



Greetings from Eureka Superkidz!

In May, summer camps were conducted in all villages to engage children in a meaningful way in the holidays. Every village wore a festive look with drawings of children hung up from trees and on verandahs. Children learnt about their village, surroundings and had fun putting up skits and dances for their parents.

Along with this issue, in a separate report, this month we also share the results of a sample evaluation that was conducted in 30 randomly selected Eureka villages by an external agency. The evaluation has shown us the areas where we have made progress as well as aspects which need more attention. We are happy to share this learning with you as we prepare for a promising new year of Eureka classes starting from July.

10 Districts

55 Blocks

717 villages



Summer Fun in Eureka Centers

Enter Krishnakuppamedu village in RK Pet block and you will see some children huddled over forms while some others run from one house to another taking notes. "We are taking a survey to know how many people there are in our village", they tell you. The Eureka Summer Camp is in full swing in this village. Children are doing various projects like finding out about herbal medicines from their grandmothers, visiting the post office, and mapping out the education and employment profile of their village.



"Our parents were very surprised to see us doing door-to-door surveys. These things are usually only done by Govt. officials. We asked each person about their education. Some old grandmothers started teasing us saying that they had completed teacher training! They then told us laughingly that schooling itself was so rare those days and they couldn't even dream of studying further. I felt sad when we found at the end of the survey, that there were just 2 women in our village who had gone to college. Even they belonged to other villages, and had only come here after marriage", says 10 year old Sangeetha.

Pooja's group has done a project on the herbal medicine practices. "At first, our grandmothers refused to show us which plants they used. They said that if they let out the secret, the effect of the medicine would be lost! After a lot of convincing they showed us the herbs and told us their names." says Pooja.

In many Eureka villages, children visited the post office and the local railway station. At the post office, they saw how letters were sorted, and learnt how to send a money order.

Every day, they gathered together at the Eureka teacher's house for an hour of English and Math. They learnt place value with bundles of straws and played 'shop games' with them. This was followed by a drawing session on various themes like 'My village', and 'My Dream School'. On the last day the summer camp ended with a village mela. Posters and charts were put up and children's drawings were displayed. Children exhibited models of the post office and railway stations they had visited. Parents and other village members participated enthusiastically. Skits and dances by children brought the 10-day festival to a close.

District	Blocks	Villages
Coimbatore	4	47
Cuddalore	4	48
Dharmapuri	4	40
Kanchipuram	6	65
Krishnagiri	6	48
Sivagangai	6	62
Tiruvallur	4	110
Tiruvannamalai	7	78
Trichy	6	76
Vellore	8	143
Total	55	717

Keelveedhi village: Demonstrating Change

Project Manager of Nemili block, Narasimhan, reports on his visit to Keelveedhi village, “Keelveedhi is an extremely backward village in Vellore District. We need to walk for 2 kms from the village to catch a bus. Children study in the local Adi Dravida Welfare Elementary school. Most of the parents are agricultural laborers.



Bharathi is our Eureka Teacher in Keelveedhi. She is one of the few educated persons in the village, and has completed her Diploma in Teacher Training. She starts her Eureka class at 5pm sharp every evening. Children come to the centre at 4pm straight from their school and finish their homework before Bharathi comes to the class.

Malathi is the other Eureka Teacher in the village who takes classes for children in Std. 6-8. “Running Eureka classes has taught me how to be a good teacher”, says Malathi who aspires to become a schoolteacher one day. “Children love the English and Science sessions. They now compete with each other to do the Science experiments”, she says.



Narasimhan adds, “I met Sowmya (2nd Std.) and spoke with her for a while. She has 2 sisters and 1 brother. Her family is very poor and her father tends cattle for a living. Her mother is a daily wage laborer. Their house is very small – barely enough for the six of them. Her father dropped out of school when he was in the 8th Std. Both parents are very keen that their children should study well and get educated. They save money out of their meager earnings so that they can spend it on their children’s education.

Sowmya was one of the first students to join our Eureka Center. She says the Eureka Center has taught her to read stories in Tamil. She even practices giving commands (“Open the door”, “Take the pencil”) in English to her brother and sisters. “I want to be a teacher when I grow up just like my Eureka Teacher”, she smiles shyly.”

“I returned from the village feeling very happy. When the program started in this village, I thought it would be difficult to sustain the interest here, since it was educationally very backward and no one in the community seemed to believe that good quality education for children was an important need. Now we have starting demonstrating good impact among the children. I also see a big change in parents’ response towards us. I left hoping Sowmya and all other children in this village will be able to achieve their dreams.”

Young Donors from Arizona visit Eureka!

Eureka’s youngest donors are a group of students from Arizona, USA, the oldest is in Std. 11 and the youngest is in Std. 3! Over the last one year these young volunteers sold ice cream and water at events to raise enough funds to support 10 Eureka villages! In June, these students visited our Eureka school and 6 Eureka villages in Vandavasi, Tiruvallur and Lathur blocks. With the help of their parents and relatives, they also conducted a medical camp in Eekadukandigai village in Tiruvallur on their last day.



Meeting children at Eureka School

In their feedback session, they said, “The Eureka teachers were dedicated and the parents were also very motivated to send their children to the Eureka centers. Although their houses were very small, many Eureka Teachers’ families had given them space to run the centers in the evening. We could also see a difference between centers that had started a year ago and those that were just starting now. Children in centers that had started earlier had progressed a lot more.”

They had several very useful suggestions to improve the quality of the Eureka program. They felt that there was a big demand for English from the parents – so this component should be strengthened in all centers. They also thought that Eureka teachers should be trained to interact more with the children and get them to ask more questions so that they think about what they do and learn.

Our entire Eureka team was touched by their commitment and amazed at their depth of understanding. We thank the students and their parents for visiting us, supporting and strengthening Eureka SuperKidz.

With the Eureka Team at Vandavasi

