

Samarthanam Library Program – supported by Child Vikaas

Libraries have been set up in 6 Bangalore Corporation schools (Primary Schools Classes 1 to 7). The schools are located in Madivala, Jakasandra, Hosakerehalli, Hulimavu, Audugodi and Subramayapura (South Bangalore).

In each of the schools, the headmaster/mistress has provided a room to be used for the library. About 400 books have been purchased for each school. The books are also graded by level of difficulty (Levels 1 – 6) and stacked accordingly.

Each class has one library period per week. The children are first leveled, to see what level they are reading both in Kannada and in English (levels are from 1 to 6). This is to help the librarians issue the books accordingly to their level. Each level has a set of 'Must Read' before the child can go to the next level. Books are issued out for the children to take home. Children from 1st and 2nd standard are not issued books but they are read to by the librarian.

The children are given activity sheets to fill out in the library period to maintain their interest in the class and to enrich their reading experience. These can be word puzzles (matching words), fill in the blanks, colouring pictures etc. 'Magic cards' are hidden in books randomly. A child who selects a book with a magic card can choose the activity. Each library maintains a Grow By Reading Chart, where the child's reading progress is recorded. This promotes reading competition in the children, since they like to see their name go up on the charts.

The library program is monitored by [Hippocampus](#) which works with NGOs to set up libraries in corporation schools. Hippocampus provides the training for all the librarians and monitors the library program through a library coordinator. The coordinator ensures that the registers are properly maintained and that the books are being issued regularly and that the activities are being done. Hippocampus also generates the activity sheets, the library curriculum and the list of books that need to be bought for all the levels. It conducts a yearly retraining program for the librarians. All training costs and coordination costs are borne by Hippocampus.

Akshara <http://aksharafoundation.org>, a well known NGO, also works through Hippocampus to set up libraries in corporation schools.

Reading Skills Program

Samarthanam also runs a Reading Skills Program in the 6 schools where the libraries are located. The children for this program are selected from the 5th and 6th grades (class). In a couple of the schools, children in 4th grade are included. There are about 25 children selected from each grade. Each school has 2 separate reading groups. The children meet 2 times a week for the reading program outside of school time. Initial training and monitoring for the Reading Skills Program was provided by Hippocampus. Now Samarthanam does this on its own.

The reading program has a prescribed set of books that need to be covered for each. During the class, the children are divided into smaller groups of 3 to 4 children. Each group is provided with a single copy of book that is being read. The teacher first reads the book and explains the concepts and story using several interesting teaching aids. After the reading is done, the children do several activities based on the books such as acting out different parts, vocabulary, relating the book to their own observations, questions on the story, depicting the story in drawings etc. There is a high level of student participation in all these sessions.