

Pudiyador Times

Issue 5, Jan 2011





I was trying to come up with a clever title, and after a few minutes of drawing a blank, I thought I'd be *real* clever, googled for "bus" puns and found this gem: the first bus to cross the ocean?

Yeah, it was Colum-bus, back in 1492 :-) I agree it's a bad pun ;-) But, it's the beginning of a new year, and there are lots more in store, so I decided to keep it simple... no title, just the fun bus!

Happy New Year! And for those who live in India, best wishes for Pongal and Sankaranthi! We hope all your dreams will come true this year!

Time has flown by so fast... it seems to me like it was just a couple of months ago that I was sitting down to write an introduction to the very first issue of Pudiador Times. But here I am,

four issues later, writing the introduction to the very fifth issue :-)

I hope that the last year was good to you all as it was to us. We thank you for sticking with us with your support, advice and encouragement in 2010. We had some ups and downs, and it was a great ride, at times bumpy but for the most part fun... how much fun, you ask? Just click to the next page to find out ... the 5th issue is dedicated to a photo-recap of 2010.

We hope you enjoy the ride! After all, the destination is not half as important as the journey itself, right?

Manickam Narayanan
Co-founder

Our Prime “Drivers”

Leading our kids on this fun journey, were Pudiyaador’s founder, Prof. Narayanan, and our energetic Program Manager, Ms. Saranya...



January and February

A New year brought about new beginnings ... the kids kicked off 2010 with traditional Pongal celebrations!



Among other exciting field trips, the kids visited Chennai's Annual Book Fair and chose their own books!

March and April

Our kids celebrated the Centennial International Women's Day by honoring women achievers and making collages about them to decorate our walls

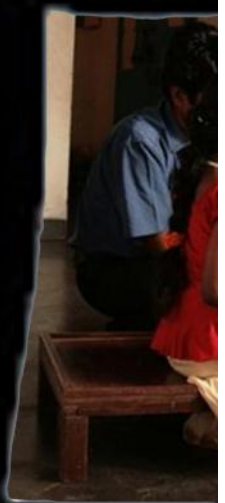


More field trips! Some kids learn with their eyes, some with their ears... but the Pudiador kids learned with their hands too!



May and June

The summer camp theme to 'Save Mother Earth' encouraged our kids to do their bit... by planting little plants around the centers!



A box of crayons, lots of paper and no restrictions... kids' favorite activity in summer!



July and August

Sun, sand and water... Ultimate Frisbee was just an excuse to be there!



Some memories are worth saving: Click... Save... Scrapbook!



September and October

Our journey stopped for a bit, and with a heavy heart we closed our Urapakkam center...



Young musical maestros mesmerize the crowd during the fall festival!

November and December

To celebrate Children's Day many hands create a collaborative masterpiece...



We thank the wonderful volunteer doctors that run our weekly clinics and keep our communities healthy throughout the year...



What's in store for 2011?

As you can see, the crew at Pudiyaador has had a very busy 2010! With a new program manager, new administrative staff and teachers, new activities, a brand new curriculum, there is so much to be excited about as we change our calendars to 2011! Here is a sneak peek at some of the big initiatives we have planned for 2011...

Last quarter, we introduced a new curriculum centered on activity-based learning. It is a structured program with a focus on language (English and Tamil) and Math. The program requires a commitment of 2 hours each day for 6 days a week and the lessons are often delivered in the form of games, songs, play-acting, and puzzles.

This curriculum is designed by an organization called *Vidyarambam*, which currently runs after school programs exclusively in rural areas. Our collaboration enables us to implement their curriculum in our urban-based centers.

Even though we have ensured that all of the Pudiyaador children attend school, and the schools themselves have curricula centered on activity-based learning, there are often gaps in their education, due to under-staffed schools and lack of resources to fully implement existing curricula; also, the children typically don't receive much academic help at home. Our program aims to bridge this gap and adopting the *Vidyarambam* curriculum is an integral part of our efforts.

To implement the new curriculum, we have recruited six women from our communities and organized teacher training for them from *Vidyarambam*. Armed with new teaching methods, these facilitators began executing the new curriculum and programs in our centers towards the end of last year.

As the new curriculum is being implemented, we are in the process of reviewing the impact of this program. In 2011, we will evaluate the efficacy of the *Vidyarambam* program and if required, develop ways to modify the curriculum to supplement our children's educational needs. As always, we will keep you fully updated on our findings and strategies as we experiment with various learning methods to enhance our children's education.

Like in the years past, we are revving up for our annual four-week long summer camp in May. Summer Camps are always built around a theme.



Vidyarambam Curriculum

- Fully implement the activity based *Vidyarambam* curriculum in the centers
- Review the impact of the curriculum and modify it to supplement children's educational needs

Summer Camp

- We are working on themes and ideas for the Summer Camp. Please send your suggestions by 15th of Feb. to: info@pudiyaador.org

Groundwork to Establish New Centers

- Identify and evaluate communities to establish new Pudiyaador centers

The children will be in the centers all day, every day of these four weeks and participate in projects, activities, and field trips related to the theme.

The core-team will soon be very busy with ideas, plans of action, organization efforts and logistics as the preparation phase begins in February. Please feel free to suggest some ideas or topics to focus our summer camp this year. Previous themes have included the Environment, Parental Occupation, Science Lab, and Arts and Culture from different states of India.

Finally, we are hoping to grow Pudiyaador, and in the New Year, we plan on starting the ground-level work at identifying and evaluating new communities to establish new after-school centers.

With so much in store for us, we can hardly wait to dive into 2011 and we hope you will be along for what promises to be yet another thrilling journey!

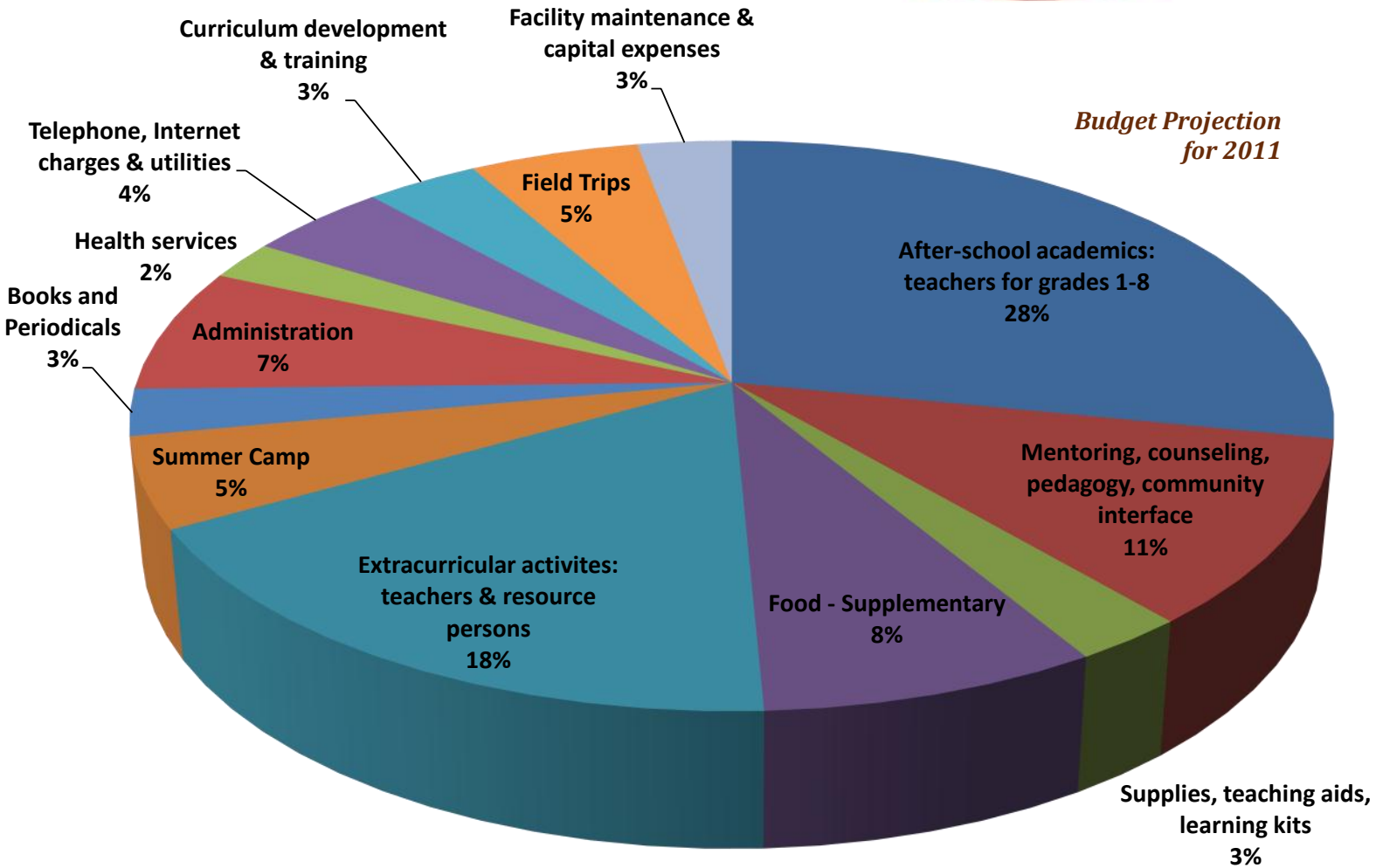
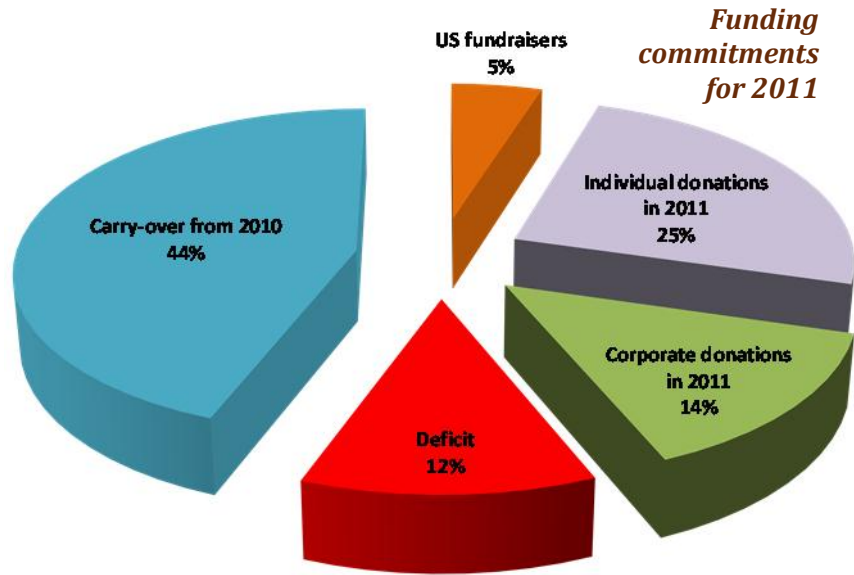
Making “cents” of our funding dollars in 2011...

Pudiyador has been fortunate to have a strong and sustained support for our programs from friends and family... More than a quarter of our funding consists of extraordinary contributions from ordinary folks!

Due to the closure of one center and subsequent re-organization, we have had significant carry-over of funds from last year. However, for 2011, our goal is to further consolidate our current programs, stabilize our internal processes and establish a solid ground team. In addition, our hope is to expand our reach to more children in more communities. The budget for the 2011 programs include the above mentioned efforts. For 2011, we are facing a deficit of \$7,000. Our core team is presently working with our partner organizations such as ASHA for Education, AID and OPEN to close the gap.

Our staffing goals of 2010 were only partially met and we look forward to recruiting committed and sincere

candidates who are interested in brightening the lives of our children. If you have questions about our budget or suggestions for our administration team or know anyone who would like to join us, please write to us at: info@pudiyador.org



How can you help?

As you were getting acquainted with the various Pudiyador activities and our progress this quarter, have you been wondering what *you* can do to help? If so, you are at the right spot and we are very excited to have you on board. You can get more involved with Pudiyador and our activities in a variety of ways by volunteering your time or by donating money and resources.



If you live in or are visiting the Chennai-area, we would love it if you can volunteer your time with our children. You can help them with their school work, coordinate and/or participate in a field trip or hold one or more sports, art, cultural or individual development sessions. Your interactions can be regular daily, weekly or monthly events (like providing academic help, teaching them spoken English or taking them on field trips) or you can schedule stand-alone events depending on your availability. Our volunteers typically come up with fantastic ideas to enrich the children's lives through fun and educational activities. You are also more than welcome if you would like to interact with the parents and share your knowledge and/or experiences with them.



If you are unable to make a time commitment and instead you are looking for other avenues to be engaged with Pudiyador's efforts, we welcome your donations. You can make a one-time donation or pledge a fixed amount every month. We are set up on [Paypal](#) and we also accept all other forms of donation - cash, cheque, cashier's cheque, etc. Pudiyador is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations made to us are tax-exempt.



One way to easily multiply your monetary contributions to Pudiyador -or any other charitable organization that you support, for that matter- is to contact your HR department to see if your place of employment sponsors a corporate matching grants program. If your company has such a program, all you would have to do is, fill out the appropriate form and forward it on to us along with your contribution. We will then fill out our details and other requested information and send the form back to your HR. This is a simple, yet effective way to augment and even double your donations and we thank you for looking into it.

If you are looking for a list of specific needs that you would like to help with, we are planning to:

Increase our collection of educational kits.

We are looking for new or used educational aids that would foster the imagination of our children—anything from abacus to microscopes, word games to complex science kits.

Extend regular medical services to all our centers.

We need medical professionals to volunteer their time, services and supplies to our children. We can use your help whether you are able to make a regular or single time or resource commitment.

Revamp our computers that are over 8 years old and are riddled with hardware issues. Please think of us if you are looking to replace your older laptops or have the resources to donate new ones.

Enable our children to hone their musical abilities.

There is a need for two *Veenas* and two *Sitars* to help with our music classes and for the kids to practice and perform on.

Expand our Audio/Video library.

We are always on the lookout for good audio/video materials for example, National Geographic/Discovery/History Channel features on DVD/Video CD to supplement the children's educational and extra-curricular needs.

If you are able to help out in any of the ways detailed above, please contact our Program Manager, Ms. Saranya Rajendar, at info@pudiyador.org or at +91.99410.59312. The Pudiyador programs are completely driven and sustained by our volunteers and donors. Without your commitment of time, money and other resources, our activities, our goals and even our organization, will be but a dream. We sincerely thank you for all your support and generosity.

We would love your feedback!

Our newsletter team would love to hear from you—after all, you are the reason our team exists! Please let us know what we can do to make this newsletter more informative and enjoyable. Or just drop in a line to say hello :)

pudiyador-newsletter@googlegroups.com

