

The TOY Bank

Recycling toys-recycling smiles!

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER
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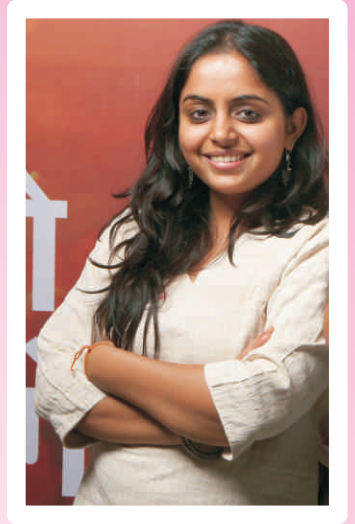


From the Director's Desk

We celebrated the not so popular World Laughter Day recently with the social media overflowing with jokes and inspirational quotes. Some even shared tips on how to be happy and a lot dwelled on self improvement, self introspection etc. Not that they are wrong, but I am going to add on one more mantra for happiness.

Donate your happiness.

The books that you read when you were young and the characters that you loved to visualize while growing can be experienced and loved by someone else too. The toys that you used to play with but have now out grown them can be useful for another child.



From the years of experience that I have managing The Toy Bank, there is one thing that I can absolutely vouch upon, and that is the feeling of happiness one gets when one donates. I have been a part of innumerable collection drives and donation drives and have been witness to children feeling extremely joyful while giving out their favourite toy to someone else. And after each such drive, I feel more motivated and rejuvenated to spread the happiness and cheer to other children who won't have access to something as basic as playing with toys.

The Toy Bank has been working extensively in collecting, refurbishing and redistributing toys along with story books, stationery items, sports equipments etc. all across India. We are currently working in 10 states of India and are expanding to North-East as well with a recent collaboration with the Manipur Government.

This quarterly newsletter is a short snippet of what The Toy Bank has achieved in the last quarter. I am also requesting all the readers to share this newsletter to as many people as possible.

Vidyun Goel

Director

The Toy Bank

Toy Distribution Drive in Schools of Ahmedabad

Toy distribution drives were conducted in 28 schools in Ahmedabad which impacted approximately 2100 children spread across 70 classrooms. Children from Grade 3, 4 and 5 received age appropriate toys. Few of the schools we impacted were MG Primary School, Brighton English Medium School, Dani Limda Public School, Republic Primary School, two schools in Kuber Nagar, Chhipa Welfare Girls School, BRAMS English Schools, FD Jamalpur English Primary School etc.

It was interesting to note how the children played with the toys they received. Some of the children assigned characters to the stuff toys to play with them. Puzzles and building blocks were the most sought-after category of toys as the children loved to play with it. One quality that noticeably developed among the children across all grades was responsibility and ownership as they made sure to keep the toys safely back into the almirah.

One of the school teachers said, "Playing together with the toys has brought the children closer and helped them imbibe the qualities of a team leader". Children have been able to mingle and work in a team while playing with the toys. Smrithi Sharma, who teaches the Fourth Grade said, "*Children have started to come early to school to play with these games which has also helped them improve their language learning abilities as well as their memory.*"

Chaitanya, another Fourth Grade teacher said, "The sentence starter kit helped the kids to make sentences in a more interactive manner". She further added that it also helped them absorb values of sharing as they would always have to play in groups and share the toys with other kids too. Dart board games especially have helped in concentration skills among the kids.





The Toy Story: How attendance increased in Anganwadis because of toys in the tribal area of Kaprada District, Gujarat

Kaprada is a predominantly tribal taluka situated in Valsad District in Gujarat. Poverty, lack of health care, less access to water etc. are problems faced by the tribal community in this area. The villagers in Kaprada also face a high rate of malnutrition with a large number of malnourished children in the village. Implementation of Integrated Child Development (ICDS) was conceived as a comprehensive early childhood intervention to mitigate and eradicate this issue, but to date, it faces a number of challenges in its effective implementation. On a usual routine day, few kids in the neighbourhood collect milk and breakfast and return to their houses while some wait till lunch is served.

Taking into account the aforementioned conditions, The Toy Bank decided to work in this particular area and was able to impact around 506 children in anganwadis in Diksal, Chavsala and Narvad villages of Kaprada.



“I had distributed the toys via The Toy Bank to the Anganwadi a week ago and on my surprise visit to the Anganwadi, I found that the box was still present, filled with toys and I felt jubilant when I was informed that the Anganwadi worker curated the toys and did not permit the kids to take the toys home”, says Shravani. Once the toys were presented, they played mostly in the Anganwadi premises unlike earlier when the toys were not available. They played with the building blocks and

were able to assemble a train and also managed to fashion a building. It was very visible how their young minds were stimulated and intrigued on how to use the toys. The Anganwadi worker Ms. Kumudben Chaudhari said “The toys are really helpful; the kids are visiting the Anganwadi and staying back.” She also talked about how she was able to carry out some documentation while the kids were kept occupied with the toys.

Another Anganwadi in Dikshal village also witnessed the same change in trend of children coming in and staying in the anganwadi instead of going back home after receiving their daily quota of edible consumables. It was quite conspicuous how the energy level in the kids was through the roof but their attention span was really short.

*“The toys are really helpful; the kids are visiting the Anganwadi and staying back.
– Kumudben, (AWW)*

Establishing Toy Libraries In Panchayat Ghar, Uttarakhand



We had distributed toys to Panchayat Ghar in Champavat District, Uttarakhand. In this process, a large number of 2758 children were impacted. In order to establish collaboration with the local governing body, The Toy Bank decided to set up toy libraries in the Panchayat Ghar with the local community which also happened to be a woman headed Panchayat. The Panchayat Ghar is now open every day from 4 PM to 6 PM for children to play and learn with the toys. Once the children and their families got to know about the newly installed toy library in the Panchayat Ghar, they were open to let their children visit and play with the toys.

It was encouraging to witness the increase in the interest of children in crafts and other creative activities also how they work in a team together and bond with each other while playing. Currently, the youth in the village are voluntarily looking after the Toy Library that was set up. Since the Toy Library was a success in this village, neighbouring villages and schools have also requested The Toy bank to set up Toy Libraries in their respective villages.

Toy Distribution in tribal and remote villages of Dewas District in Madhya Pradesh

Toy Distribution was done in 15 villages of Dewas District in Madhya Pradesh. Approximately 817 children were benefitted from the villages. Kalam Talai is a village situated approximately 12 kilometers interior of Bagli District of Madhya Pradesh. Surrounded by a forest, the children of the anganwadi in this village never had the chance of playing with toys. Once they received toys, they started staying back and regularly visit the anganwadi to play with the toys. One of the Anganwadi workers said, "It has been many years that kids in this village played with toys. It is probably the first time that this generation of kids finally have the access to something so basic."

Another achievement was that an anagawadi in Peepal Pati with strength of about 66 children started to witness regular attendance from the children there. An Anganwadi worker in Rupali Pura said, "I think the toys are helping the kids develop their thinking and creativity and toy distribution should definitely be continued".



Toy Distribution Drive in Tihar Jail

We had distributed toys among the children of Tihar Jail inmates. It was a big step for The Toy Bank as this was an untouched area by us. About 20-25 children received toys from us and were overwhelmed with joy. The mothers, who are inmates in the jail, also thanked us for conducting a distribution drive for their kids.

Collection Drives in Schools in Delhi:

We had organized collection drives in the schools across Delhi-NCR. One of the most encouraging aspects was that the children were extremely happy and interested in donating their favourite toys and books to the underprivileged children in need, which not just included their used and discarded toys but also their current favourite that they play with.

Since, the school which would manage to collect the maximum number of toys was promised a trophy, we saw an increased interest among the children to organize the collection drive and collect as many toys as possible. However, we thank all the schools which participated in the collection drive and supported us immensely.

Sri Ram School, Vasant Kunj	Sri Ram Millenium, Noida	Bal Bharati School, Dwarka	Delhi Public School, Dwarka
Paramount International School, Dwarka	Gyan Bharati Public School, Saket	St Angels School, Gurgaon	Cambridge School, Noida
Cambridge Foundation, Rajouri Garden	Alcon International, Mayur Vihar	ASN, Mayur Vihar	Delhi Public School, Vasant Vihar



Community Awareness in German Chamber of Commerce

We had set up a stall in German Chamber of Commerce in order to spread awareness about our work. About 500 individuals visited our stalls and expressed interest and appreciation of our work. Many also told us that they are interested in volunteering for this noble cause.

However, we were overjoyed in having kids come and take interest in our work. We were delighted to have children tell us that they are interested in donating toys, and not only the ones they don't play with anymore, but also their current favourite toys. One of the children who visited our stall, in fact, told us that she would love to collect toys from her friends and then donate it to us.



Upcoming Projects

We are happy to announce that we are entering Kakching District in Manipur. Having recently signed an MoU with the Manipur Government, our project will impact approximately 38,000 underprivileged children in 176 schools and around 500 Anganwadi Centres including Mini Anganwadis.



Statistics for this Quarter

Number of Children impacted

6576

Numbers of Toys Distributed

22984

Number of Classrooms Impacted

79

Number of Schools & Anganwadis Impacted

41

Number of Villages Impacted

10

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