



Inside...

Dear Friends.....	2
Unveiling Pudiyador+	3
Get involved with Skype.....	5
Paper Bags to save.....	6
Come, hang out with us	8
How can you help?	14

Dear friends...



We hope this issue finds you in the best of spirits. In the last quarter, we shared the good news about adding two new communities to our Pudiyaador family. In this edition, we invite you into our centers to see what our children do at Pudiyaador on a daily, weekly, and monthly basis. We hope that by the time you are done with the last page of this issue, you would have vicariously experienced what our children enjoy!

We also hope that we can help you take this experience to the next level and get you more engaged with the kids from the Pudiyaador communities in Chennai. You will read all about our grand plans of connecting our friends (you!) with our children using innovative and wonderful internet technologies. Soon, we will probably invite you to write your own articles in the newsletter about your experiences on the "ground"...

And finally, thank you very much for being wonderful and supportive as always!

Unveiling Pudiya dor+



Four years ago...

We introduced our children to the world of computers. We cannibalized hardware, acquired some antiquated computers from our well-wishers, and put together some working models. Our children dabbled in the basic functions of computers when the machines agreed to comply.



Three years ago...

We partnered with wonderful organizations like Deepam and Bhumi who came to Pudiya dor to teach our children all about computers. They brought their own laptops and sat with our children on the ground and helped them get comfortable with computers.

Unveiling Pudiyador+

Two years ago...

We got our first high-speed internet connection at Ramapuram after much debate over protecting our children from the harms of the internet. Technology prevailed, and we test drove our first online classes.

A year ago...

We started regular Skype sessions for the children at Ramapuram and on occasion at the other centers.

Today...

As they say,
when it rains, it pours!
All thanks to you guys!



We had 6 old PCs and laptops that we got from our donors over the years, but it was difficult for our 120 little regulars to share them between themselves. We mentioned this in the last few newsletter issues, and...

our readers (you!) responded with such great enthusiasm!

You spread the word to your friends and family, **you** donated your own computers, **you** got your companies to sponsor us, and **you** even spoke to other companies asking them to sponsor us! For example, one of our readers spoke to a friend who arranged for a whopping 12 new netbooks from Essar Group's CSR wing! Another reader spoke to residents near our Urur Kuppam center who readily pitched in with more computers!

Thanks to all your efforts, we now have a total of **28 computers!** Every center now has a primary laptop that the facilitators will use to screen videos and conduct online classes. In addition, there is an assortment of desktops, laptops and netbooks distributed based on the number of children at each center. Now we have a computer for approx. every four children! Our children can interact with the computers on their own, in their cohort groups, and the learning potential is unlimited!

Get Involved... with Skype!!

Now that all our centers are fully hooked up with computers and internet connections, our dream of conducting regular online classes can now become a reality. Online classes will enable folks from outside Chennai to interact with the Pudiador children over video chat.

The benefits are two-fold:

1. Our children can experience and interact with a world outside theirs
2. You can bridge the physical distance that currently exists between you and the kids.

What you can teach:

The children will lap up anything you teach them! Whether you want to teach a specific subject, help them out with their homework, teach them a song and a dance, show them how you play your favorite instrument, or just talk to them about current affairs, the sky is the limit! Just let us know what your interests are, what times you are available, and we'll take care of the rest!



As you can imagine, this opens a lot of doors for the children and the volunteers alike, and the



The 4 centers operate at slightly different times, and these are the outer limits:

Weekdays: 4:30pm - 8:30pm IST

Weekends: 7:00am - 8:30pm IST

We really look forward to hooking you up with our children and we trust this synergistic relationship will turn out to be extremely rewarding to all of us!

To sign up to teach Pudiador kids over Skype:

<http://pudiador.org/signup>

Paper Bags to Save the Planet

What started as a spark in their little hearts when they saw a deer stuff it's face into a plastic bag at the zoo, has culminated into a movement for change... Aided with nothing but a few old newspapers , some home-made glue from all-purpose flour and a good measure of their infectious enthusiasm, our children from Pudiyaor Ramapuram designed paper bags that have now replaced their use of plastic bags.



Paper Bags to Save the Planet

Our kids did not just stop with that... They approached the local convenience stores in their community and charmed the shop-owners to switch to their eco-friendly bags in place of cheap plastic ones. They were also featured in a local newspaper and were part of Bhumi's "Design for Change" initiative.



Kids from other centers inspired by the Ramapuram kids, have kick-started their own initiative as well! They have pro-actively contacted shops in their neighborhoods and assessed the demand for such bags and convinced the few who weren't interested that they should switch. Armed with thorough market research, they have now started making their own paper bags! To make the initiative more scalable, the next step is to convince local shops to use bio- degradable plastic bags made of cellulose.



Come hang out with us ...

You've heard about our exploits, about what we learn and what we create, but wouldn't you want to know what our "ordinary" day at PudiyaDor looks like? Come on ... hang out with us!

Weekdays

4:30pm-7:30pm

Half hour: Discussion about the day

One hour of activity-based learning

15 mins snacks and 100 break

Half hour homework

Half hour of songs and story telling

15 mins of wind-down and cleaning

Weekends

10:00am-5:00pm

2 hours: drawing/yoga/theater

1 hour: lunch at home

2 hours: indoor/outdoor games/music

2 hours: Computer Classes

Come hang out with us ...

Well, when 120 kids spread across four different centers get involved, no day is 'ordinary' :)

Here are some quick facts about how an 'extraordinary' day pans out in our centers:

- **Center Timings:**
Kids shuffle in by 4:30-5:00 pm (across all four centers) on weekdays and call it a day (or night!) at 8:00 pm. On weekends they start at 7:00 am finish at 7:00 pm. The schedule changes a bit if they have to attend school on a few Saturdays.
- **Nourishment:**
All the children are provided nutritious snacks while they are at Pudiyaador. Mothers of the kids take turns in preparing the snacks with the ingredients we provide. Typically, the children snack on sprouts, *sundal* (legumes cooked in spices) and seasonal fruits. On weekends, they indulge in biscuits as well.
- **Grouping:**
The children are organized in mixed age groups of 2 or 3 grades (For example: Group A – std 1-3; Group B – std 4 & 5; and Group C – std 6 -12) and separate streams of activities are designed for each group by the teacher or facilitator handling that group.



While we try to enforce some method to the madness, there are days when any structure is hard to maintain especially in our new centers where kids are themselves new to group learning activities. In those cases, we do not impose and let the children drive the day's sessions based on their interests / needs.

Enough said, let's jump right into an evening in Pudiyaador!

Come hang out with us ...

4:30 PM:

12 year old Rekha, is at Pudiyaador Ramapuram center, dribbling a basketball with intense concentration. The PE teacher (Coach Mohan) at the center has given her and the rest of kids in her age group some basic drills before organizing a quick game.



5:30 PM:

Elsewhere at Pudiyaador Saligramam, 8 year old Rajesh waves an excited goodbye to his mother, before settling into his chair. He has a lot to share at the discussion session today: earlier in the day, he was in a fight with his classmate at school. He also got a “very good” grade in his English rhymes class this morning.

Mrs. Subashini, listens carefully to Rajesh and other children who need to talk about their day. She then gives him advice on dealing with arguments and follows up by commending his good performance. Finally, she facilitates a 5-minute meditation session for all the kids.



5:00 PM:

At the Pudiyaador Urur Kuppam Center, Kala, an animated 10 year old, is chewing on her pencil, as she is completing her science homework. While she is hard at work, Mrs. Uma is checking to ensure that she is on track with her homework due for tomorrow. She then answers Kala’s questions about the subject.



Come hang out with us ...

6:00 PM:

At Pudiador Vannandurai, Mrs. Megala is facilitating an activity where 7-year old Deepak is animatedly spelling an English word, replete with actions to capture the sounds of this universal language. Deepak and his friends are using Vidyarambham's "Activity Based Learning" curriculum to learn Spoken English.



6:30 PM:

Break! The children at all the Pudiador centers are served a healthy snack while they enjoy a break.

6:45 PM:

It is nearing the end of a Pudiador weekday at the Saligramam center. Prem and his friends have just finished watching a Jataka Tales short animated movie and are engaged in an active discussion. Their discussions cover a whole gamut of topics - the message in the short, the characters, the dialogue, music, to name a few.

Come hang out with us ...

7:00 PM:

At Urur Kuppam, Mythili is putting finishing touches on the paper bag that she has just finished making. She adds it to the pile that she and her friends have been working on. They each have handmade about 3 bags. She takes a step back to admire everyone's work before setting the bags out to dry.



7:45 PM:

Anu is gearing up for her Skype class in Math at the Ramapuram Center. She fires up the laptop, connects to the internet, starts up Skype and connects to Mrs. Hema Jain, a Pudiyaador volunteer in the US. Over the next half hour Hema goes over all the math concepts covered in Anu's class at school. After working through her questions, Anu chats for a bit with Hema's son who is also in the same grade as her, but in California.

Come hang out with us ...

8:00 PM:

Satish waits in the wings for the singing session to end so he can begin collecting the music materials to put them away. His friends will join him in helping the teacher with the clean up. With everything put away in its place, the day draws to a close at all four centers.

Rehka, Anu, Deepak and the rest of their friends are tired but happy *and* excited. Tomorrow is Saturday and they all have so much more to look forward to the weekend - music, dance, theater, arts, computers, yoga and games, maybe a fun theater workshop! They get to spend the better part of their weekends at the centers with their friends! Join us and their teachers in wishing them a goodnight as they all head back to their respective homes from the centers.



In addition to the activities mentioned there, the children also engage in public speaking, presentation skills and leadership training. They learn two languages (English and Tamil). They hone their language skills and comprehension by narrating and listening to stories. They go to the library. They have fun with art, theater, dance, indoor and outdoor games. They do yoga and meditation every day. They have annual summer camps and monthly field trips. They engage in social causes that speak to their sense of justice. They meet with their friends from the other centers once a month. In short – their days are full and their lives are busy. And they have fun while learning to be world class citizens.

Have you been wondering what *you* can do to help?



ONLINE CLASSES!

- Help with academics
- Impart any of your skills
- Demonstrate science experiments
- Hold discussions about relevant and important topics
- Simply chat with the children about their lives and yours

Sign up for a weekly, bi-weekly or monthly slot at:

www.pudiyador.org/signup



We welcome donations

([PayPal](#), Cash, or Cheque)

- One-time or monthly
- We're a 501(c)(3) organization
- We also have FCRA clearance
- **All donations are tax-exempt**



Spread the word

- Partner us with other NGOs
- Ask your employer about CSR
- How about matching donations?

How can you help?

Here are our current & specific needs

1. Projector and speakers
 - Skype classes are clearer on the big screen
 - We also screen educational/fun movies
2. Reading material
 - Books in English for ages 3-10
 - Illustrated books for non-readers
3. Educational material
 - Picture cards for innovative story telling
 - Dictionaries (English and/or Tamil)
 - Children's puzzles and activity books
4. Music and sports equipment
 - We urgently need *veenas* and guitars
 - Any other musical instrument
 - Bats/balls/frisbee for group sports
5. Cameras and Camcorders
 - Digital cameras to record activities and share between centers
 - Camcorders for curriculum development and documentation

Contact our Program Manager

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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 a line to say hello :)

newsletter@pudiyador.org