Student Police Cadets

Helping adolescents realise their potential

Introduction

Children are the future and require opportunities and encouragement for their survival, development, protection and participation to ensure that they realise their optimum potential. This responsibility is vested in the family, the immediate community, the law makers and service providers and the society at large. However, in Kerala, crimes against and involving children were reported to be on the increase. The Kerala State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR) has released recent data showing that 1,029 children in the 15-18 years age group and 800 children in the 10-14 years age group faced sexual harassment.

Children and Police (CAP)

With a farsighted and proactive vision, the Kerala Police developed an umbrella programme called Children and Police (CAP) which contains several police initiatives to prevent abuse and violence against children and ensure better child protection. CAP aims to create “an invisible wall of protection” around every child and recognises that:

1. The extent of children’s commitment towards responsible citizenship depends on the foundation built during childhood
2. Problems faced by children even if identified, are often unreported or unattended. In some cases, they are attended unscientifically, thus causing a damaging effect
3. The present process of handling youngsters with deviant behaviour needs to be revisited as isolating them from the mainstream may enhance the negative tendencies within.

Within CAP, a basket of unique programmes have been developed, each responding to a particular lacuna/gap in child protection. One of these unique programmes is Student Police Cadets (SPC).

SPC – We learn to serve

SPC is a leadership building initiative that aims to make children develop their initiative and personality along with physical development which in turn positively influences their academic learning. SPC Cadets are capable of providing peer mentoring to children who are part of ORC in their schools and both ORC and SPC are implemented in a complementary manner at the school level.

Key indicators Kerala

One of the most developed states in India, tied at first place with Himachal Pradesh on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index, 2018

Well performing in indicators related to Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being), Goal 4 (Quality Education) and Goal 5 (Gender Equality)

94% literacy rate compared to national average of 74.04% (Census 2011)

3.4 million children

88.68% children between 5-17 years of age in school.

Key implementation steps

- Designation of state level nodal officers and committees and earmarking sufficient funds
- Organizing 10-day residential capacity building programme for Community Police Officers (CPOs) and Drill Inspectors (DIs)
- Identification of schools at district level
- Posting district level nodal officers and forming a District Level Advisory Committee (DLAC), identification of resources at district level, setting up district level learning centres
- Constituting and convening School Level Advisory Committees, identification of CPOs and DIs
- Convening PTA meeting to present the SPC rationale and implementation
- Conducting school-level workshops for teaching and non-teaching staff related to SPC
- Selection of cadets, formation of Guardian SPC (PTA specifically for SPC cadets' parents)
- Conducting regular SPC activities at all levels and undertaking regular review and monitoring

Key achievements

- SPC cadets declared as child rights ambassadors by UNICEF
- Being studied for replication by other countries in Asia and Africa
- Launched at national level by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India (GoI) on June 21, 2018
- Funds for SPC allotted to all states and Union Territories
- Improved attitude among stakeholders towards police
- Replicated in Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana and Karnataka
- Improved physical fitness, confidence, self-discipline and positivity among cadets along with improved interactions with police and improved social responsibility
- Increased interest in parenting
- Demand for SPC from all schools in Kerala
- Increased enrolment in SPC schools and improved school campuses
- 52,000 cadets currently being trained
- More than one lakh SPC cadets trained as change leaders since 2010

Reach

- 14 districts (all)
- 703 schools
- 59,672 cadets currently being trained
- 1 lakh SPC cadets trained so far
- 1,300 trained teachers
- 3,000 police officers
- More than 3,000 schools on the waitlist

> SPC was a stage for me to realise my potential. The number of opportunities and exposure I received during my two years in SPC would not have been possible elsewhere. We also helped out during the 2018 floods. We were thus able to contribute meaningfully to society because of SPC. I became more aware of the fact that I am a social being and have a role to play in society.
>
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Towards a new dawn

unicef
for every child