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Snehagram

Snehagram, the adolescent phase of the comprehensive care program by Sneha Charitable Trust (SCT) for Children Living with HIV (CLHIV), was established in 2013. This program results from SCT's ardent pursuit of an advanced care program exclusively for CLHIV. This program, which spans three phases, envisages providing comprehensive care by addressing all the issues and needs of children about each developmental stage and helping them live independently as they reach adulthood.

Vision and Mission

Snehagram envisions ensuring the quality of life and future of the orphan and vulnerable children living with and affected by HIV and leading to healthy and productive adulthood by comprehensively addressing their needs on education, health, psycho-social and emotional well-being, vocational training, life skill education, and value formation to enable them to live a healthy and happy life.

Our Motto: *Educate For Life*

Objectives

- Create a nurturing environment for children with HIV to rebuild their lives.
- Foster educational attainment for a promising future.
- Ensure quality of life through comprehensive care and emotional well-being.
- Boost self-esteem and confidence via life skill training and support.
- Guide adolescents toward responsible, healthy adulthood.
- Facilitate skill development for employment through aptitude-based vocational training.
- Mentor and rehabilitate adolescents for a settled life.

President's Message

Fr. Bijoy K. George



I am delighted to scribble down these words of admiration about Snehagram, our esteemed Centre where we care, nurture, and train our young adolescent children living with HIV/AIDS. This report will bring out the incredible progress and impact we have made over the past year, providing quality care, unparalleled education, and job-oriented training to our children. At Snehagram, we affirm that every child deserves love, care, and support, regardless of their circumstances or physical/emotional state. Our mission is to provide a nurturing and empowering environment for adolescent children living with HIV/AIDS, where they can grow, thrive, and reach their full potential.

Our medical team has worked tirelessly to provide quality healthcare services, including antiretroviral therapy, regular check-ups, and counseling. We are proud to report that the health outcomes of our children have improved significantly, with a remarkable decrease in opportunistic infections and an increase in overall well-being. Education remains a key focus at Snehagram, as we believe it is a powerful tool for breaking the cycle of poverty and discrimination. Our dedicated teachers have provided quality education to our children, ensuring they receive the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue their dreams and build a brighter future. We have witnessed remarkable academic achievements, with several of our children excelling in their studies and gaining admission to prestigious institutions.

In addition to healthcare and education, we have also emphasized the importance of psychosocial support and life skills training with I'm Possible fellowship programs and Magic Bus training, which focussed on bringing up peer leaders enabling them to grow to their full potentials and lead a healthy and secure social life. Our team of counselors and mentors have been instrumental in providing a safe and nurturing environment, where our children can express themselves, overcome trauma, and develop resilience. Through various workshops and activities, we have equipped them with essential life skills, empowering them to make informed decisions and lead fulfilling lives.

This wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of our donors and partners. We are deeply grateful for their financial contributions and various types of support, enabling us to sustain and expand our programs. We also extend our heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff and volunteers, who work tirelessly for the well-being of our children, without forgetting Fr. Sunil Joseph and Fr. Baby Joseph who courageously led them from the front. Looking ahead, we are committed to continuing our efforts to empower and uplift the lives of these less fortunate children. We will strive to enhance our programs, strengthen our partnerships, and advocate for the rights and well-being of all children.

On behalf of Snehagram, I would like to thank each and each of you for your unwavering support and belief in our cause. Together, we can make a difference and create a world where every child, regardless of their health status, can thrive and live a life full of energy and dignity.

Director's Message

Fr. Sunil Joseph MI



Stepping into the future with unwavering determination and boundless optimism, the path forward beckons us with infinite possibilities. As we stand at the crossroads of opportunity and progress, let us embrace the challenges ahead as catalysts for growth and innovation.

The way forward is paved with the lessons of the past, the resilience of the present, and the dreams of tomorrow.

It's a journey where collaboration, dedication, and a shared vision become the compass guiding us through uncharted territories. Together, we have the power to shape a future that reflects our collective aspirations and values. In the pursuit of excellence, let us continue to foster an environment that nurtures creativity, learning, and inclusivity. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape, adaptability and openness to change will be our allies. Each step forward is an opportunity to make a positive impact, leaving a lasting legacy for generations to come. The way forward is not just a destination; it's a continuous journey of growth, discovery, and evolution. Let us approach it with courage, resilience, and a sense of purpose. Together, we can carve a path that leads to a brighter, more sustainable, and inclusive future for all. The road ahead is what we make of it, and I am confident that our collective efforts will shape a world filled with endless possibilities and positive transformation.

Administrator Message

Fr. Baby Naikarakudy



In the pursuit of excellence and growth, I am thrilled to highlight our steadfast commitment to education and training within our organization. As we navigate the ever-evolving landscape of our respective fields, investing in the continuous learning and professional development of our team remains paramount. Education is not merely a one-time event; it is a lifelong journey.

We believe that by providing ongoing educational opportunities and comprehensive training programs, we empower each team member to unlock their full potential. Our efforts in education and training extend beyond the acquisition of skills; they encompass the development of a mindset — an attitude that embraces challenges as opportunities for growth.

At Snehagram, we understand that the professional landscape is constantly evolving, and so must we. Through workshops, seminars, online courses, and mentorship programs, we strive to create an environment where learning is not just encouraged but celebrated. We believe that a well-trained and knowledgeable team is the driving force behind our innovation and the key to achieving our organizational goals.



History

Snehagram the second phase was established in 2013 to cater to the needs of children who have been under care at SCH once they reach past the age of 13. Major focus in this phase is to impart vocational skills and to prepare them for independent living. In this phase the children are also provided with opportunity to complete their academic education at least till the higher secondary level along with life skill education and other health and life enrichment activities. It is a residential programme for boys and girls who are 13 years and above with a focus on vocational training and rehabilitation. It has the facility to offer residential training for 200 children, both boys and girls. Snehagram facilitates a preparatory platform for the adolescent CLHIV to face the challenges of life when they reach their adulthood. This unique model is evolved to meet the long term needs of childhood development, adolescent issues, personality development, value development, employment, community and family acceptance.



Service Delivery



Academic program

Snehagram follows a student-centered academic program. Most of the children lack formal education as they were dropped out of school for a considerable time. Hence, children are facilitated to follow the curriculum of the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) and take the examination conducted by NIOS at the secondary and higher secondary levels. Participatory and activity-based pedagogy is being followed. Each class has three or four study groups and their discussions and progress are monitored by the respective teachers. Teacher-mentored sessions are followed by group discussions and individual learning.



The three main components of the education program include academics, skilling and leadership training. Classroom sessions provide academic preparation for secondary and higher secondary education under the National Open School Curriculum. Second, the curriculum focuses on holistic learning, with job-oriented classes, vocational trainings and life skills, including basics of computer, language and communication, customer care services, driving, farming, craft-making, tailoring, and embroidery.

Academic program

From the year 2013 to 2022, 270 students participated in the 'learning for life' curriculum. As of 2021, 90% have completed class 10 and have passed board exams; 50% are pursuing class 12, and 50% are enrolled in graduate degree programs. The students get employment across sectors, such as in hospitality, information and technology, and teaching. Students have gained the confidence to independently manage their expenses invest their savings for higher education, and plan their future lives that involve a smooth integration into society. The Academic Year 2023-2024 was officially opened on the 12th of June 2023, All the classes and sessions are conducted within the institution and the subjects are taken by mentors and staff in Snehagram.

Empowering HIV-positive adolescent girls and boys with an enabling and holistic education model has a positive impact on their lives, where they gain confidence, and leadership skills, and can lead healthy and productive lives

Section	Boys	Girls	Total
Class 11 th	01	01	02
Class 12 th (PU)	09	04	16
Mentors	06	02	08
Total	16	07	26

Impact:

- All the students of the 12th Class are registered under the NIOS
- All the students are able to complete their 10th as the minimum education.



Vocational Training

Many children are involved in different activities and setting their lives to improve their future careers. Some of the programs that are introduced for skill training are:

- Organic Farming
- Dairy Farming
- Chicken Farming
- Data Entry
- Mango Garden cum plant nursery
- Catering



Impact

- Children have developed self-confidence and many have identified their potential career choices.
- Children have been exposed to different career avenues before them
- Children are interested in learning one independent living skill.

Co- Curricular Activities

Co-curricular activities are devised to help children in value formation and life skill training, resilience building and coping, and in preparing them to face challenges in life. Some of the programs that are introduced for co-curricular activities are:

- Sports and games
- Running
- Dance
- Yoga
- Gardening
- Exposure visits
- Creativity Development Programmes
- Monthly cultural Program



Impact

- Children can find out their hidden talents.
- Adolescent children can channel their energy to productive work
- Develops skills and imagination of children.
-



Leadership Development Program

Adolescents living with HIV confront a great challenge in transitioning to healthy adult life. Snehagram is meeting this challenge by making every effort to develop leadership skills. Some of the activities are as follows.

- Training programs and workshops
- Developing Peer Leaders from among the children to train the children in the communities.
- Life-skill training
- Living Value Education Programmes

The leadership program aims to develop a good balance between different skills that would help one become an effective leader i.e. problem-solving skills, decision making, planning, and managing power and influence. The program helps in the ability to convince others with their manner of speech and action, and then the possibilities of success are limitless. This creates a platform for extensive interaction with people and developing essential skills to have an influence.

Impact

- Children can make decisions for them.
- Children are improving their quality of life
- Increases participants' ability to lead change, improve teamwork, enhance performance and ultimately deliver better results.

Child Parliament

Child parliament is a system of self-governance by children. INSA India, a partner of Snehagram supported in setting up the child parliament system in Snehagram which has been actively functioning since 2013 and has become an inspiration to many more organizations working for Children affected by AIDS (CABA) in the country. Under this system, children select their own parliament; Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister along with ministers for Law, Education, Health, Environment, Sports, and opposition leader. Cabinet meetings and parliament meetings are convened regularly and children take an active part in managing and guiding the affairs of Snehagram

Health Care

Since the beginning of the Snehagram program, we have been following a three-pronged approach in healthcare; preventive, Promotive, and curative. The preventive aspect focuses on preventing our children from infections by keeping them mentally and physically fit through sports, running, and exercises which have become a lifestyle for our children.



These along with a balanced nutritious diet play a pivotal role in preventive healthcare management. The Promotive care aspect of our healthcare is based on the belief “health is a state of complete mental physical and psychological well-being”. The onus is on creating a healthy mind in a healthy body. Children are helped to address the psychosocial issues related to adolescence through individual counseling group counseling and peer counseling. There are Well-being groups of children who meet every week and discuss their issues and provide mutual support in dealing with life challenges and in goal setting.

The curative aspect takes care of treatment and drug adherence. All the children, in compliance with the NACO guidelines, are currently on ART (Anti-retroviral Therapy) and some of them are on second-line treatment.

Impact

- Minimal cases of hospitalization& Zero viral load
- Decrease in medical expenses, especially drugs for co-infections
- Children have become confident that they can stay healthy with minimal expense for healthcare
- Involvement in sports and nutrition has decreased the risk of disease,



Projects

ImPossible Fellowship

The I'mPossible fellowship was launched by Sneha Charitable Trust on 26 January 2021. We started the fellowship with 10 fellows and 4 mentors. The fellowship is built on the four Sustainable Development goals they are Health, gender, Livelihood, and education. The fellows in I'mPossible Fellowship reach out to 250 children infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. The students are monitored and supported to lead a healthy life and guided to complete their Education.

Through this fellowship, we are able to bring all the students together and share joy happiness learning give guidance teach them life skills, and take sessions on the 4 STGS through camps. The community students feel confident that the fellow is there to listen to their needs help them with their challenges and guide them to the vision they have. Through the fellowship, the fellows have helped the students to focus on their health and supported them in education and livelihood and lead a happy life. Our fellows have been placed in 7 partner institutions.

Our fellows have been getting fully involved in the placement areas and supporting the management. I' M possible fellowship is a great platform to reach students in different communities and be connected as one community and stand together to support each other.



The Positive Running Program

Inspired by Rishi's love of running and building upon Snehagram's existing educational framework for children living with HIV, this program incorporates appropriate nutrition, daily running/endurance training, and confidence-building. Children are encouraged to become coaches themselves, learn to organize running events, and develop leadership skills. The essence of the Positive Running Program is to create not winners of the race, but winners for life.

As of 2023, a total of 170 children in the 6 centers and 39 from the community have directly benefitted from the Positive Running Program. At all these venues, we witnessed how running as a group can have great social benefits which is very important during training. One can gain friends, often for life. When introduced to a group, the individual is motivated and inspired to keep up with the pace of others in the training program. The Program has demonstrated how running as a group can have great social benefits. The children have participated in several regional and national events in 2022 and 2023.



The benefits of this program are anticipated to be wide-ranging and longstanding. Running is an activity that can be easily built into one's lifestyle and can promote healthy living well into adulthood. In particular, we believe that this program will teach children the value of practice and perseverance, build endurance and self-esteem, foster a sense of well-being, and develop leadership abilities. Along with providing basic training equipment and running gear, attention to good nutrition was paramount, and support for providing daily eggs, fruits, and protein drinks was ensured.

On 21 August 2022, children and youth from the Positive Running Program organized Footprints 2022 – a 5K/10K run in Bangalore. The goal of this event is to raise awareness about running and to incorporate running for a healthy lifestyle in children. 650 registered participants ran together that day, aged 5 years to 78 years. Across the world, in 9 countries, 112 virtual runners posted pictures of their run in solidarity with the goal that the program stood for.

Snehasparsh: Empowering with Care

Snehasparsh: Empowering with Care, a project supported by Thoughtworks has helped us to reach nearly 700 adolescents and youth in the districts of Bangalore, Vijayapura, Kalburgai, Bidar, Bagalkot, and Kolar. Of the 700, 47% were females. Nearly 85% of the individuals contacted have been adherent to treatment, these were followed up and counseled. The beneficiaries from critical socioeconomic backgrounds were prioritized - among the beneficiaries, only 26.5% have both parents alive 35% live with single parents, 22.5% with grandparents/ extended family members, and nearly 16% stay in the hostel/ PGs, hence the critical need to reach out arises.



The livelihood linkages have been a challenge, due to COVID-19's impact moreover, only 15% have completed graduation or diploma courses, a further 22%, are pursuing 12th and more than 60% were below 10th. Of the cumulative, 19% have requested support to continue studies, and the project is making the needful efforts. However, we were able to partner with 10 organizations, that provided support and services during the COVID crisis as well some were supported to get suitable jobs. The peer leaders have grown up to become the primary link for adolescents and youth. They used both their personal experiences and learnings to build their lives and link the beneficiaries to critical services amidst the COVID crisis. Nearly 60% of the beneficiaries were supported with dry ration during the COVID crisis through building partnerships with other donors. Life skill and youth camps were supported and facilitated for more than 200 children, youth, and adolescents. Nearly 100 community leaders are identified.

Through our work with the HIV positive adolescents and youth, we believe the best possible way is to work with the community, facilitate them to prioritize the critical factors that impact the major influencers of life, steadily address them, will help to solve the concerns and issues of the community, hence the project continues to build on the strengths and leadership and focus on reaching out with quality services.

Magic Bus

Sneha Charitable Trust and Magic Bus, entered into a partnership, to sustain the livelihoods. Established in 1999, Magic Bus India Foundation works with children and young people from underserved communities, taking them from a childhood full of challenges to a life with meaningful livelihoods. They equip young people with the skills and knowledge they need to grow up and move out of poverty. Magic Bus, youth cantered Livelihoods Program connects the aspirations and potential of young people to available market opportunities.

They build employability skills and map job potential based on individual strengths and mobility. In this context, Sneha Charitable Trust has partnered with Magic Bus to address and support the skilling as well as placement issues of children born into HIV-infected families. Currently, 126 young adolescents are enrolled in the virtual training program for 45 days following these along with in-house placement support. Sneha Charitable Trust has assured long-term support to the students, in completion of the training program, as well as to ensure the sustainability of their lives.

The 10-week training program was meticulously structured to enhance participants' employability skills and equip them for job sustainability. Throughout the training, emphasis was placed on fostering healthy living practices, incorporating sports, and promoting holistic approaches. In the final two weeks, special attention was given to honing interview skills through mock interviews. The initial phase introduced students to the program's framework, emphasizing the concept of "Learning to Employment."



A detailed schedule highlighted critical learning areas such as Communication Skills, Life Skills, and Computer Skills. The training delved into the practical applications of electronics and computers in the workplace, underscored the significance of life and communication skills in job scenarios, and explored customer service principles, including the respectful treatment of customers. Subsequent weeks focused on talents and skills essential for marketing, emphasizing interpersonal skills, attributes, spoken and written English, and digital literacy. The program stressed the importance of systematic communication in daily life and the workplace to enhance overall communication skills. Special attention was given to emotional management, acknowledging the challenges faced by vulnerable communities, and encouraging participants to manage emotions effectively in the workplace.

The importance of patience and resilience in shaping one's career was highlighted, recognizing their ongoing impact. Financial management challenges were addressed, emphasizing effective financial handling both in jobs and the broader working environment. The training also dedicated a week to building confidence, emphasizing resume building and effective communication for successful company presentations. The program concluded with a focus on interview skills, empowering participants to navigate critical aspects confidently and present themselves strongly during interviews.

Events and Celebrations

Children's Day Celebration

On the morning of November 14th, the air was filled with happy sounds and the laughter of friends, prompting me to realize it was Children's Day. Our seniors had orchestrated various indoor fun activities, and I found immense joy in participating, especially in the quiz competition, where I surprised myself with how many answers I knew.



To my delight, the seniors themselves actively engaged in the games, blurring the lines between age and the joy of being a child. It struck me that, in the eyes of the creator, we are all children in one way or another. The realization that being a child is inherently fun made me wish to hold onto that spirit forever, even as we inevitably grow older. While age may change, the report emphasized the belief that maintaining a childlike outlook in our thoughts and actions is a choice we can make and one that the author aspires to embrace permanently.

World AIDS Day Report

World AIDS Day, observed on December 1st globally, holds particular significance for us at Snehagram, where we all grapple with HIV. On this day, we engaged in a meaningful session with Dr. Preethi, seeking answers to our questions and gaining clarity through an online platform. The fact that we remain uninfected by the pandemic is a testament to the effective decisions made by the administration during times of crisis.



While the day serves as a reminder of our health conditions, it is also a blessing, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a normal life despite the challenges. Personally, I find it unsettling as it brings back the awareness of being infected, disrupting the semblance of a normal life. However, acknowledging this reality is essential for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Christmas Celebration

The Christmas season brought joy through gifts, delicious food, and lively dances. Morning songs added to the festive ambiance, sometimes lulling me to sleep, other times rousing me with cheer. Being part of the decorating team was a fun experience, embellishing the campus with papers, ribbons, and festive ornaments.



Attending the Christmas mass was visually captivating, with a beautifully crafted crib and warm lights. The Christmas night was filled with excitement, and unable to sleep, I joined the crowd for spirited dancing and celebration. This Christmas was truly unforgettable, marked by traditional rituals, vibrant decorations, and a sense of togetherness that will linger in my memories.

Giving is Caring

Seva Cafe is a remarkable organization with a unique and heartwarming theme, "Giving is Loving." The team members tirelessly cook and serve food to various homes, sharing their love for children and spreading joy wherever they go. One of the homes that Seva Cafe frequently visits is Snehagram, and their visits have become a much-anticipated event for our students.



At Snehagram, the Seva Cafe team brings joy to our children with delicious, nutritious meals prepared with love. Their simple act of serving food has a profound impact, creating smiles and satisfaction among the students. The team's dedication and genuine concern for the children's well-being are heartwarming, emphasizing how small acts of kindness can make a significant difference. We express deep gratitude to Seva Cafe for their selfless service and unwavering commitment to bettering the world. Their kindness inspires us, and we eagerly anticipate their continued visits to Snehagram, bringing joy and love to them.



International AIDS Conference - Empowering Voices for Hope

We were delighted to have three out of four abstracts accepted for presentation at the International AIDS Conference in Montreal, Canada, on July 28, 2022. This presented a tremendous opportunity to advocate leadership and positive role models among HIV-positive students, inspiring hope through their voices.



Attending the conference with friends was thrilling, witnessing a diverse array of attendees from around the world. The inauguration ceremony left a lasting impression with notable speakers delivering thought-provoking speeches. Throughout the conference, I attended various sessions, delving into cutting-edge research projects and their findings. On the second day, connecting with fellow attendees, especially from India, sparked enlightening conversations about our goals and experiences. Representing my community and country at the conference was a true honor.

Circle of Life

The Circle of Life concert, dedicated to the memory of Rishi, a passionate music enthusiast, aimed to continue his legacy of supporting orphaned and vulnerable children. Following Rishi's 2017 "String Theory" concert, we organized the Circle of Life event on August 2023 successfully raising funds with widespread support. Particularly touching was the impactful mime performance by Snehagram students, conveying the message of kindness's profound impact on lives.



This concert served as a beautiful tribute to Rishi's commitment to making a difference through music. Excited about participating in the concert, I joined a mime group. Our teacher guided us in choosing a theme and patiently trained us with daily expression exercises. Despite initial setbacks, our teacher's encouragement motivated us to persevere. On the concert day, performing in front of a large audience was exhilarating. The well-received mime garnered applause, reinforcing the importance of practice and our exercises. This experience not only brought personal satisfaction but also aligned with the Circle of Life concert's goal of uniting music lovers in memory of Rishi Shet.

Innova Safe Project Site Visit

The Innova Safe project site visit, initiated on December 16, provided an opportunity for donors and their teams to witness the project firsthand. After careful planning, the visit took place on February 2, where the team engaged in informative discussions with Michel Sir, covering project origins, participants, and progress over a two-hour conversation.



Despite traffic delays, the team utilized the extra time for discussions. A warm welcome was extended to the visitors, Shalini Mam, and others, comprising 5 girls and 8 Snehagram community members. Michel Sir and mentors led a session covering diverse topics, including the community's evolution, menstrual hygiene, and positive walking. The program concluded with expressions of joy and appreciation from the attendees, who offered support for future initiatives. The team, grateful for the support, successfully concluded the program, bidding farewell to the visitors with warm wishes.

Livelihood Training- Empowering Lives

On September 1, 2022, we initiated the second batch of our 10-week livelihood training program, welcoming 37 eager trainees. The program, thoughtfully structured, focuses on enhancing employability by addressing specific skills weekly, including healthy living, sports, and holistic wellness. The last two weeks concentrate on honing interview skills through mock interviews, and preparing trainees for the job market.



Personally, the Magic Bus training program provided an exciting opportunity for me to develop essential English language skills — reading, writing, and speaking. Proficient in basic English and equipped with practical knowledge in Microsoft Word, Excel, and PowerPoint, I've found the Snehagram community to be a positive influence, fostering discipline and respect. Beyond the classroom, engaging in evening sports and garden work not only imparted job-oriented skills but also valuable life skills. The joy of playing football in the evenings exemplifies the happiness that Snehagram brings daily.

Leadership Training -Cultivating Success

Commencing on September 12, our three-day leadership training emphasized the importance of clear rules, responsibilities, and supporting individual needs. We learned that effective leadership is a developed capacity requiring continuous learning, training, and active participation. Focusing on the 3Cs—character, competence, and compassion—we explored impactful case studies and committed to integrating these principles into our daily practices.



A session led by ASHA Foundation experts covered peer pressure, love and infatuation, and marriage. We gained strategies to navigate positive and negative peer pressures, insights into distinguishing between love and infatuation, and valuable information on healthy communication and decision-making in marriage, including the intersection of HIV. These engaging sessions provided practical knowledge for our future leadership endeavors.

Prathibhima Camp

A three-day camp was organized for 35 children from various districts of Karnataka at Snehagram, led by the Impossible Fellowship program with support from Fathers, mentors, and staff. The camp focused on sessions and activities to improve counseling, decision-making, problem-solving, leadership, emotional management, teamwork, and creative thinking, with fun activities included to enhance the learning experience. Group activities and healthy sports competitions were also organized, resulting in a meaningful and enjoyable camp for all participants.



Medical Check-up

"Regular check-ups play a crucial role in maintaining good health, as they allow for early detection and prompt treatment of potential health issues. The aim was to catch any illnesses early so that the appropriate treatment could be administered. The doctors also noted that many students were experiencing mild respiratory symptoms due to the changeable weather, which is not uncommon. The students were pleased with the results of the check-up, as they felt that their concerns had been addressed and they received the right treatment. Additionally, the doctors provided valuable advice on how to maintain fitness and well-being. This regular full body check-up not only helped diagnose health issues but also helped prevent future illnesses and infections."

Diwali

At Snehagram, we celebrated the festival grandly and festively. The campus was adorned with a beautiful array of lights, diyas, candles, and tube lights. I was a part of the decorating team and was deeply involved in the preparations. The trainees of Magic Bus also lent their support, making the celebration even more colorful and memorable.



Everyone had the opportunity to light one lamp, which was a unique and special moment. Unfortunately, we didn't get to blast firecrackers, as the community members didn't desire to pollute the environment. While I was happy to be a part of something that protected nature, I was also disappointed that the traditional aspect of the festival was missing. However, I learned a valuable lesson on this Diwali, that true celebration is not just about individual enjoyment, but about coming together as one family and celebrating as a community.

Cultural Exchange with TISB: Learning and Bonding

The arrival of TISB students at Snehagram marked a unique learning opportunity for both groups. Beginning with a nourishing breakfast, we formed teams to tour the campus and collectively plant vegetables and flowers, a task efficiently completed in just one hour. The TISB students generously offered individual lessons, clearing many of our doubts and boosting our confidence.



The day concluded with a cultural program, shared meals, recreational activities, and a friendly football match, transforming strangers into strong friendships. This experience emphasized the significance of cultural exchange and building connections for mutual learning and growth.

Coconut Plantation Project- From Land Clearing to First Harvest

At Snehagram, we transformed an unused piece of land into a coconut plantation, aiming to maximize the benefits of this valuable resource for the growth and development of the region. Recognizing the versatility of the coconut tree, scientifically known as *Cocos nucifera*, we cleared the land, planted 135 coconut saplings, and implemented a drip irrigation system. Despite the challenges of clearing stones and thorny trees, the students diligently tend to the plantation, eagerly anticipating the first harvest.



Socialcred\$ fund raise for Snehagram

After the enriching cultural exchange at TISB, Jahaan Arora, Co-Founder of Socialcred\$, undertook a commendable initiative to mobilize funds for providing 100 days' worth of food for the residents of Snehagram. In collaboration with over 30 dedicated TISB students, a well-coordinated fundraiser was orchestrated, resulting in the collection of funds substantial enough to deliver a remarkable 2 tonnes of essential groceries.



This generous contribution, comprising 600 kgs of rice, oil, salt, dal, lentils, and more, was successfully delivered to Snehagram on November 5, 2023. The collective effort and support received have been truly heartwarming, signifying a meaningful impact on the lives of those at Snehagram. We feel incredibly blessed to have garnered such support, and this gesture holds immense significance for the Snehagram community.

Ranipet Marathon -A Test of Perseverance

The Ranipet Marathon ULTRA Run, organized by the Jollyboys team, promotes the integration of running into one's lifestyle and encourages exploration on foot. With a passion for running since childhood, I challenged myself to run longer distances, completing 10km runs for over five years. This year, I trained for and accomplished a half marathon at the Bangalore Marathon, building the confidence to participate in the 25km Ultra Run at the Ranipet Marathon.



On the event day, facing physical strain and assisting a fellow runner in distress, I persevered through the 25km Ultra Run. Feeling the strain in my heels and thighs at the 22km mark, I took a brief break, refueled, and sprinted to the finish line. This challenging yet rewarding experience underscored the importance of perseverance and the camaraderie among fellow runners, reinforcing the mantra to aim for the finish and never quit.

Delhi Marathon Adventure

Excitement filled me upon learning about the Delhi run, and I eagerly prepared for the event after being selected. Rigorous physical and mental training followed, leading to the memorable day of the run. Starting slowly and picking up the pace, I completed the 10km run, fueled by refreshing lemon water at the 2km mark.



The run was accompanied by the energizing beats of drums, creating an inspiring atmosphere. Post-run, a delicious breakfast and memorable visits to the Lotus Temple and India Gate added to the joy. The journey back home on the train with friends marked the end of this fulfilling experience, emphasizing the values of hard work, dedication, and perseverance.

Magic Bus Certification Success

The Magic Bus Certification Program offered intensive livelihood skill development for underprivileged youth, focusing on securing good jobs and building a better future. The well-organized certification ceremony marked our achievements, symbolizing not just gained knowledge but also dedication and hard work.



Receiving the certificate was a proud moment, representing the beginning of our professional journey. The program provided invaluable skills for making a positive impact in our lives and community, a truly enriching experience worth recommending.

One Eight Run

On March 26th, we eagerly awaited the highly anticipated One 8 run event held in Bangalore. Thanks to the support of Shathos Sir, we had the opportunity to participate. Our preparation for the event began after the Bangalore 10k marathon, and our mentor, Babu Sir, who is an experienced runner, guided us through a strict training schedule that included strength-building workouts to maximize our performance.



Despite the challenging cold weather, we persevered in our early morning training sessions to condition our bodies for the run. We also made sure to prioritize rest and recovery to ensure that we were physically and mentally prepared to perform our best. A total of twelve students from Snehagram participated in the One 8 run and demonstrated exceptional performances. During the event, we took the opportunity to take photos, interact with other runners and groups, and strengthen our relationships within the community.

Stride for Change

The Jobless Long Boring Runners (JLBR) from Runner's High are embarking on a five-day, 76 km daily run from Oct 18th to Oct 22nd, commemorating India's 76 years of freedom. Their goal is to raise funds for Sai Vishwanath Memorial Trust's initiatives, focusing on nutrition for children and youth. The route covers areas linked to these initiatives.



The journey began in 2009 with a running program for children at Sneha Care Home. The home has positively impacted lives, empowering children to become mentors. Funds raised will support the nutrition of children and youth at Snehagram, who regularly train for running. Now, the youth are organizing the Footprint Run, a collaboration between Sai Vishwanath Memorial Trust and Runner's High. Register to be inspired by these individuals changing lives.

The run started from Santhosh's home, with Babu Seenappa completing 42K. Thanks to Fr. Baby, Babu, and others for their inspiration. The hilly route was made memorable with the love and compassion of friends and family, with special thanks to Ravi and the Snehagram team for their support.

Launch of I'mPossible Fellowship 3rd Batch

The I'mPossible Fellowship, a collaboration between SCT and RISHI Foundation, marked the launch of its third batch with an inspiring 5 KM run on Independence Day. Having impacted 250 individuals through the active engagement of 08 Batch II fellows, the program is set to welcome 11 new fellows this year, aspiring to reach 600 peers.

Padmashri Krishnadas Nair, a metallurgical scientist and Chief Guest, praised the fellowship as a beacon of hope. He emphasized the values of compassion, innovation, and inclusivity, distributing seed paper flags to symbolize each fellow's potential as change-makers.

Dr. Anita Shet, Rishi Foundation Board Member, highlighted the fellowship's alignment with Sustainable Development Goals, focusing on

holistic support for HIV-affected youth. Education, emotional well-being, and sustainable livelihoods are integral aspects, of breaking the cycle of poverty.



Dr. Arun Shet shared 'Rebekka's' story, illustrating that every fellow is a change-maker. Father Teji urged commitment and collaboration, emphasizing the fellows' role as positive forces for change.

Mentor Babu S praised the fellowship's impact, while Meghana and Suhas shared their empowering journeys. Mala emphasized the role of positive parents, and Sandeep, the magician, artistically portrayed the fellowship's narrative.



Program Director Michael Babur Raj celebrated success, stressing the commitment to innovation and resilience. The event concluded with a reminder of the fellowship's enduring dedication to creating lasting change in the lives it touches.

Celebrating Life

On November 4th, 2023, Snehagram proudly hosted Father Mathew, the visionary behind the organization, for a heartwarming reunion. Approximately 120 former students, now working outside Snehagram, gathered to celebrate their journeys. The event kicked off with heartfelt introductions, allowing participants to share their experiences after leaving Snehagram. Babu delivered a compelling presentation on the significance of "U=U" in HIV health, emphasizing that maintaining an undetectable viral load prevents transmission.

Mr. Kalesh led a session where students openly discussed their life challenges, covering issues like job changes, adherence to HIV medications, and nutritional struggles. Amidst inspiring stories of overcoming adversity, students shared achievements, including savings, dream bike purchases, continued education, and marriages with HIV-negative children.

Personal narratives, such as Sanjay's resilience despite workplace discrimination, Vijay Kumar's journey from contract to permanent sports teacher, Meghana's challenges in Amazon, and Deepthi's triumphant story of societal acceptance, highlighted the resilience of Snehagram alumni. The unexpected rain shower during open sharing added a refreshing touch to the day. Father Mathew outlined his vision for the children's future, stressing the importance of informed choices, financial independence, and better job opportunities post-12th grade.



Discussions on insurance and job support concluded the event, reinforcing Snehagram's commitment to guiding its children toward a successful life.

Sunny Smiles Camp

The Sunny Smiles Camp, held from October 26th to 28th, 2023, was an extraordinary three-day event for the children at Snehagram. It provided a well-deserved break and an opportunity for fun and relaxation following their exams. This camp was a unique experience for the junior mentors as they took on the responsibility of organizing and managing it for the first time. With the guidance and support of our senior mentor, Mr. Babu, and the entire staff at Snehagram, we worked tirelessly to make it a memorable and successful event.



The camp kicked off with a high-spirited Sports Day. The students were divided into two teams: Team Daisies and Team Orchids. The day was packed with exciting activities, including long jump, high jump, running races, tug of war, and many more. From the very beginning, Team Daisies took the lead, creating an atmosphere of healthy competition.

On the second day, Arts Day brought a burst of creativity and joy. The program included singing competitions, dance-offs, fancy dress contests, and various other cultural activities. Team Orchids displayed their talents, earning praise and accumulating a commendable score.

The final day of the camp was dedicated to a day of adventure and fun. Early in the morning mentors and staff accompanied the students on a memorable trek to the nearby mountain. This experience allowed the children to connect with nature and build lasting memories. In the evening, a barbeque gathering was held, where students, mentors, and staff came together for a delightful meal, strengthening their bonds.

Footprints

Footprints 2023, an annual run by the RISHI Foundation in Bangalore, unites 737 participants, including 278 children from India and abroad. The event, organized by Children for Children, features a 5K and 10K run, emphasizing the journey over the race. The Positive Running Program empowers participants, fostering a healthy lifestyle.



Children like 8-year-old Pratisha and 7-year-old Nandari, both facing challenges, inspire the event. The 'Buddy' concept allows anyone to sponsor a child's participation for Rs. 1000. Finishers receive medals with seeds, symbolizing the mission to empower and nurture positive change.

Post-run, participants enjoy a nourishing breakfast and music by Vantablack, fostering connections and purposeful discussions. The event echoes transformation, signaling a positive change in progress.



RunRise Camp

RunRise Camp 2023, organized by the Positive Running Program under the RISHI Foundation, united participants in a commitment to well-being, growth, and leadership. The camp, held from August 12th to August 14th, featured physical training, interactive sessions, and expert guidance, fostering improved fitness, mental resilience, friendship, and leadership skills. Positive feedback highlights the camp's profound impact, creating a community ready to inspire positive change. With 27 participants from various institutions, the camp aimed to promote holistic physical development, empower participants with leadership skills, and extend benefits to broader communities. RunRise Camp 2023 stands as a testament to collective efforts for continued growth and empowerment.

Independence Day

On August 15th, 2023, Snehagram embraced the spirit of Independence with a vibrant celebration. The day commenced with the hoisting of the tricolor, symbolizing unity and freedom. The residents and staff gathered for a cultural program that showcased the diverse talents within the community.

The program featured patriotic songs, dance performances, and inspiring speeches that underscored the significance of Independence Day. Residents actively participated, expressing their patriotism through various artistic expressions.



The festivities extended into the afternoon with a communal lunch, where residents, mentors, and staff came together to share a meal and strengthen their bonds. The day served as a reminder of the shared values that unite the Snehagram community, promoting a sense of belonging and pride in being part of a larger whole.

Being the Change

Being selected as an Ambassador for the first edition of One Eight Run, held on the 26th of March 2023, was an honor and a privilege. Representing a cause that is so close to my heart, HIV/AIDS, and promoting a healthy and active lifestyle was an incredible experience that filled me with both professional and emotional fulfillment. Through this position, I was able to be the voice of the voiceless children and spread a message of hope to stop the stigma and discrimination of HIV and provide equal opportunities for everyone in all fields.



As an ambassador, I took it upon myself to encourage others to participate and spread awareness about the cause, sharing my personal experiences with running and promoting the benefits of an active lifestyle.

Visit of District Judge

On December 1st, Mrs. P. T. Jennifer, the Secretary of the District Legal Services Authority in Krishnagiri, paid a visit to Snehagram Sneha Special Home. Accompanied by staff members, Mrs. Jennifer took the opportunity to distribute stationery items to the children, emphasizing the importance of education. In an inspiring gesture, she motivated the young minds, encouraging them to pursue their studies diligently and strive towards achieving their ambitions.



During her visit, Mrs. Jennifer engaged with the children, imparting words of encouragement and empowerment. Her presence not only provided noticeable support through the distribution of stationery items but also served as a source of inspiration for the children to believe in their potential. By emphasizing the significance of education and setting ambitious goals, Mrs. Jennifer contributed to fostering a positive and motivating environment at Snehagram Sneha Special Home.

The visit by Mrs. P. T. Jennifer not only showcased the commitment of the District Legal Services Authority to community engagement but also highlighted the collective effort to uplift and support the educational journey of children at Snehagram. The event served as a meaningful reminder of the positive impact that individuals and organizations can have on the lives of children, particularly those in need of special care and attention.

Children's Election at Snehagram

The Children's Election at Snehagram was a vibrant demonstration of democracy and civic engagement among our students. Candidates delivered compelling speeches, articulating their visions for Snehagram during school assemblies. The election process, overseen by teachers, ensured fairness and transparency. When it was time to cast my vote, the significance of the moment dawned on me – a small ballot paper held great power to shape our school's leadership.



As votes were tallied, anticipation filled the air. The results, announced promptly, brought joy and humility to the newly elected leaders. This experience showcased the potency of democracy, with students actively participating, assuming leadership roles, and embracing the responsibilities that followed. The subsequent selection of cabinet ministers by the Prime Minister further added to the excitement of this democratic exercise.

Human Resources

Sl. No	Name	Designation
1	Fr Sunil Joseph	Director
2	Fr Baby	Administrator
3	Ms. Reni	Counselor & CWC Officer
4	Mr. Prabhakar	Security Officer
5	Mrs. Nirmala	Cook
6	Ms. Nirmala	Warden
7	Mr. Babu	Technical Officer
10	Mr. Ramu	Teacher
11	Mr. Amar	Teacher



Experiences

Snehagram: A Haven of Love and Growth

Siddha Sannigrahi

I came to Snehagram as a graduate research assistant from the Maternal and Child Health Institute at Johns Hopkins University. From the first day, I felt the overwhelming charm of Snehagram: connectedness, in more ways than one. Firstly, connectedness to nature. Whether you are walking through the campus or hiking through the mountain, nature always surrounds you. I woke up with birds singing every morning and in the evenings I could look up and quietly gaze at the stars. Secondly, connectedness to the people who are so warm and kind. When they say welcome to the Snehagram family, they truly mean it. You will eat together, pray together, and laugh together every day without fail. One of my favorite memories was when all the students and staff went hiking, somehow in the process of climbing up the mountain, I ended up completely drenched in the pond, playing with the rest of the students with the biggest smile on my face.

Most of all connectedness to yourself, through my time here I felt myself becoming more open, authentic, and capable. Snehagram will bring the best out of yourself, so keep your heart open and enjoy everything Snehagram has to offer! I am truly thankful to have spent 5 months here, and I thank Fr. Sunil and Fr. Biju as well as all the staff and students at Snehagram for opening their space to me and allowing me to be a part of their lives. Although I was a teacher at Snehagram- I was the one who was taught valuable lessons that will remain with me forever.



Hope and Resilience

Dr. Kayur

To me, Snehadaan and Snehagraam symbolize hope and resilience. Ever since my first association with Snehadaan a decade ago, I have only increasing awe and respect for each of the individuals involved – right from the fathers to each of the children. Over the years, I have seen the children blossom into well-rounded, confident individuals, who are ready to take on the world. Over the past year, whilst being closely involved with the activities supported by the Rishi Children's Trust, it has been heartwarming to work with some of the children who have now taken on leadership roles within Snehagram. Their passion to take the learnings from a program as wonderful as that at Snehadaan and Snehagram to those unreached in the community and bring about a positive influence in their lives through the I'mPossible fellowship is truly inspirational. The recent presentations from some of the graduates of the program at the International AIDS Conference in Montreal, Canada is a true testament to the impact of this program, and the world is taking notice. Wishing everyone at Snehadaan and Snehagram continued success, and further power to impact the lives of many, many more...



Collaborations and Alliances

- **INSA India** - Child Parliament and developing child protection policy
- **St. Johns Medical College** –ART and Tertiary Healthcare
- **Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health** - ART and Tertiary Healthcare
- **Attitude Prime Impact** – Physical training, Fitness and motivation
- **Sisters of St. Joseph of Tarbes** – Counselling and guidance for girls
- **Runners High** - Sports and running training
- **Rishi Foundation** – Fitness, running training, nutritional support
- **SOS** – supporting and guidance for mentors of fellowship
- **Magic Bus** – Livelihood training
- **Innovasafe** - Livelihood training
- **ThoughtWorks**- Reaching the community

Publications

Snehagram publishes Annual reports, active in social networks such as face book, and YouTube as Snehagram, and a bimonthly newsletter – ‘Snehavaani’ that covers all the events of Snehagram during the period. The major shares of the contents are contributed by the children themselves. It also gives a platform for children to nurture their literary skills.



Snehagram Camillians

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