

• Recognition of minus sign

• Concept of subtraction

• Ability to carry out single digit subtraction

• Concept of multiplication

• Tables upto 7 and random presentation of the same

Reading: • Recognition of vowels and consonants

• Recognition of signs

• Word attack skills -simple cvcvcv words

• Ability to read simple words with /a/ matraa.

Writing: • Formation of letters and spacing

• Ability to write vowels and consonants

• Ability to write two and three letter words.

Life Skills: • Personal Responsibility

• Turn Taking

*Health education:* • Personal Hygiene.

#### 3.3.2. Whole Class/Large Group Programmes:

**Subject** Method

Health education:

Nutrition and proper eating habits Song, story telling and games. Food Groups and Food Sources Mask games and quizzes.

Design and creativity building activities:

Toy making (food masks)

Origami Basket and Box

All toys made in the large group programmes are taken home by the participants.

#### 3.4. Programme-wise hours of input

#### 3.4.1. PAL small group programme:

School Name Hours of input

per child\*

Kormangala Government Model Boys Primary School
 Ejipura Government School
 hours
 bours

3. Adugodi Government Middle School 18 hours

4. Viveknagar Higher Primary Corporation School
5. Viveknagar Kannada Government School
18 hours
18 hours

#### 3.4.2. PAL large group programme:

School Name Hours of input

per class

1. Ejipura Government Corporation School8 hours2. Kormangala Government Model Boys Primary School4 hours

3. Adugodi Government Middle School 8 hours

4. Viveknagar Higher Primary Corporation School5. Viveknagar Kannada Government School8 hours

#### 3.5. Assessment of Outcomes

The rate of improvement has been varied across schools and with each individual child. Given below is the rate of improvement in academic skills from *one* of the schools, which has children from all four ability groups.

<sup>\*(</sup>see Appendix 1 for days lost to the programme and reasons)

Ejipura School: Pre-intervention and Mid-intervention Comparison for READING SKILLS:

Group (No.)	Group One: 5 children	Group Two: 3 Children.	Group Three: 5 Children
Pre-Assessment Scores	0.4	1.35	11
Mid project -Assmnt. Scores	3.8	5.8	12.5

**Ejipura School :** Pre-intervention and Mid-intervention Comparison for ARITHMETIC Skills.

Group (No.)	Group One:	Group Two:	Group Three:
	5 children	3 children	5 children
Pre-Assessment	6	12	14
Score			
Mid project	17.8	18.5	31
-Assmnt. Score			

**Ejipura School :** Pre-intervention and Mid-intervention Comparison for Spelling Skills.

Group (No.)	Group One:	Group Two:	Group Three:
	5 children	3 children	5 children
Pre-Assessment	0.1	0.3	3
Score			
Mid project	2.5	3.8	8
-Assmnt. Score			

### 4. Chilli Pilli Mela

Chilli Pili Mela, as the name suggests, is a fun fair that left children 'chirping with joy!' 500 children participated in this Mela conducted by The Promise Foundation at the Bal Bhavan on 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1999. The participating schools were from Government and Corporation schools in and around Koramangala, Ejipura, Adugodi and Viveknagara. Most of the children were from our target classes of Std. 3 and Std 6. Schools had been requested to ensure that children who live in especially difficult circumstances should be encouraged to participate in this Mela.

The Chilli Pili Mela was conceived by The Promise Foundation for children who study in Government and Corporation Schools where our Programmes for Assisted Learning (PAL) is being implemented.

While most of the children identified to attend the Mela did come, some stayed away from the programme. The reason: they could not take off from their early morning commitments as domestic workers in houses in and around Koramangala. The daily routine of these children is working as domestic help till around 10 in the morning and then attending school which starts at 11.30 am.

The Mela was a collection of art and craft experiences and interactions with performing artists. Children were exposed to crafts, the performing arts and stimulating games for creativity and personality development.

The Chilli Pili Mela also gave the participating school teachers an opportunity to interact with each other and exchange notes. At least one teacher said she was leaving the Mela with new ideas for her classroom activities.

When a well known teacher training centre in Bangalore (Karnataka State Council for Child Welfare - KSCCW), heard about our plans for the Chilli Pili Mela, they requested that 40 of their trainees be taken into the programme as volunteers, so that the programme could be a learning experience for them as well.

The *Chilli Pili Mela* will be followed up in our weekly programmes in the participating schools. In the follow up sessions we will continue to focus on reading and spelling skills, attention and concentration building exercises, health education and life skills.

All the Head masters and Head mistresses as well as the teachers of the participating schools have been extremely appreciative of the programme and have given us complete support. We do hope that at the end of the academic year 2000 we will have all our beneficiaries happily graduating into the next class!

### 5. Work Awareness and You – WAY (High School Students)

WAY is a careers education programme developed for high school students. Given below are the WAY workshops that have been held in the participating schools since October, 1998.

Government Pre-University College, Madivala.	28th October	Std. 10
Government Pre-University College, Madivala.	29th October	Std. 8
Government High School, Wilson Garden.	4 <sup>th</sup> November	Std.10
Hombbe Gowda High School	5 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 8
Government High School, Wilson Garden.	10 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 8
Government High School, Wilson Garden.	16 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 10
Government High School, Wilson Garden.	17 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 8
Hombbe Gowda High School	19th November	Std. 10
Government Pre-University College, Madivala.	24th November	Std. 8

Government Pre-University College, Madivala.	25 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 10
Government Pre-University College, Madivala.	29th November	Std. 8
Hombbe Gowda High School	30 <sup>th</sup> November	Std. 8

#### 5.1. Findings from Pre-Intervention Screening

WAY pre-intervention screening focused on two main areas:

5.1.1. **Unhelpful Career Beliefs:** It is well known that children from the lower income groups, often firmly hold career beliefs, which do not reflect reality. A number of these beliefs act as hindrances to their career development (*E.g.: Ramesh, does not have a job although he completed high school, therefore, going to school is of no use*). The WAY programme actively addresses students' thinking patterns with the intention of altering unhelpful belief structures. *The Career Belief Distortion Scale (CBDS)*, developed specifically for this purpose was used as the screening device.

The details of the CBDS are as follows:

- The *higher* the score on the CBDS, the higher the level of unhelpful
- thinking.
- Maximum obtainable score on the CBDS is 140.
- iii). The average pre intervention score obtained by students was 86.67,
- indicating a high level of unhelpful thoughts.

Within the students screened, boys tended to score higher on the CBDS than girls, indicating a *higher level of career belief distortions amongst boys* than amongst girls.

The second area that the WAY pre-intervention screening focused on was:

**5.1.2. Career Maturity and Self Efficacy:** Career Maturity reflects the students' ability to make accurate career decisions, in keeping with their age. It is well known that children from lower income groups have a lower career maturity, which causes them to enter the world of work prematurely. The WAY programme focuses on enhancing career maturity. *The Career Preparation Self-Efficacy Scale (CPSES)*, developed specifically for this purpose was used as the screening device.

The details of the CPSES are as follows:

- The *lower* the score on the CPSES, the lower the student's career
- maturity.
- Maximum obtainable score on the CPSES is 140.
- The average pre intervention score obtained by students was 71.97,
- indicating a low career maturity level.

Within the students screened, girls tended to score higher on the CPSES than boys, indicating a higher level of career maturity amongst girls.

#### 5.2. Programmes for Class 8:

TOPIC METHOD

Learning Skills:

• What are the Study Skills Case studies and students as peer counsellors

• Paying Attention Breathing and Concentration Exercises

• Scheduling Ski1ls Making daily timetables

Introspection:

• My talent areas Toy making (stick puppets)

#### 5.3. Programmes for Class 10:

TOPIC METHOD

Career Guidance:

Understanding Myself
 Understanding my Beliefs
 Aptitude and Interest Test.
 Case Studies and Role Plays.

• Planning for the Future: Case studies and Role Plays on career

preparation self-efficacy.

• Understanding the World of Work Careers information.

• Developing Career Alternatives Work Sheets and Discussion.

Case studies and child as peer counselor.

Learning Skills:

What are Study Skills
 Paying Attention
 Case studies and students as peer counselors
 Breathing and Concentration Exercises

• Scheduling Ski1ls Making daily timetables

#### 5.4. Outcomes

The impact of the WAY programme was assessed after a part of the interventions were completed. Findings are summarised below:

**5.4.1.** Career Belief Distortion Scale: This scale assesses beliefs that hold back a child from making informed career choices and initiate planning for skills development.

Pre-Intervention Average Score: 86.67. Post-Intervention Average Score: 58.86.

Trends at this point in the project indicate a fairly significant\_reduction in the level of unhelpful career beliefs amongst students.

This implies that the interventions have helped students to view their situation, their careers and their futures in a more positive and proactive fashion. It is anticipated that when the time comes for students to actually make career and life choices, they will be better equipped to make practical and accurate choices.

**5.4.2.** Career Preparation Self-Efficacy Scale: Career Maturity reflects the students' ability to make accurate career decisions, in keeping with their age. This scale assesses the students awareness and planning for careers that he or she may be suited for.

Pre-Intervention Average Score: 71.97. Post-Intervention Score: 95.67.

Trends clearly indicate that student career maturity levels have *gone up* after the intervention.

This implies that the interventions have enhanced students' ability to make accurate career decisions. It is anticipated that their career planning efforts would begin even before they complete high school in an effort to prepare themselves for entrance to courses they are suitable for.

#### 5.4.3. Excerpts of feedback received from students in the WAY programme:

<u>Shilpa, Government High School</u>: I feel confident now. I now know what I am cut out for. This session on careers enlightened me very much.

<u>Ratnamma, Government High School</u>: *Now I know how to handle time, and now I know how to make time to study. Now it is easy to plan my career.* 

<u>P. Eshwari, Government High School</u>: Whatever has been taught by you has been useful. Now I know to cope up with my studies. I also feel confident to shape my career in the future. on my own.

<u>Purshotham, Government High School, Wilson Garden</u>: We should have been exposed to this programme from 8th Std itself We would have done more justice to our studies. This programme has enlightened me to take up a career depending on my aptitude and interest, and also to be more practical in career selection in future.

Muniraju, Government High School, Wilson Garden: I liked the programme which you conducted. The only thing that I was upset about is that you gave a lunch break!

#### 6. Case Studies

#### 6.1. NOORJAHAN.

Noorjahan joined the Ejipura Government School this academic year in Std. 5. She was sent to the PAL programme with teachers evaluating her as dull, low in comprehension, uncommunicative and withdrawn. Noorjahan appeared to be a sad and lonely child. Noorjahan clearly stated that she hated school and would like to drop out.

Interestingly, Noorjahan *fared well* on our assessment of academic skills. We were surprised! Her only Noorjahan's problem was with the Kannada language. She had been studying in an English medium school prior to joining the Kannada medium in Ejipura Government School. A shift in school and medium of instruction had been forced on Noorjahan after her father had a sudden turn in finances and loss of employment. Unable to pay the fees of her previous private school, Noorjahan had been shifted from Andhra Pradesh to a government school in Karnataka. The alien language and culture began to take its toll on Noorjahan's coping and academics from the first month in school.

During the PAL pre-intervention assessment we were able to pin point Noorjahan's difficulties. She was given intensive input in Kannada reading and writing and oral communication. Noorjahan was quick in learning and grasped the new language almost effortlessly. Teachers were happy. Simultaneously, Noorjahan who had been complaining of not liking school and wanting to stay at home, began making friends. She now had a language with which to communicate with her new friends!

Today Noorjahan is a class favourite. Teachers are all praises for her. We have sent her back to her class as she has reached her class level and is capable if independent functioning.

The teachers have substituted her place in the PAL programme by sending in another child named Padma with a request to make her like Noorjahan!

#### **6.2. SUNIL V.**

Sunil is 12 years old and studying in class 5 in the Adugodi Government School. Sunil was referred to the PAL programme with complaints that he was very restless, distracted and disruptive in class. His attendance in school was below 20%. On the days he did attend school he would wander around the school campus avoiding entering the class. On most days however he was found playing truant from school. He usually preferred to wander to the Majestic Bus Stand (the main bus terminal near Bangalore Central Station, approximately 8 km. from his home). Once he reached his destination he could be found begging, often claiming that he could neither talk nor see!

Our pre-intervention assessment revealed that Sunil's problems were more in the behavioural domain than in the academic-skills domain. PAL observations showed that Sunil has extraordinary memory. If we read numbers strings to him, he had the capacity to recall them with no errors. He has quickly learned the tables and is now ahead of his class. But our target in the PAL classes goes beyond academic skills training.

Sunil is a very sensitive child. He gets hurt very easily. Our target here is to make him a responsible citizen, help him unlearn the behaviors he has learnt and inculcate in him the interest to continue school. Over time we see a gradual but definite change in Sunil. His attendance has improved. He comes to the PAL programme regularly. When the PAL books were distributed to the participating students, Sunil was the only child who came back without his book and demanded another book. He was taught the concept of accountability. Though it took some time, he seems to now understand the demands the PAL teachers make of him. He attends classes and has not misplaced his book again!

#### 6.3. MANGALA

Mangala was rarely seen in school. She was seen for only two sessions in the PAL programme. When Ratna, the PAL project co-ordinator decided to find out why Mangala disappears from school, she heard a sad tale. The teachers told Ratna that Mangala had a hormonal problem which apart from making her very short (dwarfism) leaves her exhausted. Her family had reported that she was too exhausted to walk to school and hence would be able to attend school only on days when her father was free to cycle her to school.

Ratna decided to talk directly to Mangala and ask her if she could make alternate arrangements to attend PAL classes regularly. After much persuading Mangala started talking. She said she could cope with exhaustion but she found the teasing and pinching by other school children and passers-by, extremely difficult to bear. She did not want to attend school because she was made to feel she had a disability.

Ratna uses her time with Mangala to talk to her about coping with teasing and unfair labelling. Mangala's classmates were made to understand how their teasing could make Mangala miserable. They all felt very embarrassed about what they had done and were sorry about it. For the past few months Mangala has been regular to the PAL programme. She is behind her class in basic academic skills but is slowly catching up.

#### 6.4. KATAYYA.

Katayya studies in Std. 10 at the Government High School in Wilson Garden. His father works as a bus driver in the KSRTC and has had a history of liver problems following alchoholism. Katayya takes turns with his mother to take care of his ailing father. Since the last two years he has been supplementing the family income by working as a helper in a neighbouring screen - printing unit. He has been trained on - the - job and enjoys working with colour and paint.

Katayya found two aspects of our programmes with him useful. First, he said he was immensely helped with the scheduling skills taught to him. He says he is able to manage his time between school and the screen-printing unit and evening study better. He has also decided that he will give complete attention to finishing the Std. 10 exams. He understands that with a school leaving certificate he can enrol in a screen printing course in an ITI or polytechnic and get a certificate. He also understands that such a course will allow him to open his own screen printing unit and

that there are government loans to facilitate his plans. This he learned from the World of Work section of the WAY programme.

#### 6.5. VASANTHA.

Teachers in school report that Vasantha, who is in Std. 8 always comes late to school. Her father also as a driver in the KSRTC and has a severe alcoholism problem. Her mother works as a domestic worker. The reason Vasantha is late to school everyday is because she works as her mother's assistant. She helps with the sweeping and swabbing of rooms while her mother does the utensils and clothes. Vasantha comes to school poorly kempt and has few friends. She finds making friends especially difficult because of a mild stammer. She says she does not particularly enjoy school work.

Vasantha was not very participative in the WAY workshops she appeared to be drowsy and very tired. She was unable to concentrate for long and refused to take any initiative in the toy making section of the programme. She is however much more receptive in one-to-one sessions. Vasantha is one of the students we are hoping will respond to our WAY team during individual sessions.

#### 7. Conclusion

The Promise Foundation's programmes continued smoothly over the year 1998-1999. The demand for our programmes is steadily rising with more schools asking for our interventions. It is anticipated in the coming year, that we would be able to increase our reach by about 25%. We also plan over the coming year to lay a higher emphasis on teacher training for the PAL and WAY programmes and thereby increase the reach of these interventions.

### Appendix I

# PAL PROGRAMME: Days lost to the programme due to school holidays.

DATE AFFECTED	REASON	SCHOOL
June 28th to July 9 <sup>th</sup>	Government School strike.	All Schools.
August 11th	Solar Eclipse	Viveknagar Corporation
August 16 <sup>th</sup>	Independence Holiday extension	Adugodi Government School
August 26th	RH Yajur Upakarma	Viveknagar Govt
School		
August 31st	School Tests	Ejipura Government School
September 8th	Nativity of Mary	Viveknagar Corporation
September 11th	Festival Shopping	Koramangala Govt.
Schl		
September 13th	Ganesha Festival	Adugodi Government Schl
18th September	Teachers Meeting	Koramangala Govt
Schl		
23rd September	Ration Giving day	Viveknagar
Government Schl		
25th September	Health Class by a local NGO	•
4th to 15 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Mid Term Examinations	All schools
16 <sup>th</sup> to23rd Oct.	Dusserah Holidays	All school
27 <sup>th</sup> Oct.	Dussserah Holidays continue	<u> </u>
6th to 10 <sup>th</sup> Nov.	Deepavali Holidays	All schools
17 <sup>th</sup> November	Film Show	Viveknagar
Corporation		
22 <sup>nd</sup> .November	Heavy rains in Bangalore	Adugodi Schl
30th November	Rajyotsava Celebration in School	Ejipura Government School

*Note:* Given the fact that the PAL and WAY programmes function to a tight schedule, with clear targets for every session, it is vital that we maintain this record. Such records help us plan to accommodate for lost days and ensure that target oriented inputs to students continue.