

INSTITUTIONAL BEST PRACTICES 2020 - 2021

7.2 Institutional Best Practices

1. Title of the Practice

I. ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS FOR STUDENTS' WELFARE

2. Objectives of the Practice

Majority of the students enrolling in our college are first generation learners belonging to the lower middle-class section of the society. The underlying objective is to keep parents informed through periodic meetings, thereby developing a good rapport with them which in turn help us understand the students' background and deal with them more amicably.

This has been an effective way for the College to enable parents to get first-hand information about their child's academic performance as well as participation of their ward in the class and different activities in the college. This practice also aims at promoting the welfare of the students at home, college and in the community at large.

3. The Context

Many of the parents meet the teachers for the first-time during admission enquiry. They accompany their children during subsequent rounds of the admission process and develop a bonding with teachers.

Initially when we started with this practice many parents would not turn up as their wards would not inform them about the parents- teachers' meetings. To overcome this problem, we had to relax certain rules like instead of calling all parents of a class at a given time on the same day, we gave them an option of bringing their parents according to their convenient time. We do face some issues but due to our determination of giving results only to parents, students do bring their parents as soon as results are declared, as they need to fill the ATKT forms.

4. The Practice

Many parents like to be involved in students' welfare activities. They do appreciate of being informed of the students' interaction in college activities and also about their progress in academic skills. In this way, the college develops a family type harmonious relationship with the students and their parents. Sometimes it also helps to resolve mental health issues, if there are any.

Teacher's interaction with parents takes place several times in an academic year.

i) During the admission process:

Students, especially after 12th (Science) are confused of their subject choice during F.Y.B.Sc. admission. Many parents accompany their wards for the process and are apprehensive about their wards getting admitted for the right course. Our teachers take turns sitting at the admission counters and patiently counsel them, clear their doubts and establish a good rapport with parents. This gives them an assurance that their wards are in safe hands. Many parents have language barriers, so teachers speak to them in the language they are comfortable at. Moreover, we also admit students coming from other States, so additional documents for eligibility are required to be submitted to the University of Mumbai. The parents are well informed about the rules and regulations through effective communication so that there are no future issues.

ii) In the starting week of the course:

All parents are invited class wise by the respective class teacher for general instructions to be conveyed. Here the class teacher along with the Principal, Vice Principal and some subject teachers address the parents. They are informed about Lectures and Practical timings, need for punctuality and regularity, University attendance rules and how the college implements the same. Teachers also counsel the parents on nutritional diet aspects for the students, emphasizing on proper balanced, healthy breakfast before they come to college and also to carry food to be taken during their recess break. The Examination in-charge is invited to orient the parents and students about the semester exam system and rules for ATKT examination. They are also told about the various associations and activities conducted so that students can exhibit their talent. Parents are informed about tentative dates and venue of Industrial visits to be organized by various departments.

iii) Attendance defaulters Parents -Teachers meet:

Parents are required to meet the class teacher if the students fail to attend 75% of lectures and Practical sessions. Parents get to know about the regularity of their wards in attending class. Parents are also informed about any behavioural discrepancies of their wards so that they can intervene and bring about timely corrections. Parents feel satisfied when there is one on one interaction and also share any personal problems faced by the child during such discussions.

iv) Unfair means committee meeting:

Parents are called along with the student to defend their case in an unfair means committee meeting. The parent thus gets a first-hand information of the wrong doing of their child. The parent is counselled along with the student about the punishment meted to the child for using unfair practices, so as to avoid it in future

v) Declaration of Results:

Results of students are handed over to students in the presence of at least one parent. This ensures that the parents are informed about the students' progress and are not kept in the dark about it. Teachers counsel students in front of their parents giving them tips to improve their performance. Thus, they are also prevented from going into depression as they realize that they can work and do better.

Parent teacher meeting is thus an effective way through which parents can discuss several issues that they feel are hindering their child's learning. Face to face communication with the teacher immensely helps the parents to contribute in the learning process of their child.

5. Evidence of Success

This practice of involving parents from the time of admission to their results has benefitted students in several ways. When teachers as well as parents motivate them for performing well, most of them improve their grades as they are promoted from one semester to the next due to the check on them.

The evidence of success of this practice is reflected in the performance of students in curricular as well as co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.



Principal Dr. Usha Iyer interacts with the parents during Parent Teacher Interactive Session on 4th January, 2020



Principal Dr. Usha Iyer, Vice-principal Mr. Vaibhav Banjan & Mr. Ayyapan Iyer with the parents of BMS/ BBI/ BAF/ BMM students during Parent Teacher Interactive Session on 4th January, 2020

Parents are happy when we keep them informed of their wards progress. Parents and teachers also exchange their phone numbers during such meetings which makes it easier to call the parent or vice versa anytime directly if required.

In the Science section where the numbers of students in a class is less, the parents personally inform if the child is sick and cannot attend class.

When the teacher along with the parent sets a goal for a student to improve, it motivates the child towards achieving his goal and attaining success. It has been observed over the years that students do better when parents are involved.

When parents take over the responsibility of monitoring the learning plan of their wards daily and follow it up regularly it makes a difference in their commitments towards their work.

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

There are many problems we face while inviting parents for the meeting. Though we try and arrange for a weekend meeting, many parents do not turn up, so we ask students to inform us in advance if their parents are not free on the said date and time. We then give them suitable date and time as per their convenience and our availability so as not to disappoint them.

Some parents also report about some teachers that they are strict, but by effective communication in their local language they are made to understand the values of a good teacher and their moral commitments.

Other problems encountered include absence of parent in the city, either out of town on duty or hospitalized etc, such parents are given their convenient date and time to meet the teacher individually. If the student stays with his relatives in Mumbai, he is asked to bring his guardian along, with an identity proof.

1. Title of the practice

II. EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS FOR UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN BY D.L.L.E. STUDENTS.

2. Objectives of the Practice

Educational sessions for underprivileged street children is being provided by Department of Lifelong & Learning Extension (D.L.L.E.) in collaboration with the **NGO, Robin Hood Army**

The main objectives for conducting these sessions were:

- a) To benefit the mentor (D.L.L.E. students) and the mentee (underprivileged children)
- b) To educate and counsel the needy children and help them improve their mannerisms
- c) To provide an experience to our students to become good tutors
- d) To sensitize our college students to the challenges faced by the underprivileged children, so that they can become responsible citizens in future and get to know the importance of community service

3. The Context

One of the challenging issues was that of space to conduct classes for these children. Initially it was decided to conduct these sessions near the residence of the underprivileged children, but no suitable place could be found there. Running out of options, the D.L.L.E. team approached the Principal, Dr. Usha Iyer and with her permission started conducting the sessions within our college premises. However, our college was a little far from their residence. To solve this problem, the mentors decided to personally accompany the kids from their residence to our college.

The second challenge was the time slot because our students' lecture timing and children's school timing were clashing. Our college students carefully scheduled these sessions to avoid time clashes and engaged these kids between 11.00am to 12.00pm, twice a week.

Finally, understanding the needs of the street children and methodologies required to be adopted for teaching was also a challenge, since they were of different age groups. That too was overcome in due course of time by being considerate to them and using a customized approach towards each child.

4. The Practice

Education is a basic human right in today's world and it is necessary to reach out to the underprivileged children and give them hope for a brighter tomorrow. The environment makes a huge difference in children's behaviour. It is not an easy task to change these children's mannerisms overnight. It requires humanitarian traits of patience, kindness, thoughtfulness and moreover sensitivity towards these underprivileged children to deal with them appropriately. Young children's minds are raw, impressionable and can be moulded through right training.

This practice has helped in inculcating a value system in our college students. This practice not only benefitted the underprivileged children but also the mentor. They realized the significance of understanding and compassion. It also in a way aided the thought that practical application of knowledge by imparting it to the needy and demonstrating patience through empathy, is the best form of service to society.

The D.L.L.E. team proposes to reach out to such underprivileged children in the future so that more lives can be touched and improved.

- These sessions were not given the form of a formal classroom, rather they were in a casual set up and this helped the children to develop a better rapport with their tutors.
- These sessions aimed at giving the children an overall development, encouraged them to be more forthcoming, interactive and overcome their inhibitions.
- Friendly learning environment was created by including fun games so that the children could learn happily.
- Initially the children were shy to even use the black-board and this inhibition was overcome by giving them different colour chalks and asking them to write on the board.
- Our college students who played the role of mentors understood their needs, the knowledge gaps of the children and devised ways & means (methodologies) to teach them.

They gave individual attention to each child and helped them improve their personality. Some of the areas on which they concentrated were development of communication skills, English pronunciation, spellings, understanding Mathematics fundamentals etc.

- Discussions were held on general topics like the importance of cleanliness, discipline, manners and etiquette. The mentors put in their best efforts to inculcate the above traits in the children's daily life and to make them habituated to good thoughts and deeds. At

the end of the sessions they were happy to see that their efforts were well taken by the children.

- This process of mentoring the underprivileged children and inculcating good habits in them has helped our students understand the importance of caring, sharing, nurturing and to be patient while dealing with the kids.

5. Evidence of Success

The success of this practice can be measured in terms of

- Progress of the underprivileged children
- D.L.L.E. student's ability to mentor these needy children

The end result was very encouraging as a noticeable change was seen in these underprivileged kids. Their words and deeds showed a tremendous change. It turned out to be a satisfying experience for the D.L.L.E. students since their efforts were showing results. The following were the positive changes observed among the mentees:

- 1) They started following good hygienic practices
- 2) They showed behavioural changes
- 3) They learnt how to greet people or friends
- 4) They started speaking in English and their growing confidence was visible in their smiles.



Students of S.I.W.S. DLLE Team mentor underprivileged kids



Students of S.I.W.S. DLLE Team teach underprivileged kids

Mentoring kids from slums and teaching them through methods and language they understood was a difficult task that D.L.L.E. students handled very well.

- 1) They acquired the attributes of patience and tolerance.
- 2) They were sensitized to the problems that the slum children faced.
- 3) They understood the importance of caring and helping the society in whatever means they could.
- 4) This will surely help them to become responsible citizens of this country.
- 5) The practice may also encourage them to take up such social causes in the future

6. Problems Encountered and Resources Required

As an incentive for regularity in attendance, it was initially decided to give healthy snacks and fruits to the children after each session. This would encourage them to be regular to the class.

Arranging for snacks after every session became a challenge as D.L.L.E. students did not have enough sponsors. They took up this challenge and propagated the need for sponsors by approaching all the classes of our college, and ensured that each day during these sessions we had enough, nutritive snacks for the kids. Our teaching staff also came forward and sponsored snacks and takeaways for the kids.

The second problem which was faced by the mentors was that these kids did not belong to the same age group, hence each one had to be approached differently. Also, the method and medium of teaching had to be altered as per their understanding level.

The D.L.L.E. students solved this problem through their patient and compassionate approach by understanding their level of knowledge.