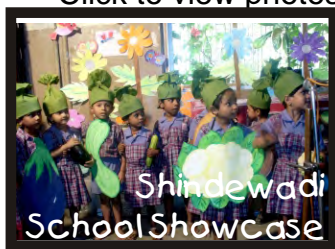


Akanksha Update Dec 09 - Feb 2010

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Stand up and Notice!- The service project initiated by Akanksha for using paper bags around..

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A fun-filled carnival with food and music celebrating the hardwork of the volunteers...

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Continuing to aim high and achieve higher. Take a look at our achievers..

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An inter- centre dance and drama competition in commemoration of Latif, an Akanksha alumus

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Finance
Run, running; Ran for Mumbai Marathon...!
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Education -Mumbai

The teacher's retreat in December was focused on getting to know each other at Marve beach where everyone got a chance to interact with each other through conversations and games.

Education-Pune

One of our centers, Kothrud Morning did a service project on the use of paper bags. The kids made 3 different types of bags specific to the needs of a medical shop, a vegetable vendor and a grocer's shop. The kids went around in groups to address shopkeepers and customers about the need to shift to paper bags. Within an hour, one could see hundreds of paper bags with the Akanksha Sun displayed in shops. Watching customers carry these bags was the ultimate reward for Kothrud Akanksha kids.

Three of our senior teachers attended a creative writing workshop conducted by Renu Balakrishnan. It was a rejuvenating experience in terms of location and thrilling in terms of content, so much so that they came back to Pune filled with the new realization that they could be writers! As an extension of this workshop, these teachers replicated the activities with all the other teachers at the teachers meeting in the lush green surroundings of the University of Pune. Many thanks to the organizers of the Alibaug workshop and to our teachers who shared it with others.

As part of the Joy of Giving Week organized in October 2009, 3 Akanksha students got an opportunity to spend a day learning cricket from none other than Sachin Tendulkar!

Ecstatic about getting an opportunity to step on to a cricket field with the greatest cricketer.

Rohit Patil, 14, said: "I actually got an opportunity to shake hands with Mr .Sachin Tendulkar. He taught me how to hold the bat and ball."

Sheikh Alim, from Sunshine centre, felt that it was an opportunity of a lifetime to meet the cricket legend. "Now we know why Sachin is a star. He is well mannered and a good human being. He told us not to get scared to make mistakes. He told us that perfection can be attained by making mistakes," Alim said.



Beyond School- Mumbai

A beyond school retreat was held in Mumbai for children who are about to take their board exams. The kids attended sessions on timetable planning, sharing and learning through inspirational stories as well as an art session where they created colourful jigsaw paintings.

A daylong training session on being an effective mentor was held for our mentors by Mr. Rohan Singhal, Director, Energy Infinite and Ms. Jalpa Joshi, Director, Bespoke Life and People Management Services.

Beyond School- Pune

Akanksha mentors spend 2 hours every week to guide our adolescent children and positively influence them through their growing phase. We celebrated Mentor's Day on Feb 20th to recognize and thank them for their efforts. It was a fun-filled evening planned for both the mentors and the mentees. The highlight of the evening was the open interactive session between the various Mentor groups.

Social Leadership Program (SLP)- Mumbai

SLP leaders' focus was on learning all about Rights. Stuti didi conducted a session on rights of children with disabilities; Vinita didi from Satark Nagrik Sangathan conducted a session on Right to Information. Abodh bhaiya from Welfare of Stray Dogs conducted a session on Rights of Animals. We also conducted sessions on rights of Senior citizens, Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Transgenders.

On the occasion of Republic Day our leaders went around the city appreciating and thanking public servants who work relentlessly everyday to serve us policemen, traffic cops, taxi drivers, BMC workers and many others.

The **Bopodi English Medium School** in Pune had its first ever showcase where the children presented their learning from the last six months. It was a great experience for the kids as they interacted confidently with different people and felt proud showcasing their learning to all the visitors.

Another showcase was held at the **Abhyudaya Nagar School** where the learnings were presented in four main groups areas - Math, Hindi, English, Science & Art. The children put on a number of skits for parents and visitors, showcasing the school's emphasis on self-confidence and teamwork. A new addition to the school's annual event was a parents' showcase, where a variety of handcrafted items were displayed in order to highlight the increasing participation of the school's parents community.

KCT Vidya Niketan School celebrated its second annual Sports Day which was flagged off by the school mascot the puppy PATCH (named after the school motto 'Participation Above Triumph Counts Highest'). The four houses competed gloriously in the march past, races and human pyramids. The students of the third and fourth standard kept the audience entertained with a ribbon display. The event ended with the Blue House emerging victorious.

The Annual Day celebrations at KCT Vidya Niketan School were based on the theme of "The Power of Choice". The event highlights were a presentation of the school annual report, a powerful drama based on terrorism, and awards for the students. The evening ended with a beautiful recitation directed by Mr. Tom Alter - strains of Nehru's 'Tryst with Destiny' speech wove in and out of Tagore's 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' and Frost's 'lovely promise filled woods, deepened by the melodies of 'Ai Vatan' and 'Ai Malik'. The school had special visitors from Kashmir girls from the Borderless World Foundation, an organization that takes care of children orphaned in the Kashmir militancy.

Matoshri English Medium School (MEMS) published its second newsletter for the parents.

A postal savings meeting was held at **Savitri Bai Phule School** for the parents as a result of which over 100 parents opened their savings accounts. The team at Savitri Bai Phule School organized a Holi Awareness campaign, which included a walk in the community with the kids carrying posters and cards to encourage people not to waste water or use chemical colours.

Four members of our school team attended a training organized by Disha, which focused on the vision of a learning school, understanding change theory and practices in schools, designing a school improvement planning and sustaining change in schools and the role of a leader as a change agent.

A team from Yale University came to visit the school team and presented their proposal for developing a new teacher-training institute.

Learning to lead (LTL)- Mumbai

LTL students attended many field trips as part of their learning experience.

Students of class 7th and 8th attended an exhibition on aerial photo shots of the Earth focusing on environmental and social issues.

Students of class 8th went for Gyan Mela organized by “Our Children”, which exhibited projects on Recycling, Future Houses, Historical Movements, etc.

Students of class 7th and 8th went to the Kala Ghoda Festival to experience the art and Culture of our country.

Kumaar Bagrodia, CEO of Leapvault, a change leadership organization in association with “Who Moved My Cheese” came and spoke to the class 9th students about change and leadership. As a follow up activity, LTL students were asked to design the logo and trophy for the Global Change Leadership Awards being instituted by Leapvault.

Parvin and Priyanka, alumni of LTL program, have been doing an incredible job as tour guides with Deepa Krishnan's Mumbai Magic Tours. Tourists who have been with them have given excellent reviews about their work.

We would like to thank Mahesh Tutorials, Mahtab Sir and Mahesh Sir for their support.

Achievements

Ganeshri received a scholarship from her school for standing first in class 8th and scoring highest in Science and Maths.

Rahul got a scholarship from his school for general proficiency (behaviour and studies). He was among the top 75 students in the city selected for the Art Competition conducted by JJ School of Arts and he secured 33rd position.

Atul won 2nd prize for his project on 'Rain Water Harvesting' in an inter school science exhibition. Now he will be competing at the district level. Atul also got 3rd prize for best 'teaching aids' in the same exhibition. Kandarp won 2nd prize for 'best out of waste' in the exhibition. He also won 2nd prize for handwriting and 3rd prize in drawing. 48 schools participated in this exhibition.

Tauqeer Sheikh a recent graduate of LTL program received the Dean's award for securing 2nd rank (72%) in HSC (XIIth Board exam) in the Arts Stream at Wilson College. Tauqeer also achieved a rare feat of being the first student in First Year Bachelor of Arts to be awarded the Ram Murthy Award for “Good Academic Record and Outstanding Social Work”, the most prestigious award at Wilson College. He also received a cash prize of Rs. 5,000.

Tauqeer: we are really proud of you!

Art & PR -Mumbai

X'Mas Art Exhibitions: Our X'Mas Art Exhibition at Srila, Fiona and Tina didi's homes was a grand success! This year saw a range of exciting products made by Akanksha children - bags, furniture, candles, notebooks and painted shoes & kits for children.

A big thank you to Srila, Fiona and Tina didi for hosting this exhibition!

Art Workshops: An art workshop based on making musical instruments out of paper plates was conducted for children at The Mill Culture Crawl at Mathura Das Mills in Parel. Art workshops were also conducted at the birthday parties of Tista, Shiv and Rioni.

Stalls: We would like to thank Indus International, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Fame Adlabs, Amercian School of Bombay, Indian Merchant of Chambers, and Dhirubhai Ambani International School for giving us the opportunity to put up art stalls. We would like to thank students from Jai Hind College and Government Law College for representing Akanksha in their college festival.



Our little kids from the JB Petit centre gave a dance performance at The Kala Ghoda Festival on 12th February 2010.

KGM centre kids also performed at The Institute of Chemical Technology's Festival.

Latif and Zafar, Akanksha alumni, worked with Nitin Das on his film called 'Jadui Pankh' starring many Akanksha students, including Zafar.

The screening of the film took place on 11th February at The Kala Ghoda Festival.

Art & PR -Pune

To commemorate the completion of a ten-year partnership between Forbes Marshall and Akanksha, we organized an art workshop for the Forbes Marshall employees and Akanksha children from FM 2 centre. The theme of the workshop was 'giving' and based on the Shel Silverstein story about the 'Giving Tree'. Everyone created their own trees in Madhubani traditional Indian art from .

It was an honor and a moment of pride for us to welcome Dr. Horst Koehler, the German President, and the delegation from the Federal Republic of Germany at the Thermax Factory during his visit to Pune. The visitors were welcomed by the children from the Muskaan Centre who sang " Hum honge kamyab".

We would like to thank Sundeep bhaiya from Credit Suisse for conducting a session on study techniques with the children at Forbes Marshall centre.

We would like to thank WIN/Max Mueller Bhavan, AXA Business Services, Credit Suisse, Thermax Ltd and Malaka Spice for inviting us to put up art stalls. The response was great at all the stalls.



Sports Program -Mumbai

Our children participated in the Valentine Hockey Special organized by I &G Partners, interactive games organized by the NGO 'Down to Earth', and competitions organized by the Karnataka Sporting Association.

We are delighted to see six of our boys selected for a year-long coaching at the Soccer School of Excellence.

Akanksha children outshone all other teams at 'Khel Khel Mein', the Concern Indian Athletic Meet, by winning 19 medals and also the championship trophy in the female category. Priya from the Mankhurd Alexandra centre was awarded the best athlete amongst the 600 participants.

Sports Program-Pune

Akanksha's annual Sports Day was held in Pune in January where close to 750 children enthusiastically participated in the event. There were two main categories: fun games and major games. It was amazing to see the overwhelming number of volunteers present on that day.

A very special thanks to the team from WNS who showed up in great numbers and helped us manage everything so effortlessly. We would also like to thank the Loyola and St Joseph School for their continued support by providing us the space for the event.

The Udaan team organized a talk on Police and the Armed forces as a career choice with the children at Forbes Marshall 1 centre.

Our children participated in an inter-school Football competition, where they played with students from some of the prestigious schools of the city. Some of the other prominent sports events include, Pune Marathon, inter-NGO Cricket competition conducted by Innocent Heroes Foundation and Maharashtra Cricket Association and inter-centre competitions at Akanksha.



HR- Mumbai

Volunteer Carnival - Staff members stood poised at various stalls dressed in funny glasses, wigs and clown noses. The volunteers came in with curious stares which soon turned into big smiles and laughter as they enjoyed multiple games from ring toss, bucket toss, balloon darts, face painting, mehendi, to poker. The event was a celebration of all the hard work and dedication our volunteers give to our students and the organization.

HR-Pune

On the occasion of International Volunteers Day (5th December), Akanksha Pune office was swarming with volunteers. The entire team got together to thank our volunteers for their continued support and commitment. The event was huge success with close to 80 volunteers participating in fun games and activities and everyone leaving with big smiles on their faces! Many thanks to Thermax for giving us the permission to use their premises for the event.

Social Work- Mumbai

The Mumbai Social Work team organized a special event in the memory of Latif, an Akanksha alumnus, on the 7th of February. Students performed on various themes, from the story of Buddha to the consequences of terrorism. Thank you to all the participants and congratulations to all the winning teams.

Haji Bachu Ali and Shankaralaya Temple, Chembur, conducted eye camps for the Bandra and Mankhurd centers respectively.

Parent meetings focused on creating awareness about breast cancer and HIV/AIDS. The session on HIV/ AIDS was made possible by the help of Chirag Foundation and the SLP team. Sessions were also conducted on explaining the importance of saving and various saving options.

The Social Work team, in collaboration with the Maharashtra Pollution Control Board and Eco Exist, spread the message of safer and eco-friendly Holi in our centres and communities. Natural colors made from plants and flowers were distributed to all our kids.

Social Work- Pune

We are thankful to command hospital for supporting the medical tests for three of our centres: Arushi, Anand, and St. Crispins Home.

Children from Thermax morning and Kirloskar centres played a cricket match, an incentive promised for their attendance and good behavior.

Nilofer, an Akanksha Alumni currently studying in college, addressed a group of parents from the Sunshine centre on issues of early marriage.

Mr. Milind Deshmukh & Mrs. Mahajan from 'Andhashradha Nirmulan Samiti' conducted a session on superstitions with the helpers and similar sessions are now being planned at our parent meetings.

A big thank you to...

The Mumbai Marathon got 2010 off to a speedy start and we would like to thank the following companies and individuals Deutsche Bank, Drive India, Franklin Templeton, Marico, Mecklai Financial Services, Novartis, Thermax, Unichem, Dhillon Singh, Dr BK Viswanathan Amit and Archana Chandra & Bain Capital

The Uniform Project visited Bombay and we were very excited to have Sheena and Moynihan in our centres and schools interacting with the children and seeing and learning a lot more about the work they have supported. Maithili Ahluwalia of Bungalow 8 hosted a special evening soiree for The Uniform Project, which has to date, raised over USD 50,000 for Akanksha. Go to www.theuniformproject.com

Richard Cribb and his team from National Grid made a visit to the Muskaan centre in Pune, which they have been sponsoring for the last 3 years. They gave all the children pencil boxes personalized with their names as a special gift.

Tech Mahindra has confirmed to continue support in 2010-11 for the Learning to Lead Project and for 50% of the funding requirement of two of the Akanksha run municipal schools in Pune. This is a great boost to the project and confirms their belief in the large strides we are making in providing quality education to less privileged children.

Poorvi Shah our Learning to Lead Project Leader held a series of talks and meetings in Singapore in December and we would like to specially thank Payal Nayar and Shefali Suradkar for arranging and co-ordinating this visit.

Thank you to our other generous supporters

Gunvati J Kapoor Medical Relief charitable Trust, Harish Raman, Mastek Foundation Giving Programme, Globe Op Financial Services and Mr Baman Cama.

We would like to thank Mahesh Tutorials, Mahtab Sir and Mahesh Sir for their support.

You can now view the Akanksha Annual Report 2008-09 on our website. Click http://www.akanksha.org/docs/annual_report_09-10.pdf

Dear Supporters,

The end of the tax year is coming up and you have a few weeks to make a donation which will be deductible against your income for 2009-10. If you haven't made a donation this year then think about the difference it can make. Children getting a better education, girls more empowered to control their future livelihood and families, parents being more supportive of their children, more suitable employees in the market place, teachers more empathetic and enabled to teach productively and numerous other benefits that happen because of our long term education intervention.

You can make a cheque out directly to The Akanksha Foundation and send it to our office . Please clearly mark the envelope to Fundraising Team and we will ensure that you receive the receipt and tax deduction certificate within two weeks of the year end.

Alternatively you can log onto www.giveindia.org/give/pledgepage/theakankshafoundation and make a donation through the Give India Tax Saving Challenge where the 7 top NGOs stand to win a top up of the funds raised. Give India will send the receipt and certificate directly to you. What better way to increase the power of the donation you make and educate more children effectively.

You can also donate online.

India: <https://www.billdesk.com/pgmerc/akanksha/AKANKSHADetails.htm>

US: http://www.nycharities.org/donate/c_donate.asp?CharityCode=1461

UK: <http://www.justgiving.com/kinoe>

Akanksha is urgently in need of spaces to run classes for the after school program. We require rooms in the Colaba, Mahalaxmi/Lower Parel/Worli and Bandra areas from Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 12am or 2pm to 5pm. Art classes are run on Saturday and Sunday and the timings would be the same.

Akanksha has been able to provide education to thousands of children through utilizing rooms that would otherwise remain empty. Your assistance in helping us to source these would be a huge help and give more kids a chance at improving their lives.

Please contact admin@akanksha.org if you have any space available.

United States

The Akanksha Fund Inc.

We extend a warm welcome to the new Board Members of The Akanksha Fund Inc.:
Yvonne Dadoo de Lewis, Brande Stellings and Abby Young Moses

The Uniform Project visits India

The Uniform Project is a year-long fundraiser for the Akanksha Foundation, to fund the education of children living in Indian slums. Starting May 2009, Sheena Matheiken has pledged to wear one dress for one year as an exercise in sustainable fashion. There are 7 identical dresses, one for each day of the week. Every day she reinvents the dress with layers, accessories and all kinds of accouterments which are vintage, hand-made, or hand-me-down goodies to know more visit www.theuniformproject.com .

United Kingdom

KINOE (Kids in Need of Education)

KINOE is holding an art exhibition at Channing School in North London. All the girls attended art workshops which were run by Sweta Shah (an ex Akanksha teacher). They learnt how to paint using different traditional Indian techniques. The pictures they created will be on sale along side 90 framed paintings produced by Akanksha children.

The school is having a dress up as an Indian day, where the pupils and teachers are planning to come to school wearing traditional Indian clothes. At break time the children will be able to buy a popadum as a snack! An Indian dancer will be coming in to do traditional Indian dancing with the girls.

Amanda Faber (from KINOE) gave an assembly on Akanksha and tried to highlight the differences between the Akanksha children and their own privileged lives.

KINOE also held a very successful and enjoyable wine tasting evening in February, where a small group of KINOE supporters were able to sample a choice of Tuscan wines and learnt about them by wine expert, James Handford. This again raised money for Akaksha.

We are already planning our very successful annual curry and quiz night, which will take place on Thursday 14th October.