

ANNUAL REPORT  
2016-2017



# I. PROGRAMMES

---

Headstreams has been working towards bringing positive change in society using play as their core area of interest to promote social, psychological and emotional well-being of different stakeholders.

The organisation started its work 9 years ago by working for the underprivileged including the homeless, self-help women groups, children and youth in Bengaluru. With time, the organisation gathered momentum and explored various ways of working for the poor. It included working on issues like health, livelihood, skill development, education, entrepreneurship and disaster relief.

Gradually, Headstreams focussed its work on something very critical and unique - which is, using **play to bring change**. Today, Headstreams' work encompasses integrating **play** in various spheres including **schools, communities, hospitals, with special needs children and in higher learning institutions**.

Each of the different interventions by Headstreams in different spaces are briefly described in this annual report for the year 2016-2017.

## A. AALAMBA MALUR PROGRAMME

### About the programme

The Aalamba Malur Programme started in the last academic year (2015-16). It was then designed particularly for undergraduate students of the Government First Grade Degree College (GFGC), Malur. In 2016-17, the programme expanded in terms of additional programmes that it offered to pre-service teachers pursuing B.Ed. and D.Ed., in addition to offering an internship programme to the undergraduate students of GFGC. Details about the three courses are given below:



1. Programme on 'Enhancing employability through multi-Arts and play' for the second year students pursuing B.A from Government First Grade Degree College, Malur.
2. Programme on 'Psycho-social well-being using multi-Arts and play' for B.Ed. students of Sri Bapuji College of Education, Malur.
3. Programme on 'Psycho-social well-being using multi-Arts and play' for D.Ed. students of Nethaji Teacher Training Institute, Malur.

Beneficiaries of these programmes were exposed to theory and practical sessions. In the theory sessions, facilitators used play based learning approach to train the beneficiary students. Use of multi-arts including dance, music, crafts work, projects, team work, discussions, debates and various games was integral part of the three programmes. Students' practical sessions included field experiences like participating and conducting weekly Tackle Caravans in two schools including Morarji Desai Residential School and Kittur Rani Chennamma Residential School in Malur.

### Objective

The programme for the undergraduate students was to prepare them for economic independence by opening scope for employment by developing key skills necessary to get jobs and also help them acquire social skills to find a larger purpose in life.

The programme for D.Ed. and B.Ed. students were designed to make them efficient and better teachers who could use multi-arts and play methodology.

## Achievements and Impact

- Over **100 students** (undergraduate and students being trained for teaching) were benefitted through the three programmes designed to cater to the rural youth.
- **44 sessions** successfully completed in Government First Grade Degree College ; **17 sessions** completed in Nethaji Teacher Training Institute and **7 sessions** completed in Sri Bapuji College of Education.
- Weekly Tackle Caravans were organised in two schools benefitting over 60 students.
- Joy of Giving Week organised for LinkedIn.
- Evaluation (Endline-Baseline assessments) of students from GFGC showed significant improvement in students' English performance. **About 10% more students qualified in the Endline** as compared to the English Baseline reading assessment. In English comprehension and writing levels also there were more students who performed well in the Endline assessment as compared to the Baseline.
- Of the many other outcomes, students were observed to have improved communication; enhanced life skills as well as self-confidence and gained basic computer knowledge.
- By the end of the year, AALAMBA B.A students had created, designed and published bi-lingual newsletters (in Kannada and English) which were inaugurated in April 2017.

"Through Aalamba I have been trained not to be a teacher who gives knowledge but to be a facilitator who spreads knowledge among students. I have acquired skills which are important to be a good teacher. When I go to other schools to teach students as a part of my training, I can already see the difference become popular among students compared to other teachers who visit them."

I belong to an orthodox Muslim family. I grew up as an introvert person. After joining the Aalamba programme, I learned to overcome my fears and talk freely with everyone. Seeing my progress, my family members have also started supporting and encouraging me.

- Asfiya, Intern from GFGC, Malur.

## Way Forward

- The programme will continue in the next academic year (2017-2018) and cater to new batch of students.
- Tackle Caravan will continue in the two schools. There is plan to set up libraries in the two schools which will inculcate the habit of reading among students and also provide tablets to students to digitally empower them and increase their interest in gaining knowledge.
- The programme also envisages to set up Community Learning Centre for the village youth. The space will provide opportunity to school and college drop outs to get hands-on training on key skills including technology.

## B. ARIVU PROGRAMME

### About the programme

Implemented in 2015, the Arivu programme is one of the flag ship programmes of Headstreams. The programme was born out of Headstreams' core belief that the typical learning that happens in schools need to change. Children are victims of syllabi that does not encourage exploring, playing, asking questions and most important enjoying the process of learning.

The programme was designed mainly to promote and change the atmosphere in schools through the very unique approach-'play based learning'.



The programme completed its second year journey in March 2016, benefitting students of class VI and VII from 30 schools across Bengaluru, Kolar and Hosakote. The Arivu English learning programme had specially designed playful English learning content (based on multi-arts, movements like dance and music, activities, projects, crafts, free play, games etc.) and modules on tablets.

Under the programme several other initiatives were launched or carried out during this year including designing and publishing of Arivu Comics, continuation of the 'Dial-to-Learn' service, community visits for creating social awareness and organising Let's Play week for different stakeholders.

### Objective

The programme envisaged to promote play in pedagogy and thereby also prove its belief that students achieve better outcomes and possess life skills through the play based learning approach.

### Achievements and Impact

- As many as **24 Arivu content and digital sessions** successfully completed this year, benefitting more than **2500 students**.
- During the academic year, **140 Arivu digital learning apps** (games, stories, songs, English learning videos) were identified and compiled for students of class VI and 24 Arivu gaming apps were developed for students of class VII.
- 24 Arivu comics were published and **over 32000 copies of comics** were distributed among class VII students.
- Over **13,000 missed calls** were received from students in 1.5 years
- More than **6500 people** including children from schools, *anganwadis*, street vendors, labourers, government officials like traffic police, shop-keepers, parents and corporate sector employees participated in various **Let's Play events**.
- About **14 community visits** organised along with **18 street plays** on critical social issues like health and cleanliness, urbanisation, trees, road safety, alcoholism, child labour, education, waste management, etc.
- **Improvement in students English outcomes**- English Reading, Comprehension and Writing were observed (as suggested by the Baseline and Endline) by the end of the year.
- Findings of the **Focussed Group Discussions suggest improved grasp** of the English language among students, enhanced digital literacy, impact on other academic subjects, improved life skills such as personality development, confidence, creativity, moral values, emotional regulations, interpersonal skills and socialisation patterns.

## Way Forward

- For the next academic year (2017-2018), the Arivu programme is being designed in such a way that the fun and learning that was limited to the classrooms moves to learning spaces in schools. These learning spaces or digital labs would offer free, unstructured, non-hierarchical space where learning would happen through play, exploration and creation.
- The Arivu programme in the last two years reached out to students of class VI and VII. However, the focus is now at students of class IV to VII.
- An additional initiative would be to make school teachers' co-owners of the programme and empower them with the right skills that would equip them to easily use play based learning formats in their classrooms.
- School management and teachers have always expressed a need to expand the programme to other disciplines. Based on the need, the programme would focus on other academic subjects like Science, in addition to English.

Jennifer, a student of class VI from Murphy Town government school in Bengaluru had no friends in school. Her class-mates would not talk, sit or play with her. She would mostly be sitting alone, at the last bench. Other children would underestimate saying it was useless to give her worksheets and encourage her to participate in Arivu sessions. Naturally, Jennifer's reaction to this was bitter. She would not even talk to the facilitators. She would not participate in a single activity or submit her worksheets.

However, Vineetha, a programme facilitator mentioned, "I did not force her to do anything but would sit with her in Arivu digital sessions. Gradually, she started talking to me. I took this opportunity to tell her she could try participating or doing the worksheets and it was alright not to be able to finish her worksheets properly." Jennifer, slowly started participating in Arivu sessions and submitting worksheets. She stopped sitting at the last bench and also started responding to questions in English. She became more forgiving in nature, and this also changed others behaviour towards her.

Arivu programme, brought about academic outcomes as well as positive behavioural change such as confidence among beneficiary students.

Vineetha C., Facilitator, Arivu programme

## C. CERTIFICATE COURSES

### About the programme

University co-certified post-graduate diploma and credit course on “Psycho-social well-being using multi-arts and play” was introduced for the first time in the academic year 2016-2017 for students of different colleges in Bengaluru including Christ University, Indian Institute of Psychology and Research, Mount Carmel College, St. Joseph’s College (Autonomous) and Smt. V. H. D. Central Institute of Home Science. The course was conducted in 4 colleges for undergraduate students and in 1 college for students pursuing post-graduation.



The certificate course was also offered to the staffs of Headstreams.

The 12 months course was facilitated by Headstreams’ Secretary, Dr. Naveen I. Thomas, along with some of his colleagues.

Students had both theory and practical sessions. Theoretical sessions were conducted once weekly and substantial amount of time was spent in understanding theory with the help of multi-arts, movements, games, activities, role plays and reflective discussions. Around 24 different topics were covered including Human Centred Design, Theatre, Creating a Concept Note, Art and Movement based Workshop, Art of Conversation, Reflective Learning, Benefits of Play, Play Principles, Understanding Developmental Disorders, Working in Communities, Life Skills, Facilitation Skills, Story Building, Research, Creating Learning Spaces, Gender Roles, Play Construct, etc. Field experience was mandatory for students who participated at the community based weekly Tackle Caravans and in Arivu and Disha sessions organised in government schools.

### Objective

The core objective has been to build more play facilitators and practitioners. The expected outcome of the programme was that after having gone through this course, students would have experienced the practice of play and the use of the creative art techniques; that they would have rudimentary knowledge of initiating, planning and facilitating play spaces in various settings; and that they would emerge as motivated youth with a soberer understanding of the world around them, and a clear sense that they have the potential to contribute to catalyse change for the well-being of others and experience well-being themselves.

### Achievements and Impact

- As many as **62 undergraduate** and **7 postgraduate students** enrolled and successfully completed the certificate course.
- About **33 Headstreams’ staffs** successfully completed the course.
- The programme exposed students to concrete skills and reflective practices which they will have a chance to use in spaces which require intervention (government schools etc.).
- The programme helped students to expand their own consciousness through realising capabilities of self and exploring a realm of learning possibilities.



## Way Forward

- The certificate course would be offered even in the next academic year to undergraduate and postgraduate students in the same institutions. However it would be enriched with more information and value added content.

## D. DISHA PROGRAMME



### About the programme

Disha was born with the belief that arming adolescents with life skills and guidance to help them choose right academic and career path is best done within the education system.

Headstreams' Disha is a two-year career guidance and life skills programme for high school students (Classes IX and X) who are enrolled in government schools. The programme was designed in such a way that students were introduced to a range of academic and career opportunities that they could choose after finishing their school.

Each of the half-day session was conducted outdoors within the school premises. Key elements of the sessions included creating awareness, exposure to various professions, enhancing social skills, making adolescents self-reliant and abled individuals who could explore and identify their potential and aspirations.



### Objectives

The programme's core purpose has been to empower and enable adolescents to take informed decisions in life by exposing them to academic opportunities, career options and develop their social skills.

### Achievements and Impact

- Disha reached out to **over 800 beneficiaries** enrolled in classes IX and X in 4 schools across Kolar and Hosakote.
- A total of **10 sessions** were successfully completed in class IX and **7 sessions** were completed for students of class X.
- The **5<sup>th</sup> mega educational fair-Tackle Fest** was organised in November, 2016 at St. Joseph's College in Bengaluru. Around **450 students participated** from Disha schools along with 40 pre-service teachers of Malur D.Ed. College. **45 stalls and 2 start-ups**, MindAuraa and ILoveMondays gave hands on experience to students who got inspired being exposed to the wide range of academic and career opportunities.

- As a part of the programme, **5500 glee boxes or summer kits** were designed and distributed among students, for the first time. These boxes consisting of 8 different kinds of games and activities were distributed to keep students constructively engaged during their summer holidays.
- Disha's journey in the last one year saw significant changes among its beneficiaries-like improved life skills, positive attitude among beneficiaries, personality development and increase in confidence levels.
- Other significant changes includes bring about gender equity in classrooms, helping students become self-reliant, independent, informed and above all respectful towards others.

### Way Forward

- The design of the programme is currently being revisited. It is being explored if the sessions could be more like workshops. It is also hoped that Disha would gradually expanded from two to more districts across Karnataka, in the coming years.

"One of the interesting sessions have been where students were asked to build an architecture of their choice using limited newspapers and only cello-tapes. It was wonderful to see students work in teams, using limited resources. They not only came up with fantastic designs and innovations, but successfully came up with strategies demonstrating problem solving abilities, critical thinking skills and creativity."

-Soumya, facilitator, Disha programme

## E. SOUKHYAM

### About the programme

Soukhyam is a pilot project that was conceived this year, for the first time. The programme was mainly for cancer patients, caregivers and special needs children.

The facilitators of the programme visited the Kidwai Cancer Hospital, Bengaluru twice a week. They spent time with the patients of two wards, conducting bed-side activities which helped them cope with their illness.

As a part of this programme, even special needs children of Mar Thoma Opportunity School were catered to once a week, every Friday. The programme with the special needs students was conducted with the help of facilitators of Headstreams and play therapists from the National Association of Play Therapy, India. Sessions were designed keeping in mind the requirements and capacity of an individual child. Each session included individual sessions using stimulatory nature materials like food grains, water, *ragi*, *maidha* (flour), vegetables, and also play materials like soft toys, foam, balls with different textures, paints, musical instruments etc. It also had provision for free play and group sessions for self-expression





using games, music, play, gardening, craft making and painting.

### Objective

The main goal of the programme was to improve the psycho-social well-being of the individuals suffering from cancer and also ensure well-being of children with special needs.

This was done by creating a space to help them express their feelings, provide an environment that encouraged a sense of positive thinking and help patients express themselves and experience comfort.

### Achievement and Impact

- A total of **15 sessions** were taken which were designed for **41 children** of the Mar Thoma Opportunity School. The programme was catered to **cancer patients of two wards** in Kidwai Cancer Hospital.
- Soukhyam helped to make recovery of patients a pleasant, peaceful and optimistic experience. In this time, patients finally got an opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts that they have been holding within for a long time.
- The **World Disability Day** was celebrated on **November 19, 2016**. As a pre-event preparation, a kitchen garden was set up with the students. Students were made to paint on clothes to be exhibited on the day of the event, and a cookery session was organised where the students prepared sandwich, chapattis and salads. On the day of the event, every student was encouraged to come up on stage and exhibit their hidden talent to the audience. This event helped in bringing together the parents and children of Mar Thoma Opportunity School to come together and appreciate the effort made by the children and teachers.

"Students are a lot happier on Fridays when you (facilitators of the programme) come to school because the children feel free with you."

-Teacher, Mar Thoma Opportunity School

### Way Forward

- The programme with the terminally ill patients came to a closure this year.
- Headstreams' engagement with the management of the Mar Thoma Opportunity School provided them with ideas and structures for the next year. Progress reports of individual children were handed over to the teachers which would help them plan the next year effectively. Vision 2020 was also brainstormed and planned that would help to transform the school by making it a more friendly space.

## F. SUMMER CAMPS

### About the programme

This year, summer camps were planned for 3 different locations- Nandagudi in Hosakote, Harati in Kolar and Thoranahalli in Malur. It started on 18<sup>th</sup> April in Hosakote, followed by other two locations. In each location, camps were organised for 10 days mainly for high school students. The summer camps were designed by Headstreams with the help of a Bengaluru based organisation called the Centre of Gravity Social Practice.



These camps encouraged self-expression by exposing participating children to different activities and mediums such as drawing and painting; crafts work; upcycling waste materials; movement and dance; singing, composing songs, writing script, acting and story-telling.

A five-day simulation workshop for facilitators prior to the summer camps served as the basis to hook, inspire and unleash the creative potential of each participant.

In groups, participants along with facilitators or volunteers experienced a variety of activities conducted in different stalls. The summer camps in each of the locations culminated with a final production created and staged by participants themselves. Prior to the final production, children visited their village along with other team-mates and facilitators, to discuss, interview and choose key social issues from the community. Based on real stories or issues, children narrated their experiences through their performances. These performances were staged in front of the communities and students won huge applause for their work.

### Objectives

The summer camps intended to create safe, free and unstructured spaces for children who could express themselves without being judged for anything.

### Achievements and Impact

- About **300 children participated** in these camps.
- Each stall was set up in a way that the participants with minimal instructions were able to complete the various activities. The idea was to minimize top down facilitation and truly explore learning for the facilitator and the learner. Most felt they were allowed 'to be' and do things the way they wanted. While most activities were assigned in groups it required immense individual participation.
- The camps were created as safe spaces for children to use and express their views, not in abstraction but in a personalised way. Children were not asked to write essays about pollution, unemployment, alcoholism and clean village. Instead they were to draw out their own personal stories of dissonance, weave it with the group's story (finding a common topic), find the ideal mix of mediums of expression and put it out in a safe space crafted for them.

### Way Forward

- Summer camps are organised annually. It would be organised again in the next academic year.

"This Summer, our first camp was held in Government High School in Nandagudi, Hosakote. The camp was the first to be tried with the new design. We saw close to 150 children, from grades VII to X participate in the camp.

The children enjoyed learning new activities in the different stall days and took back their creations home. They bonded with their group facilitators over fun games like *Kabbadi*, Tug of War or action songs they learnt.

When the students went on to conduct surveys, they were like researchers, trying to understand the various issues people face. On the last day of the camp, students put up a performance entirely created and led by them. They wrote the dialogues, set up the stage, decided the costumes, created their own script. There were many mothers and grandmothers who turned up for the show and had a ball laughing and admiring the spirit these children showed!

-Soumya, Summer Camp team

## G. TACKLE CARAVAN

### About the programme

Headstream's weekly Tackle Caravan have been organised in the community for a long time. This year, it was conducted in 5 government schools of Bengaluru, Hosakote, Kolar and Malur. These events were organised every Saturday where children of different ages participated. The design of these Caravans were such that every alternate week it was meant for free-play week, when children decided what they would play. The other Saturdays were activity week. The focus of an activity week was on a particular theme. Children engaged in activities including games, stories, craft, theatre and dance based on the week's theme.



### Objective

Creating safe and free play-spaces for children was the main objective of the programme. Trained facilitators from Headstreams, students undergoing certificate courses and youth from the communities were equipped with skills to engage with the children during the Caravans. These weekly events provided avenues for meaningful interaction among children and between children and volunteers to jointly explore social and emotional issues and learn certain skills.

### Achievements and Impact

- In total **22 Tackle Caravan events** were conducted in the year 2016-2017 across 3 schools in Bengaluru, 4 schools in Kolar and 6 schools in Hosakote. On an average, **100 students in Bengaluru, 200 students from Kolar and 200 students from Hosakote** participated in each of the weekly Caravans. Over **40 volunteers** from colleges participated every week in each of the locations where the Tackle Caravan was organised.
- The participating students have been observed to have acquired the ability to identify their mode of expression, develop a sense of ownership, identify their skills and interests and gain more confidence.
- Youth volunteers said they experienced their childhood in these Caravan events.
- The programme traversed through domains of education, social development and governance in creating safe play spaces, breaking structural barriers and building community relationships through play. Structural norms and practices based on caste, class, religion, age and gender were challenged through the creation of the play space.

"The energy of the kids there was enough for my mood to go from a zero to a hundred by the end of it."

-Anquna Ananitha, Intern, St. Joseph's College.

"It's never too late to become a child again."

-Megha Prajapati, Intern, Mount Carmel.

### Way Forward

- This programme envisages to reach out to more schools in Karnataka and the rest of the country in the coming years.

## II. EVENTS AND RECOGNITION

### INAUGURATION CEREMONY

Headstreams' Arivu and Disha programmes commenced this year with a grand inaugural function on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The programme was attended by 200 participants including representatives from DSERT, DIET, BEO, BRC, school HMs, teachers, students, senior leadership team from Mphasis, NASSCOM, associates, partners and well-wishers of Headstreams.



The ceremony witnessed the release of Arivu's English content, new digital applications, comics and Dial-To-Learn (missed call service) service for the year 2016-2017. On the occasion, Tablets were handed over to HMs and nominated teachers from schools.

This event provided a platform to the stakeholders, organisations and individuals who support this programme in different capacities, to meet each other and also express their views and feedback.

### TRAINING AND FIELD TRIPS

The staffs of Headstreams have undergone several trainings throughout the year. Trainings were organised at a venue outside their office, at 'Lahe Lahe' in Indiranagar, which was conducive to fostering fun-filled, non-hierarchical and a lively learning environment.



Trainings were conducted by mentors and experts from Headstreams along with external professionals who were invited to facilitate sessions on different topics including reflective learning, professionalism, multi-art therapy, theatre, dance, and technology and life skills.

At different occasions, team outings were organised for the internal staffs of Headstreams including:

**Visit to Adima:** A two days trip was organised at the beginning of the year for all the staffs who were taken to Adima in Kolar for group bonding and orientation of the team to roles and responsibilities.



**Summer Camp training at the Indian Social Institute:** Summer Camp training for the year 2016-17 was provided to the staff members. Through this training programme, the structure of the Summer Camp was introduced to the staff where they had hands-on experience on the different stalls that was designed for the camp. This training programme at the Indian Social Institute was conducted for 3 days.

**Trip to Visthar:** At a campus called Visthar, outside Bengaluru, a two days training programme for the summer camp was conducted. It was an extension of the training at the Indian Social Institute. Through fun, games, activities and discussion, the team developed ideas for the Summer Camp.



**A day out at the Holiday Village Resort:** A final team outing was planned on May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2017 for all the members of Headstreams. It was a closing process for those who were not continuing with the organisation for the next academic year. The day involved team activities and a closing meeting where the people who were leaving shared their experience with Headstreams and their future plans. It was an outing to relax after the year's hard work and dedication.

### **THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PERSPECTIVES AND PRACTICES IN PLAY, 2017**

A grand conference that was organised by Headstreams in association with International Play Association-India, Christ University and supported by Mphasis was held at Christ University on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> April, 2017. The conference brought together experts, academicians, play professionals, therapists, counsellors and students who either work on play or use forms of play in their interventions.



The conference was a step towards understanding and integrating play practices from India and around the world. With the theme, Play for Change, it was a step towards popularising the plethora of aspects that form the basis of play, with the hope that more and more people could adopt the benefits of the same.

The conference featured 3 panel discussions attended by 29 delegates, exploring play and learning, play and therapy and play in creative mediums. It also had 13 experiential workshops. Along with intensive knowledge sharing, the conference also provided a platform for over 260 participants to experience 28 different games which were beautifully set up in stalls put up by the play facilitators of Headstreams.

### **2017 TASP CONFERENCE**

The Association for the Study of Play (TASP) invited Headstreams in the annual conference which was organised between April 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2017 at the Strong Museum in Rochester, New York. The conference theme was 'Playful Communities' which intended to examine the concept of "play community" across the world.



Ms. Anu Thomas represented Headstreams' work through the presentation "Play Caravan: Building Community through Play" at the conference. Her presentation about Headstreams' work on play in the communities of Karnataka was much appreciated by delegates and participants present at the conference.

### **PLAYATHON**

A game design challenge called Playathon was organised for game designers to design digital games for school children of classes IV to VIII that had the potential to enhance digital literacy, language skills and life-skills that would complement their academic curriculum. This initiative was a step towards reimagining gaming in a school set-up which would help students to experience and explore the digital world. The winners of the challenge were announced and awarded with mementos and a cash prize sponsored by Mphasis at the International Conference on Perspectives and Practices in Play, 2017. The third place was won by Indranil Kale, the second place was won by Ipshita Srivatsav and the first prize was shared between two winners- Sriram and Chaitalee.



## **NASSCOM AWARD**

This year, Headstreams was announced as one of the winners of the ninth edition of the NASSCOM Social Innovation Forum-platform that fosters innovative use of technology to create sustained social impact. Headstreams received the award in the Mphasis Primary and Secondary Education category. Out of 1300 entries, Headstreams was one of the 9 winners selected under different award categories.

# The Team



## **Headstreams**

#2200, 5th E Cross

H.A.L II Stage, Indiranagar

Bengaluru – 560008

Karnataka, India

Email: [contact@headstreams.org](mailto:contact@headstreams.org)

Tel: +91-(80)40951709, +91-9342858056

Website: [www.headstreams.org](http://www.headstreams.org)

Follow on Facebook: [www.facebook.org/headstreams](https://www.facebook.org/headstreams)