



# Pudiyador Times

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Issue #31

# Individual Accomplishments

Starting from this month, we will be featuring some of the cool things that our children manage to accomplish! Below are some from the last quarter.



Kausika of the Young Adult Program (YAP) in Pudiador's Urur Kuppam center won first place in a national essay writing competition.

Gautham & Bhuvana were selected for the 'clicking together' photography camp organised by school of equality.



Vikram has been accepted into Gurunanak College for a degree in Visual Communication. His education is being sponsored by one of our volunteers.

Now, Vikram teaches our YAP children, making other parents in the community quite proud of him!



Kishore, along with Vikram, ran in the Bhumi India Run. They both placed in the top 5 of the overall race.



Several of Pudiador's children participated in the run. Overall, 5 boys from the YAP program ran in the races.

# When Our Teachers Became Students

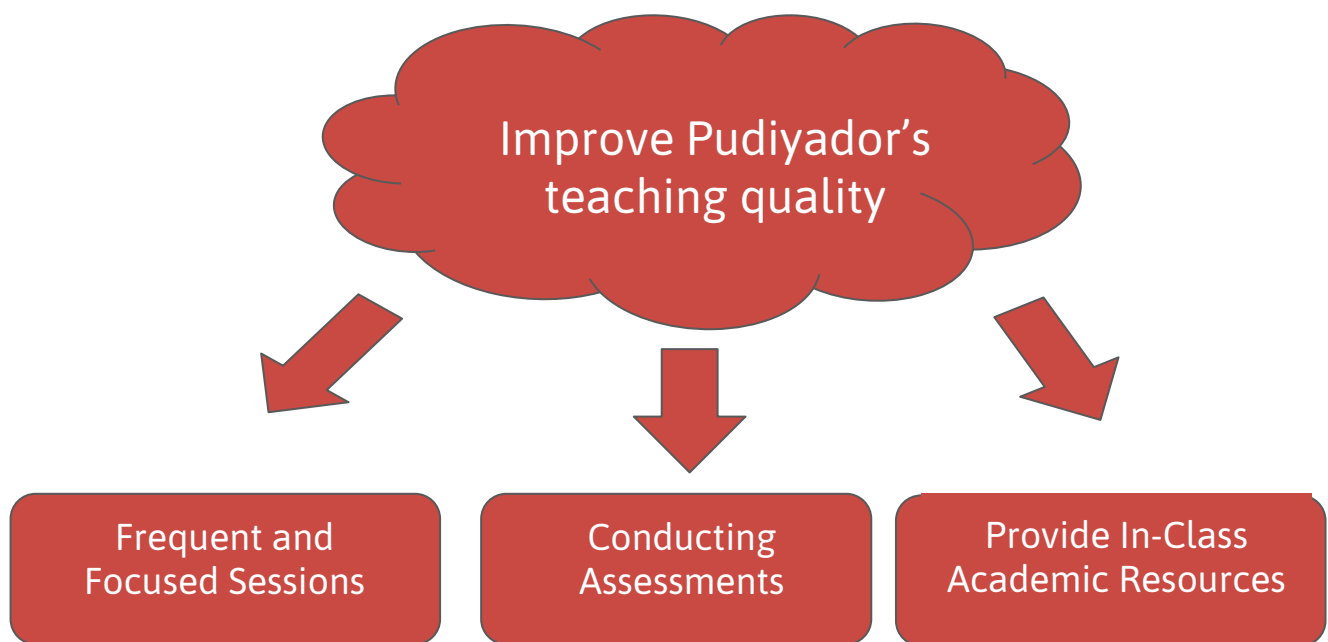
Teachers at Pudiador are our bread and butter. Good teachers create good learning experiences for our children. Recently, when we brought new leadership to Pudiador (ref: [PudiadorTimes\\_Issue30](#)), we asked ourselves this question: are we doing everything we can to help our teachers do their best? To do that, do we know *their* academic standing? We have training sessions for our teachers every month, and we assess them on their teaching behaviors but should we not assess them on their subject knowledge? When we set out to do that during our last winter camp, we found that we needed to make some urgent and major changes.



*We have **21 teachers** across 4 after-school programs and 2 young adult programs. Each of them participated in this from start to finish.*

Our last winter camp was unlike others so far: we changed the focus from conducting a host of activities to simply helping our children catch up and brush up on basics. It was at this camp that we noticed that the teacher quality at our centers was not up to par. In February this year, we held formal assessments (in Math, Tamil and general teaching skills) to determine where our teachers needed more training. The results were disappointing, And we needed to correct the situation immediately.

Until that point, we had provided frequent and focused training sessions (Ramanujam teacher training, monthly Teachers' Team Building Meeting or TTBM, etc) that were short and summative, providing teachers a platform to learn from each other and become better at handling the children and at running the centers. But we had not conducted any specific assessments of our teachers, except during initial job interviews and while evaluating their teaching techniques at the centers. Apparently teachers were afraid to speak up about their own academic shortcomings, so we never truly understood how unprepared they were.



In order to get our teachers back on track, we created planning and training materials this past February and March. Shortly thereafter, we scheduled the teacher training camp for the last 3 weeks of May - during Pudiador's summer camp!



The first week was basics boot camp in which the teachers were trained on basic Tamil language and Math (each 3 days, 8 hours a week) with testing and corrections provided every day. The next 10 days were the children's summer camp itself during which the teachers were constantly observed by the ground team staff and given instant, applicable feedback. Teachers were helped when they struggled, and were frequently encouraged to use learned the techniques they learned during training.

The last 3 days of the training were tailored based on the results of our summer camp monitoring. We used role play where teachers acted as themselves and as children (some regular, some with learning or behavioral difficulties) in multiple scenarios. These sessions were fun, light, and highly applicable. The training camp concluded with our ground team giving feedback to each teacher about their strengths and scope for improvement. The feedback from our teachers suggest that this training was hard but valuable and enjoyable. We do not plan on being complacent though - *we have miles to go before we sleep.*



The post-training period is perhaps even more important than the training itself. The teachers are now expected to read the lessons the day before they teach them. On the day of the lesson, teachers do not use textbooks anymore. Instead, they use flashcards that the ground team created for them. These flashcards were made for each grade (from first to sixth), for every lesson in term I (there are 3 terms in a year), to be used by all teachers as a reference manual.

Sample flash card:

*Grade 3, Term 1, Lesson 5:  
Compromise, lovingly:*

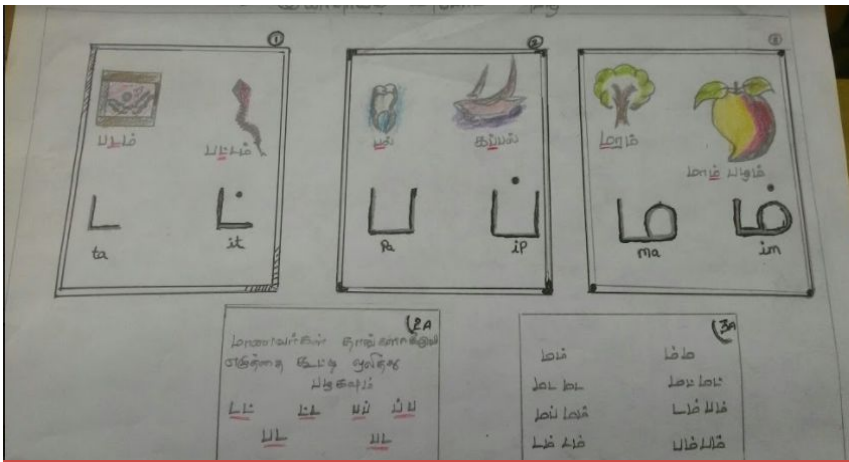
Related information: A tale of two mothers – a birth mother and an adoptive mother. Children learn of the value of compromise and love when reading about this classic story.

III | ① : பாடம் 5 : மாடுகள் கொடு  
மறும்புக்குள்

3. கொடும்புண்டிய செய்தி:

சாய் - சூழ்ச்சை - வளம்பு  
சாய் - சூழ்ச்சை நல்லாய்  
சாய் - சூழ்ச்சையை வளம்பு  
சாயம் - சூழ்ச்சைகள் - சாய்  
சூழ்ச்சைக்குள் சூழ்ச்சையைக்  
கொடு - இரண்டு சண்டை:  
கொடுகள் - சூழ்ச்சைகள் கொடுகள்  
- சூழ்ச்சையை சூழ்ச்சை பாடுகள்  
பாடுகள் கொடு - வளம்புக்குள்  
சாய் வளம்பு சூழ்ச்சை - சாய்  
சூழ்ச்சை உண்டி மறும்பு  
மாடுகள் கொடுகள் - சூழ்ச்சை

The teachers use these cards every day to remind themselves of the overall concept of the lesson, get helpful pointers on how to teach that particular lesson, and to come up with useful examples, stories, and techniques to help the children grasp the lesson. All this without opening the textbook in front of the children to keep them engaged throughout the lesson time.



### Phonetics flash card

Padam (picture) & pattam (kite)

Pall (tooth) & kappal (ship) ...

*Ask children to write, draw, and then read these letter composites out loud*

The flashcards are an investment in our future, a sort of dynamic framework material for the teachers to build on. Our goal is to make the lessons fully interactive and help the children advance quicker by enabling them to engage deeper. We have since created new flashcards for term II and are currently

developing new cards for term III, this time with the teachers involved. We have since created new flashcards for term II and are currently developing new cards for term III, this time with the teachers involved. We are adding more ideas and content to the flash cards and adding more flashcards to each set. Once we achieve this, we would be able to use and reuse these cards with modifications for the next five to six years. We are confident that we will see a noticeable improvement in the performance of our teachers as well as our children. You can rest assured that we will be keeping a close eye!



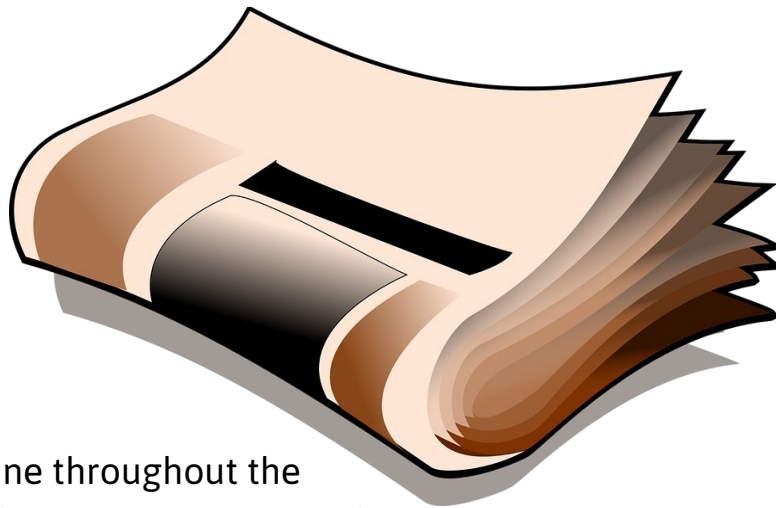
# Quarter Highlights

PUK Center Painting was done by both PR & PUK YAP. Eight children from each center were involved. The main motive of this project to teach painting to the children & to develop good relationship between both the YAP's.



PRYAP Recruited 2 new staffs, and both are graduates. PR1 PR2 ASP have also recruited 2 new staffs, both alumni themselves of Pudiador.

Pudiador Magazine is one of the projects of PUK YAP. It contains information about Pudiador and other facts like health benefits of vegetables, and gardening/farming experiences.



We circulated this magazine throughout the Pudiador community, and many parents write their feedback in the back of the magazine.



Pudiador's children love project based learning – it helps improve their existing skills while picking up new ones. Both PUK and YAP children complete difference projects based on their respective interests. Some projects have included book making, documentary filming, and puppetry.



# You can join our efforts

## Teach online!



Connect with our children during weekday /evenings and weekends

Choose from helping with academics to reading stories to demonstrating science experiments. Sky's the limit!

## Donations welcome!



PayPal, direct deposit, or in kind  
All donations are tax-exempt  
501(c)(3) in the US  
80-G and FCRA in India

## Spread the word!



Partner us with other NGOs  
Ask your employer about CSR  
And about matching donations!

## Our specific needs for the next quarter

### 1. Doctors

- Need doctors to volunteer once a month for health check-ups in our communities. Any kind doctors you know of who would be willing to help?
- Need a child psychologist who speaks Tamil. Know any?

### 2. Projectors

- Skype classes are clearer on the big screen
- We also screen educational/fun movies

### 3. Educational material

- Books in English for ages 3-10
- Illustrated books for non-readers
- Picture cards for innovative storytelling
- Dictionaries (English and/or Tamil)
- Puzzles/activity books, board games
- Art Material: Color pencils, crayons, water-colors, paint-brushes
- Science experiment kits

### 4. Music and sports equipment

- Musical instruments
- Bats/balls/frisbee for group sports
- Carrom boards / Chess boards

### 5. Cameras and Camcorders

- Digital cameras to record activities and share between centers

### 6. Others

- Computer tables, plastic chairs, storage cupboards/bureaus

## Contact our team

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