



**Kalanjiyam**

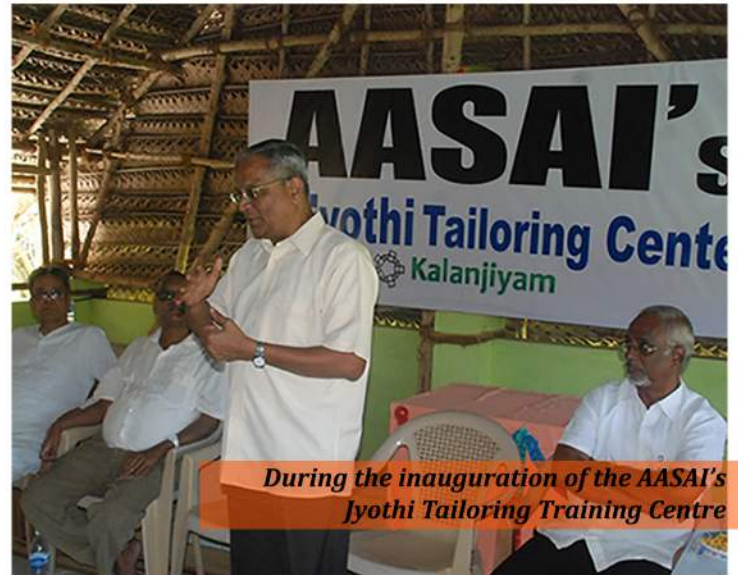
**Working together for a bright future**

# பதிவுகள் - 8

*Imprints. Volume 8. 2015*

## ***AASAI's Tailoring Initiative***

It is our pleasure to announce a wonderful new initiative JYOTHI Tailoring Training Centre which was started in partnership with the American Association for the Social Advancement of India (AASAI) at Kalpat Training Centre. The centre gives tailoring training to deserving women in our adopted villages that helps develop skills and self-confidence to support their families and improve their livelihood. In this first year, thirty women will be trained, ten in each batch for a period of four months. A senior tailor from one of our villages will conduct the training. The training curriculum will teach designing and stitching basic garments for women and men as well as bed sheets and pillow covers. A unique feature of this project is the partnership with Voluntary Health Services (VHS), Chennai (through AASAI), that will help create annual orders for bed linens and other hospital garments. The women from Jyothi Tailoring Centre will fulfil the orders for stitched hospital garments that will get them hands-on experience during the training period and create opportunities to become employed after the training is complete. An expert management consultant, Mr. Durairajan is guiding the project's implementation to help women develop entrepreneurial skills. The goal is to grow this project into a successful business enterprise run by women from the community.



*During the inauguration of the AASAI's Jyothi Tailoring Training Centre*

## ***Engaging with Pregnant & Lactating Women***



*Kalanjiyam staff member surveying a pregnant woman during village level survey*

In partnership with Share and Care Foundation USA, the Right Information Community Health (RICH) program in 2014-15 focused on maternal and child health. The health assessments conducted in prior years highlighted to us that women in our villages were not practicing the appropriate pregnancy related care and infant feeding practices; in particular knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding was found to be poor. Pregnant women were provided prenatal check-ups for vitals, blood pressure, weight-gain, etc. and referred for specialized referral as required. Counselling was provided on appropriate mother and child care, nutrition and breastfeeding. Lactating women were provided basic check-up and education on all aspects of infant care, breastfeeding, initiation and continuation of complementary feeding and immunization. Over the period of a year, 376 pregnant and lactating women were identified in Lattur and Maduranthakam blocks through village level surveys and supported by this program that made women and child health a priority. At the end of the year, we found significant improvement in the knowledge about exclusive breastfeeding and complementary feeding, as well as increase in the number of women who breastfed exclusively for longer period and those who started complementary feeding at the correct age.

***Kalanjiyam is registered under FCRA by the Home Ministry of India***

**Providing Access to Health Care**

The RICH (Right Information Community Health) mobile clinic implemented in the Lattur and Maduranthakam blocks of Kancheepuram district reaches out to over 200 villages that have poor access to health care. About 35% to 40% of these villages are remote, the nearest health care centre, public or private, is at a distance of 10 kilometres or more, and the availability of transportation is limited to none.

This year,

- ☞ 129 health camps were conducted
- ☞ 7728 beneficiaries were provided free health care check-up and medicines.
- ☞ 5566 women and girls were reached through the Program this year.
- ☞ 47% of the beneficiaries were the adult population over the age of 40.

Health education and creating awareness is an important component of the RICH Program. As a part of this, the outreach workers have been providing need-based information to the village community, school children and adolescents. In addition, the outreach workers this year focussed their energy on increasing awareness at the community level on critical health issues such as antenatal and infant care, tuberculosis, etc. through one-on-one, group discussions, and screening of informative videos.

Awareness programs for adolescent girls (ages 12-18 years) has focussed on reproductive health and hygiene, nutrition, and other common adolescence related problems. Over 500 girls have benefited from this program and 50 of the girls affected by reproductive health-related problems were given special attention and counselling.

A total of 26 health awareness sessions were conducted in 20 project schools (primary through higher secondary) that reached over 1500 children. The programs provided basic health awareness for children, and special focus on hygiene and sanitation, nutrition, and communicable and non-communicable diseases.

Through the Child Health Card, the children in adopted schools have been able to access free health care from qualified health care practitioners for minor illnesses. The RICH van doctor and nurse have provided regular health check-ups for the children and a fall in the number of severe episodes of health problems such as colds, fevers, etc. among children has been observed over the last year.

A number of referrals for specialized health care were made this year for tuberculosis, pregnancy-induced hypertension, cardiac disease, cataract surgeries, seizures, etc. In all the cases, the RICH Program Nurse and the outreach workers closely followed up with the patients to ensure that they visited the appropriate health care practitioner for the treatment, regularly took their medicines and followed all the guidelines given to them.



Inside the RICH Van



Nurse and outreach worker with village women during awareness session



During an awareness session for adolescent girls

**SUCCESS STORIES**



Mahalakshmi, a 10th class pass out, got married at the age of 23 and now lives in Zameen Endathur, a village served by the RICH Program. The Kalanjyiam team consisting of a nurse and an outreach worker first contacted Mahalakshmi when she was four months pregnant. She was provided a basic check-up including weight, BP and vitals since she had not had an ante-natal check-up at the time. Mahalakshmi said, "This was the first time I had my BP taken; though I have studied up to 12th I am not very aware about these things." She was also advised to see the doctor in the nearby PHC. The nurse and the outreach worker visited her 8 times during her pregnancy and provided awareness and counselling about the do's and don'ts during pregnancy, the importance of exclusive breastfeeding, appropriate timing for commencement of complementary feeding, etc. Mahalakshmi was advised by the PI-IC Doctor to take iron and folic acid supplements, but she did not regularly take these tablets. The Kalanjyiam nurse advised her on the importance of Iron and Folic Acid for pregnant women. After this, she took the supplements regularly and reported that she was less fatigued and more active than before.

Mahalakshmi gave birth to a healthy baby boy weighing 2.9kg. She reported, "The Kalanjyiam nurse had prepared me well, so after I gave birth to the child, I started breastfeeding my baby within half an hour after birth. Once I came home I continued to practice exclusive breastfeeding as I was advised." She did find it a little difficult initially but following the Nurse's advice, she kept herself healthy by drinking sufficient water and eating healthy which aided in the process of lactation. She also resisted from giving water to her child as advised despite being repeatedly told by her mother in-law. In the following visit, the nurse discussed at length with her mother in-law about why we should avoid water and how breastmilk was sufficient for the baby.

**Achievements in Zamin Endathur High School**

The Rural School Strengthening project supported by Asha for Education, Stanford Chapter has continued its implementation this year in all the five Panchayat Union/Government schools in Kanchipuram district. In the academic year 2014- 2015, Zameen Endathur School has got 100% pass percentage for Class X board exams. There has been a 15% increase in marks in Maths and 28% in Social Science in their final exams when compared to the Mid-term Exams. The pass percentage of the students has risen from 38% to 100% in the board exams which has shown a remarkable change in the performance level of the students. This achievement has been realized only since the support by Asha for Education, Standard Project.

**Asha Projects**



**Academic Outcomes in the year (2014-2015):**

Academic performance of the students in the year 2014-2015 improved from the previous year in all the project schools. The project placed teachers have played a vital role in helping students to pass in Class X and Class XII board exams. The pass percentage of Thiruvadhoo Higher Secondary School has improved from 77% to 84% in class X. The top three scores of the school are above 85%. Scores in each of the subjects have also substantially improved this year. The pass percentage of class XII is 64%. With regard to primary and middle school, students are doing relatively well and consistently as observed in our independent assessments.



**Kalanjiyam appointed para-teacher and special educator engaging with students**



**At a Teacher Training Program**

**Special Education**

A special educator was appointed to identify and help students with varying learning, mental, physical and emotional disabilities in the project schools. Initially, 3 project schools were chosen and students were observed and assessed, of these 21 students were identified with problems such as restlessness, low level of concentration, poor memory and use of foul language. Special attention in Math and languages was given to those students after school hours. Students were taught phonics, comprehension of words, reading and writing, grammar, vowels and consonants in Tamil and English. Number recognition, counting, ordering and sequencing, addition and subtraction were also taught. Complementary fun activities such as word tracing activity, dot-to-dot exercises, mirror activity etc. were conducted to improve understanding.



**Special Educator engaging with students with special needs**



**Mr. Suresh handling a session during the Life Skills Training Workshop**

**Life Skills Training Workshop**

Life skills are essential to deal effectively with everyday life challenges at school, college, work and personal lives. These skills, in turn, improve one's life and career prospects. A Life Skills Training Workshop was conducted on May 3 and May 4, 2015 for the students who completed class XII. A total of 33 students from the local villages attended the workshop.

The workshop covered various aspects of life-skills including self-awareness, leadership, communication, gender values, identifying strengths, goal setting, career options and resume writing. During the resume writing session, the students developed their own resumes. This workshop was very helpful to the students in helping choose a college course that would satisfy their career goals.

**Madurai Project**

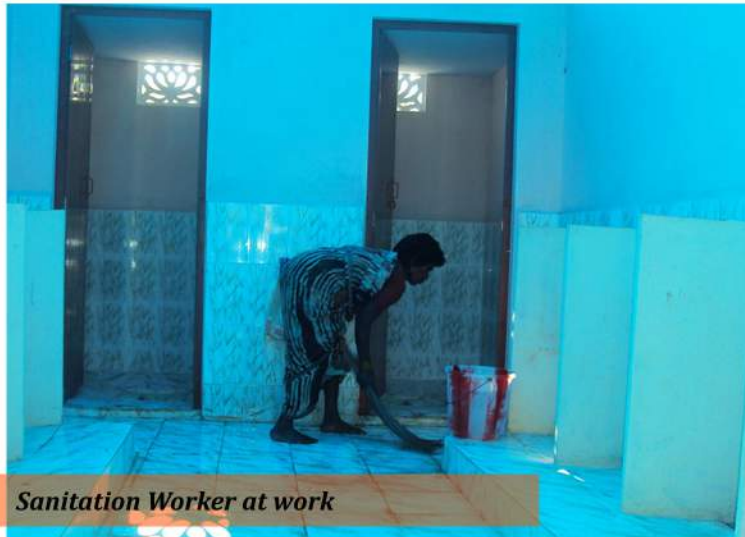
The project schools in Virudhunagar district continued to be supported this academic year. Financial support of Rs.3000/- each was extended to needy and deserving school children of Panaimoondradaipu village. The project conducted various activities such as speech competition and supported the schools with school books, library books and educational aids such as atlas, dictionaries, etc. Bicycle and spectacles were provided to two needy students. On the occasion of Ramzan, gifts were provided to 10 needy Muslim people from the villages.

**Highlights:**

- ☛ As a token of encouragement, gifts were provided to 9 students who have been actively engaged in the process of growing teak wood saplings provided in the last academic year.
- ☛ The project has supported 3 individuals for obtaining their driving licence for carrying out their livelihood.
- ☛ Financial assistance was given to M. Veeralakshmi, a college student, from Thathampatti village for pursuing her degree course and for computer training.
- ☛ 16 students were awarded an amount of Rs.1000/- each for their excellent academic performance.



At a school Program in the Madurai Project



Sanitation Worker at work

**Hygiene and Sanitation**

Kalanjiyam has been implementing a sustainable program to improve hygiene practices among school children for the last eight years. These efforts are supported through funding from various individuals and organizations who are committed to improving hygiene and sanitation in schools. A total of 9 sanitation workers were appointed to schools to help maintain the hygiene facilities in the project schools. The schools were supplemented with cleaning supplies that has proved to enhance the commitment and motivation of the schools. To encourage good work, the best sanitation worker is chosen every month and felicitated with prizes. Repair and maintenance of the toilets in three of the schools was done this year. Clean drinking water is being provided through Reverse Osmosis filtration systems. In addition, water drums were provided this year to collect and store purified water in the classrooms. Annual cleaning and maintenance of the water tanks is also done in the schools.

A new initiative was started in the month of November 2014 to promote proper handwashing habit among children. Hand wash soap was provided to each school and the para-teachers facilitated proper handwashing habits in children before lunch and after using toilet facilities.

Health education classes were conducted by the Kalanjiyam nurse in the project schools on a monthly basis. At this time, the nurse focuses on reinforcing the messages on proper toileting, handwashing, personal cleanliness and hygiene, use of slippers and boiling water before drinking alongside other topics. The Kalanjiyam staff members also reinforce the same messages to the children to bring about positive behavioural changes in personal hygiene.



Kalanjiyam staff members during a 'Clean India Campaign' activity

**Nutrition**

Nutrition education is an important focus of our efforts to improve the wellbeing of children and to bring about better academic outcomes. With funding from various sources, nutrition education and nutrition supplementation in the form of vegetables, which were cultivated in Kalanjiyam field office, were provided for the noon meals in all the schools. In some schools, the project-supported kitchen gardens continue to flourish with the active involvement of students and school officials, and the vegetables cultivated are used in the daily noon meals provided in the schools.



Students plucking vegetables from the kitchen garden

**Mitigating Toil:  
Providing Cycles**



In many villages there are no middle and high schools, and the children have to travel long distances to get higher education. There is minimal or no transportation options in these villages and children often have to walk the long distances daily. These distances often become a deterrent for children to go to school and in many cases, results in school drop out.

Kalanjiyam in association with AASAI- American Association for Social Advancement of India has been providing bicycles to students from 2011 onwards. Students are chosen on the basis of their family's socio-economic condition and distance to school. This program has been very successful in keeping the students in school and also a long term solution for addressing the lack of transportation facilities in rural areas. This year 35 boys and girls in classes VI-VII were provided bicycles to be able to attend school.

**Maithri Educational and Charitable Trust, Chennai** has been supporting deserving students to continue school education and take up higher education since 2007. The scholarship amount is need-based and varies according to the school/ college fees. In its 8th year of support, this year Maithri supported a total of 25 students. Of these, 9 children were supported with school fees and the remaining 14 were supported to pursue college education in Engineering, Commerce, Nursing, etc..

Since 2008, **Anbu Alumni of MIT, Chennai** has been providing fixed-amount scholarships of Rs.1000/- each to all students who score 80% or above in the class X Board Examinations. This year 79 such students were given scholarships. A majority of the students supported by the group from 2011-13 are currently pursuing college education to fulfil their dreams of becoming engineers, doctors, IAS officers, bank officers, scientists, teachers, etc.

**Honouring  
Deserving  
Students:  
Scholarships  
and  
Endowments**

Since 2012, **Rajammal Nagarajan Educational Endowment** is supporting girls securing 1st and 2nd rank from classes VIII-X. This year 17 girls were given an educational endowment of Rs.2500/- each.

**Lakshmi Ammal Educational Trust** based in Coimbatore supported 7 deserving students with a scholarship of Rs.3800/- each. Since the year 2011, many have benefited. All the beneficiaries are single-parent children and selected on the basis of their family's socio-economic conditions in order to ensure they continue their education.

**Dr.AU Ramakrishnan,** a homeopathic doctor based in Chennai, collaborated with Kalanjiam to support girl students in pursuing college education. A total of 15 girls students were shortlisted based on their performance in Class XII Board examinations and their family's socio-economic condition. These 15 girls were awarded with a scholarship of Rs.8000/- each and all of them are pursuing various college degrees ranging from Pure Science, Engineering, Medicine and Physiotherapy to Maths, Literature and Commerce.



## Ford Happy Schools Project

Happy Schools Project funded by Ford commenced in October 2014 and is being implemented in 4 primary schools in Chennai. The project activities have focused on making the school environment enabling for the students as well as teachers.

### Activities and Highlights

- ✎ Regular after-school tuitions and special classes are conducted for slow learners.
- ✎ ASER Assessment was conducted in two of the project schools and a total of 121 students out of 294 students were assessed.
- ✎ Student assessment of 161 slow learners was conducted in three schools to identify specific problem areas. Three monthly follow up assessments of 120 of these students attending after-school tuitions were done to track progress.
- ✎ 20 scholarships in total were provided to deserving students of the project schools. Each of them was supported with a school kit.
- ✎ 750 students of three of the project schools were screened during the eye camp. Spectacles were given to 37 of these students identified with vision problems.
- ✎ Basic health assessment of 280 children of two of the project schools was done by Dr. Balasubramanian, a paediatrician from the USA, in February.
- ✎ Teacher Training Session on child development was conducted in February 2015 by Dr. Lalitha Sridhar, a child development specialist and 18 teachers from three of the project schools attended.
- ✎ One nutrition session each was conducted in Lady Nye School and CPS, Taramani in association with Fortis Malar and 31 and 38 parents/ caregivers respectively attended the session. The resource person was Ms. Shanthi Cauvery, clinical nutritionist from Fortis Malar.
- ✎ Group and one-on-one Counselling Sessions were conducted at Lady Nye School (4 sessions) and CPS, Taramani (3 sessions).
- ✎ Anthropometric Assessments of 95 children of Lady Nye Special Primary School and 195 children of Thava Thiru Nagamani Adigalar School were conducted in December 2014 and a follow up in June 2015.
- ✎ Long-term/ Infrastructural needs such as classroom partitions, water tank, computers, projectors, etc. were provided as per the need of the schools.
- ✎ Basic/ Immediate needs such as library books, story cards, play kits, water bottles, tables, chairs, etc. were satisfied in the project schools.
- ✎ 'Tidy Stars of the Month' initiative was started from February onwards in Lady Nye Special Primary School to promote good hygiene practices among the children wherein red stars and black dots are awarded for good and bad turn out respectively throughout the month. One girl and one boy with the maximum number of stars from each of the classes are felicitated at the end of each month.
- ✎ 3-day Summer Camps were conducted for 41 students each of TTNA School and Lady Nye School in April 2015. Children were taught arts and crafts, dance and drama. Items made by the students were exhibited in July 2015.
- ✎ Co-curricular and extra-curricular activities such as competitions, exhibitions, movie screenings and observance of important days were conducted on a regular basis.



After-school tuitions



Scholarship awardees of Lady Nye School



Students doing crushed paper art during the Summer Camp

### Accomplishments

#### Improvements among slow learners

Monthly follow up assessments were conducted to track progress of slow learners and to measure the impact of the tuitions provided. The data from these assessments suggest that overall in the 3 schools, 91% slow learners have improved in attention, 53% in Maths, 80% in English and 50% in Tamil. The progress made by slow learners from the above assessments was compared with the school level scores. We are beginning to see some sustained improvements among class four and class five students.

#### Habituating Handwashing

The project provided liquid soap for washing hands to the students of Lady Nye School and Thava Thiru Nagamani Adigalar School. The children were taught to wash their hands with soap before eating and after using toilets. A Hygiene-Sanitation Survey conducted to understand the impact of the interventions suggests 70% and 80% of the students surveyed wash their hands 3 or more times a day with soap in Lady Nye School and TTNA School respectively.



## Ford Project Lighthouse

Project Lighthouse is a Ford sponsored project and implemented by Kalanjiyam for the last two years. In the second year, more initiatives and new programs were started as part of Project Lighthouse.

### Activities



A FORD volunteer with students during newspaper reading session

- ☞ Mentoring Sessions were conducted for selected 75 students every month by a committed team of Ford Volunteers. These sessions helped to motivate, guide and mentor students especially girls and help them overcome their fears and inhibitions.
- ☞ Newspaper reading habit was encouraged among students through provision of English newspapers in their classrooms to help build confidence and positive attitude to improve their English language skills.
- ☞ Spoken English classes were conducted for student and teachers of the project schools.
- ☞ The project placed a counsellor in the schools to facilitate regular counselling sessions to help students, teachers and parents.
- ☞ Career guidance sessions were provided at regular intervals for students of class X and class XII.
- ☞ After-school tuitions were conducted for students of class X and class XII in Kannagi Nagar School.
- ☞ Every quarter, one child was identified as Best Student from each of the schools and awarded a prize to recognize their good work and to motivate them further.

### Highlights

- ☞ 75 deserving students from both project schools were shortlisted for scholarship and were supported with a school kit each.
- ☞ Support for college education was provided to 16 deserving girl students of Kannagi Nagar School for continuing higher education and pursuing Professional/Degree Courses.
- ☞ Financial Support for education was continued for the 10 previously supported girl students of Sri Karapagavalli School who have now successfully completed class IX and are in class X.
- ☞ Financial Support was provided to 14 deserving girl students of Sri Karapagavalli School who have graduated class VIII for class IX in different schools.
- ☞ Ms. Karpagam, teacher in Sri Karpagavalli School, was supported with an amount of Rs.30,000/- towards continuing and completing higher studies.
- ☞ Twenty students from Kannagi Nagar School were taken on a visit to Ford car manufacturing unit in January, on an educational tour.
- ☞ A toilet with the provision of sanitary napkin incinerator was constructed at Sri Karpagavalli School by Ford for the girl students.
- ☞ With the support of Rotary Club of South Madras, a girls' toilet was constructed and inaugurated at Kannagi Nagar School.
- ☞ 5 school dropouts from Kannagi Nagar were identified and 2 were re-enrolled in the school through regular interaction and counselling provided by the project.
- ☞ 3 girl students who had failed class XII Board Exams last year (2014) and discontinued their education were enrolled in ANEW, Anna Nagar for Certified Nursing Course with financial assistance.



A select student receiving the school kit



A livelihood beneficiary at her tea stall

### Accomplishments

- ☞ Newspaper Reading has been impactful and has helped students overcome their fear of reading English. Due to this activity, 3 of the students at Sri Karpagavalli School have joined English medium schools this year.
- ☞ Keerthana, a mentee of the project, secured 469 marks in her 10th Board Exams and was the school topper.
- ☞ 85% of the project selected students have passed their Class XII Board Exams.
- ☞ 14% of girl students secured First Class marks in Class XII Board Exams.
- ☞ Bhuvaneshwari, a mentee of the project, secured 990 marks in Class XII Board Exams and stood second in school.
- ☞ The project mentees in Sri Karpagavalli School have performed well in their Annual Exams and the school has achieved 100% result.
- ☞ Project Lighthouse provided Livelihood Support to 48 caregivers from January onwards. A sum of Rs.3,90,000/- was provided in total for this purpose. Regular field visits were carried out and counselling was provided. The income obtained from these livelihood activities was tracked. This project has helped to increase beneficiaries' income by 5-10%.

# A Glimpse of Activities Conducted...



**New Primary Schools Adopted:** Five new primary schools were adopted as part of rural school strengthening program by Kalanjiyam in 2014

**Placement of Para-teachers and Subject teachers:** Para teachers were placed in all the primary, middle and higher secondary schools adopted by Kalanjiyam. In addition six subject teachers were placed in one high school and one higher secondary school.

**After-School Tuitions:** Daily after-school tuitions are conducted in a project supported schools to help the children catch up on their school work, to do their homework and brush up on the basic reading and writing skills. General knowledge is also taught by reading from different books/ sources.

**Provision of Educational Aids:** Students in all the schools were provided drawing notebooks, colour pencils. Additionally, Tamil-English-Tamil Dictionaries were provided to all children from Class V onwards, and World Atlases were provided to all children from Class VI onwards.

**Computer Classes:** A computer teacher conducted computer classes twice a week in the primary and middle schools. The focus continues to be education on and through using computers. Students learn with great enthusiasm and majority of the children are able to use and operate the computer and operate the computers. Students learn with great enthusiasm and the practical exposure improves their knowledge on computers.

**Drawing Coaching:** Students who were good in drawing were selected and a drawing teacher was appointed to teach children to improve their skills. Stationery and art supplies were provided to those students. Monthly competitions were conducted and prizes were given to the winners.

**Summer Camp for Primary School Children:** In the month of May 2015, a one day summer camp activity was held at Kalanjiyam. Students from class 3rd to 5th from Ariyanur, Chinna Venmani and Periya Venmani Schools participated in the camp. Various art and crafts were taught to the children. The children thoroughly enjoyed the camp and learnt a great deal.

**Clean India Campaign:** In celebration of the "CLEAN INDIA CAMPAIGN", the Kalanjiyam staff members took part in cleaning of 20 schools in and around Kalpat village.

**Motivational Classes:** Motivational classes were conducted for students of Class X during the year. 300 students benefitted from these classes.

**Adolescent Meetings:** Adolescent meetings were conducted on a regular basis to address the issues reproductive health and other issues related to adolescence.

**Newspaper Reading:** Newspaper reading habit was encouraged among the students. Other activities for improving general knowledge among the children was taken up on a regular basis.

**World AIDS Day:** World AIDS day was observed this year by visiting Hope Foundation, a home for HIV/AIDS affected children, in Perunkaranai village. Kalanjiyam staffs spent time interacting with the children and distributed stationeries and books. A special lunch was sponsored for all the children on the occasion by Kalanjiyam.



**Kalanjiyam thanks all our patrons and well wishers in India and across the globe, for their generous support!**

## Partners:

American Association for the Social Advancement of India (AASAI), USA  
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Asha for education, Central NJ Chapter, USA  
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## Pathivugal Team:

Aruna Balasubramaniam, USA  
Suganya Viswanathan, Chennai  
Sharanya Vairam, Chennai



## Kalanjiyam

Registered Office:

No 11, Avataar Apartments, 27, Balakrishnan Road,  
Valmikinagar, Thiruvanmiyur,  
Chennai - 600 041-India  
Phone: 91-44-2457 1508 / 4304 2414

Field Office:

Kalpat Village, Maduranthakam, Kancheepuram Dt.

Email: [kalanjiyam@gmail.com](mailto:kalanjiyam@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.kalanjiyam.org](http://www.kalanjiyam.org)

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