



# SAHAJ FOUNDATION

...connecting people with their hearts

## SWANIRMAAN— A PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN'S HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

SwaNirmaan, a 15 days long program that focuses on holistic development of kids aged 12-15 years old, was organized in the month of July during monsoon breaks. A total of 21 kids participated in the program and took active part in our sessions running 7 hours a day and specially designed to focus on Life Skills, Values and exposure building.

In 'LifeSkills' module, our prime focus was on experiential project-based learning of three major skills— Asking questions, Listening and Collaboration. In 'Values' module, kids took part in various activities that highlighted the importance of Humility, Honesty, Perseverance and Empathy. In addition to sessions on Lifeskills and Values, there were specially designed modules on Ayurveda (4 Hours), Kabaad se Jugaad (6 Hours), Spoken English (6 Hours) and career options (2 Hours). A visit to nearby organic farm and a few episodes of Satyamev Jayate added more fun to entire learning experience.

By the end of the program, kids not only took their learnings home to discuss it with their parents but also opened up to share their personal and school related problems with the whole team.



## HEAD2HEART RETREAT 3



Our third Head2Heart Retreat was organized in our beloved Deer Park Institute this September. The retreat hosted a set of 6 seekers who joined us from different parts of the country namely New Delhi, Chennai, Bangalore and Hyderabad. They all came with a quest to figure out how their hearts wanted them to lead their lives. The agenda was to spend time with 'Self' in the beautiful Himalayan surroundings for a period of 7 days.

The process involved detailed discussions around various people's life stories, meditation, different set of community adventures specially designed to travel from 'Head' to 'Heart'. Our seekers benefitted from the entire process wherein they reflected upon 'the beauty in simplicity' and 'ambition vs. happiness'.

## UNDERSTANDING 'EDUCATION'

### VISIT TO PURKAL YOUTH DEVELOPMENT SOCIETY

[PYDS](#) was started by Mr and Mrs Swami in Purkal village near Dehradun 18 years back. Under the society, the couple, after getting retired at the age of 60, established a school (Yuva Shakti) and a women livelihood wing (Stree Shakti) for local rural community. We visited them in the month of August this year to understand about the ways in which they are running the school. The entire experience left us amazed as we could see children coming from lower sections of the society competing head-on with the students of high-ended metropolitan schools of the country.

### VISIT TO SOCIETY FOR INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT

**OF HIMALAYAS:** [SIDH](#) was founded by Mr Pawan Gupta and his wife Mrs Anuradha Joshi in mid 80s when the locals of Jaunpur region in Uttarakhand (then UP) requested them to start a school for their children. Having started in the modern ways, the couple soon realized that they need to change their ways to suit local requirements. Thus started their journey towards designing experiential, contextual curriculum. We visited them in Mussoorie this August to understand their philosophy, curriculum and different school experiments in detail.

## OUR EFFORTS FOR SELF-GROWTH

### GRAMYA MANTHAN, YOUTH ALLIANCE

[YA](#) organizes Gramya Manthan to expose urban youngsters to understand problems of rural communities of the country in Kanpur. We got a chance to be there for a period of 5 days and learn from the event execution experience of YA team. The key learning was on how an intimate space can be created where a group of people can connect, explore, learn, share and celebrate their successes and failures.

### JEEVAN VIDYA WORKSHOP

We attended the famous workshop in the month of June to understand more about our lives on 'Individual', 'Family', 'Society' and 'Existence' level. We were deeply inspired by the coordinator of the workshop Mr Vinish Gupta who lives in a village in Karnataka and runs [Jeevanshala](#).

### EXPLORING CHAMBA

As a part of our rural explorations, this time we visited Chamba districts of Himachal Pradesh. On papers, Chamba is known as one of the 250 backwards districts of India with more than 50% BPL families. In September, we set out to explore the truth behind these numbers with the help of [Upamanyu Ji](#) who has worked in the district for last 40 years. Our visits to Bhattiyat, Jadera and Tissa convinced us that these regions were not really poor, rather they possessed low amount of money as they had just started moving towards a modernized economy from a self-sufficient one.

## ARTICLES ON OUR 'SOFT' LEARNINGS

### A DIFFERENT TAKE ON 'EDUCATION'

The question of what Education really is' has taken us on a ride for last one year. Through all our programs with community kids, and our explorations and meetings with people working in different communities across country, we try to find an answer to it. Go through an [article](#) written on our journey so far.

**CAN TECHNOLOGY SAVE OUR VILLAGE ECONOMY?** Often, in social media, we keep highlighting the importance of technology in rural development. But most of the times, we keep ourselves limited to technology for better communication and education systems. In our Chamba visit, we got to understand a different perspective ([Article](#)) on the same by [Upamanyu Ji](#) who has worked in the region for past 40 years.

### LEARNING AYURVEDA

From our SwaNirmaan Workshop Experience, we are convinced that Ayurveda can be passed on to kids as a tool to take care of their health in future. Therefore, we have now started taking an online course conducted by National Library of Ayurved Medicine ([NLAM](#)) to enhance our understanding of the same.

### NEWLY LAUNCHED

[www.sahajfoundation.in](http://www.sahajfoundation.in)

A fresh website that explains our philosophy and provides details of all our programs, team members, supporters and contacts.

### MAGIC HAPPENS :)

Right before our third Head2Heart Retreat in September, a new member came to Sahaj Family! The member named 'Fatafat' serves as a projector and was contributed jointly by our friends [Vineet](#), [Vaibhav](#), [Raj](#), [Tarun](#) and [Abhishek](#) as a gift to our work. We feel grateful to them for helping us on urgent basis as the retreat was just three days away, and we were not able to arrange a projector with the help of any of our friends.

### THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS

We would like to thank all our supporters who help us in our mission financially. A special thanks to [Vaibhav](#), [Anant](#), [Aparajita](#), [Saurabh](#) and [Sanchit](#) for their monthly contributions. Thank you for keeping us going! Love is all we need... :)

## UPCOMING...

**I. LEARNING 2 LEARN (REVIVED)-** We aim to re-launch a revived version of this program for primary level kids of Government Schools. The program shall come as a series of a week long workshops that would aim to strengthen basics of kids in academics.

**II. HEAD2HEART RETREAT 4 (FOR STUDENTS ONLY):** After conducting two retreats with working employees/ self-employed candidates, we now aim to experiment the concept with students who are looking for clarity in their upcoming professional careers.

Reach us at [www.sahajfoundation.in](http://www.sahajfoundation.in) or mail Sahaj Team directly at [sahajfoundationinfo@gmail.com](mailto:sahajfoundationinfo@gmail.com)

For exploring volunteering opportunities or contributing to our work financially, contact Ashish Arora at 98168 62327