

TUTORING UNDER- PRIVILEGED CHILDREN DURING THE PANDEMIC

Abstract: This initiative of tutoring under-privileged people during the corona virus pandemic was taken up by the Robin Hood Academy. As a volunteer for the same, a member of the Legal Aid Centre of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA started tutoring a child through phone calls and video calls. The initiative is focused on keeping the children updated with their studies till the schools reopen after the pandemic. (Nov - Dec 2020)

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1. Concept Note

The Legal Aid Centre of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA has always strived to work for the welfare of the society. Through various initiatives the LAC aims at offering assistance to those in need.

The sudden lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic has forced thousands of schools across the world to shut down. While it became increasingly clear that most part of the academic year will go by before the schools reopen, many schools opted for the option of online classes. Since not all school teachers and students, due to financial and connectivity reasons, could use the facility of online classes, this particular section were at a higher risk of lagging behind in their education.

In July 2016, the Robin Hood Academy was started with the purpose to bridge the gap between streets and schools under the aegis of the Robin Hood Army, a non-for profit organization. By giving access to basic values and primary education, the Robin Hood Academy empowers students by developing their inclination towards learning. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the volunteers of this academy continue to expand their target so that those students who are unable to access online classes from schools can continue their studies. A learner is assigned to each volunteer who takes regular classes on school subjects and additionally topics like hygiene, wellness and values on phone calls or video calls.

2. Objective

The objectives behind this initiative are as follows-

1. To ensure that the switch to online classes does not create a big lag in the education of under-privileged students.
2. To keep students at primary school level motivated to continue studies as school drop-out rate at this level is high among this section of the society.

3. To spread awareness amongst the learners on topics of hygiene, health and wellness so they can deal with the Covid-19 situation more effectively.

3. Preliminary Preparations

The preliminary preparations for this initiative are as follows-

1. Getting to know the learner and the availability of smartphones.
2. Scheduling the classes as per availability.
3. Preparing the material for teaching as per requirement of child.

4. Conducting the programme

The learner assigned to us is a 9 year old boy who studies in class 3. We started teaching him on 20th September and are still continuing with it as on 10th April 2021. The sessions conducted from Monday to Friday, 1 hour each. At times the sessions are conducted on video call but mostly they are on phone call as per the availability of internet connection. Topics taught till now include tables up to 10, *hindi matras*, general greetings, people who help us, names of planets, continents and countries, division/multiplication etc.

Apart from these topics, we have also included topics like good touch bad touch, good hygiene, water wastage and pollution, gender equality and good manners in our sessions.

5. Response of target audience

The learner assigned to us is a motivated student. He loves to explore his environment and talk about it. His response to the classes has been well so far. He looks forward to the classes especially when the topics taken up by us are more practical like pollution, gender equality and hygiene.

6. Key Personal Takeaway

The feeling of being able to help someone in these dire circumstances is always pleasant. The hard work that the learner puts in motivates us to bring up better ways to teach every time we take a class and has taught us a lot about the profession of teaching.

Overall the initiative by the Robin Hood Academy is very inspiring. Their work in the field of education during the Covid-19 pandemic is highly commendable. We have learnt how one can work selflessly and find out ways to help the members of our society no matter how difficult the circumstances are.

7. Future Plan of Action

We will continue to teach the learner assigned to us until the schools reopen. Also in the future we would like to help the Robin Hood Academy to expand its initiative by bringing in more volunteers.

8. Suggestions/Feedback

The circumstances created by the Covid-19 pandemic are very difficult and unprecedented. One of the sections which is hit hard by this is the under privileged section who have had to face unemployment and other such problems. In such a circumstances, everyone should take a step forward in helping this section in whatever way that they can.

9. Conclusion/Remarks

This was a great learning experience. We got the opportunity to help a learner during this lockdown. This has also now made us a member of the Robin Hood Academy which is a group of highly motivated volunteers who have inspired us to work with this initiative. This was all only made possible because of the Legal Aid Centre of Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA the members of which have encouraged and motivated us to get out of our comfort zone and work towards the welfare of the society.

ANNEXURE 1

