



b - In Touch

Vol. XII



January 2009

" Educating minds.... strengthening roots.... To build a better tomorrow "

Editorial Column

Dear Friends,

We are proud to present to you the third anniversary issue of our in-house newsletter featuring the various activities, events, festival celebrations, etc. conducted by **Buniyaad** for our children.

Over the years, **Buniyaad** has moved from strength to strength and it has been a matter of pride for **b-In Touch** to mirror its growth. Our news letter does not merely catalogue the various activities of **Buniyaad** but is also a reflection of the hopes, dreams and the immense potential of our little ones – the future of our nation. Just as a healthy flowering plant symbolises the love and care showered on it by the gardener, so also at our playschools & nurseries the values and education imbibed by the children embodies the love and values nurtured by **Buniyaad**. Their success in curricular and extra-curricular activities reflects the patience and perseverance of our teachers and volunteers.

On the occasion of the 3rd anniversary of our newsletter, I take this opportunity to thank all those who have been involved in our journey – the volunteers and the sponsors, both corporate and individuals who have extended their support and have become indispensable members of the **Buniyaad** family. They have lovingly and freely given their time and themselves to our children adding joy to their learning. I also thank the teachers and the parents who are ever-willing to go that extra mile for their children so that they learn in the manner best suited to them. And above all, thanks to our little children themselves, our little angels, who have been the guiding lights on our journey.

Regards,
Ms. Binu Pillai,
Editor.

◆ Straw Art Competition:

A child's world is resplendent with colours and fun. What better way for a child to enjoy and showcase his artistic talents than to create an extraordinary piece of art with colourful ordinary straws, glue and chart paper? A **Straw Art Competition** was held during the week of **December 15 – 20** for the children at their Nurseries.

The children, as part of their curriculum were learning to create art with straws. They were told about the competition and that they all have to pitch in together to make the best poster. The children were given a chart



The Winning Masterpiece! : Milind Nagar Nursery



The Runners' Up! : Vikhroli Parksit

paper with a free-hand boundary on it along with colourful straws of one size. The children sat around the charts with their teacher and watched the teacher adeptly drawing a pattern inside the boundary. Thereafter, they received instructions on how to proceed. It was a wonderful sight to see them choose a straw, examine it, give it to the teacher for cutting to size and then systematically paste it in position on to the chart. They used straws of different sizes and colours to make standing lines, sleeping lines, zigzag patterns and triangles unconsciously reinforcing their concepts of lines and shapes. The masterpieces are above for you to see. The on-site competition was judged by Xoriant volunteers **Mr. Tushar Suvarna** and **Mr. Ujjwal Trivedi**. The completed art was judged by **Ms. Shailaja Desai**, a connoisseur of fine arts.

◆ **Diwali Celebrations:**

Diwali was celebrated at the **Buniyaad** Nursery, Parksite with great spirits. *Diwali* as a festival evokes a very festive and party kind of mindset.



It was festival time and the vacations were around the corner. There can't be a better time for getting the best response from the children. The children were told about the festival, as how houses are cleaned and decorated and that it is a festival of lights. To give their personal touches to the meaning of *Diwali*, children were given earthen lamps to be painted. The festival brought out the best of their creativity. The children used their fingers and Fevicyl and some wonderful colour combinations turned the otherwise plain lamps into a delight to watch. The silver and gold dust on their work and their faces brought glows on their ever bright faces. The lamps were given to them to take home. That way the scope of their appreciation of art also increased. The pride on their faces was a great treat to watch. The children were given sweets. They also received bubble blow kits as *Diwali* gifts. They couldn't wait to open their packs and were getting impatient and excited. "*Happy Diwali*" greetings filled the classroom. Festivals are fun and they get added flavour when celebrated with innocents like our nursery kids.

◆ **General Medical Camps:**

Buniyaad conducted its 2nd round of **General Medical Camps** for children at Milind Nagar and Vikhroli Parksite Nurseries on the 12th and 19th of **December, 2008** respectively. These medical camps have brought about an increased awareness of health, nutrition and hygiene amongst the parents too. It was encouraging to see that



this time some fathers had brought their children for check-up & assumed responsibility. **Dr. Usha Chennuru**, our panel doctor, was happy to see the improved health of the children and the response of parents.

◆ **Christmas Day Celebrations:**

A lot of cheer, laughter and excitement marked the *Christmas Day* celebrations at the **Buniyaad** Nurseries. The children were told about the story of *Christmas*, Santa Claus and the tradition of decorating Christmas Trees. Chart paper cutouts of a large green Christmas tree



complete with cotton 'snow' was readied for children to decorate. The children set about pasting glistening silver stars and gaily coloured festoons in slanting lines on to the Christmas tree. The excited children were vying with each other to paste their star onto the edges of the tree branches. This was followed by singing *Christmas Carols* like '*Jingle Bells*', etc. Wafers and cake were distributed which rounded off the *Christmas Day* celebrations.

◆ **Reports:**

The parents had expectantly come to meet the teacher and understand the progress of their wards. The teachers and volunteers discussed every child with their respective parents and counseled wherever required.

Children's Day Celebration



Today children arrived in their new dresses as they were told. They were looking very happy. I told them Chacha Nehru's story. Everyday, Chacha Nehru put a red rose on his coat. I showed Chacha Nehru's picture in the book in which he wore on the coat a red rose. In this book, there were other pictures. The children asked, "Whose pictures are these?" So, I told them about Indira Gandhi, Mahatma Gandhi Subhashchandra Bose, etc.

Afterwards, we played many games like 'Touch the given colour', 'Jump in – Jump out', 'Jumping Jack', etc. The children happily recited many poems. Then I fed them Chana-Usal.

In this manner, we celebrated "Children's Day" in the Park Site Nursery.

Ms. Bharati C. Ahire,
Teacher.

(Ms. Bharati Ahire has sent in her first ever English article written by her in her own words. We laud her efforts.)

Different Strokes

Children have this knack of evoking straight-faced laughter..... Unintentional gestures and words from the little ones can make some run of the mill situations look so funny.

One day, we were at the nursery doing the colouring sheets. As good teachers we were hand holding the kids and making them understand the colouring patterns. They all looked as if they have been doing it for many years. They were looking quite confident which might be because they knew the teachers are either ways going to repeat the “what to do and what not to do” instructions many more times. Not that they are inattentive, but they know that these are not one-time only instructions, if not this time, I can always understand it the next time.

So, the colouring session started. One of the girls in the class was not a very great colour lover and hence we had to pitch in to make her finish her work. I was holding her hand and guiding her, but her eyes were busy surveying her colleagues. That little artist was busy giving out comments as to who is doing what and why the other person’s artwork was not up to her mark. All this while I was holding her hands and her eyes and attention were nowhere near her own sheet! In the process, many of the strokes we did were going out of the confined picture lines. I was little irritated as she was busy finding something to comment about except paying attention to her own sheet. I told her in a slightly reprimanding tone that her colouring is not coming out right. She just turned her head towards the paper and saw and understood what I meant. Immediately, she sprang back at me saying, “Arrey, you do it properly, see the lines are not right.” I was taken aback and looked at her surprised at being found wrong. The girl continued saying, “That is why I said you should hold my hand properly. See how you have spoiled my picture now.”

I just did not have words at that moment to tell anything to that little girl. But I was for sure convinced this girl will have a great future in politics or in the back office of our foreign affairs ministry. This knack of turning the tables is an inborn talent. Not many have it!!

**Ms. Radha Kannan,
Volunteer.**

A Heartfelt Tribute.....

Buniyaad pays tribute to all the real-life heroes like *Mr. Hemant Karkare, Mr. Vijay Salaskar, Mr. Ashok Kamte*, Staff of the Taj & Oberoi Hotels and many other unknown ones who laid down their lives discharging their duties as conscious Indian citizens. We also extend our heartfelt condolences to families of the innocent ones who lost their lives.

A Satisfying Journey

Today there is a lot of pride in the voices of a parent when they say that their ward is studying in an English medium school. Not just that, parents wish they too could speak English so as to be able to assist their own children in education. Interest levels to learn English by one and all is on the rise.

When I was presented with an opportunity to be a part of an adult English conversation programme to teach a group who seemed very inclined to learn the language, I was elated. Our team of five volunteers began the journey by selecting students through a simple interview wherein we assessed the students on their interest levels and how they intended to put the language to the best use. So that’s how we had a batch of 5 young ladies who nurtured a dream..... to speak English!

To set the ball rolling, the volunteers worked on designing a simple module to suit the needs of the students. Starting from words, progressing to sentences, introducing the nuances of grammar, indeed seemed daunting at first, but sincerity and enthusiasm of our students made us work harder to accomplish the goal. Our introduction to conversation on various topics helped to open their minds, apart from learning new words and enriching their vocabulary. In our conversation sessions we encountered situations when the sentences would be partly in English and partly in Marathi. Sternly the students would be reminded to use only English while framing sentences. There were also tests to reckon with. Each test was an indicator of their progress, a clear message that they had to work hard till the end. Personally, I have always felt that these tests boost their self confidence and motivate them to work harder. This year we have a batch of seven ladies who are working hard towards learning to speak English.

All through, our teaching journey has not been all roses but quite satisfying. Regular meetings of the volunteers, suggestions and ideas from every one of them have truly been of great help. Our endeavour is to bring about a change and we are sure that this will be possible given the levels of enthusiasm and dedication we see in our students.

On behalf of all the volunteers, I wish the students the very best for the coming year.

**Ms. Priya Murlidharan,
Co-ordinator,
Buniyaad Adult English Conversation Program.**

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