

Best Practices

1. Title of the practice:

DAAN UTSAV – Reaching out to the underprivileged

2. Objectives of the practice:

St. Francis College for Women organises a Social Outreach Program every year in the month of December. It has been a practice to involve every student of the college in this initiative and help them experience ‘Joy of Giving’ by reaching out to the needy.

DAAN UTSAV is a week-long celebration of connecting with less fortunate by offering them help either in cash or kind. The key objective is to develop the value of ‘reaching out to the underprivileged’ among the students. Every class is expected to visit an institution to provide aid and spend time with the inmates.

3. The Context:

The Mission of St. Francis College is to motivate students to become intellectually competent, morally upright, socially committed, emotionally stable, spiritually inspired patriotic women citizens of India. The social outreach program in alignment with this mission intends to make the students understand and experience that ‘It is in giving that we receive’.

The program aims at inculcating the value of social commitment among the students. The management strongly believes that while the students aspire to be intellectually competent, it is equally important to reach out to the underprivileged who belong to the society we live in.

4. The Practice:

A centralised schedule for DAAN UTSAV is shared by the management 2 to 3 weeks prior to the commencement of the programme.

The list of suggested places to visit is displayed on the college notice board. The list comprises old age homes, orphanages, schools for specially abled, schools for street children, government schools etc.

Students and staff are encouraged to select the place they would like to visit.

Student representatives in coordination with the staff incharge find out the actual requirement of the institution by contacting the concerned authorities.

Fund is generated by voluntary contributions made by the students of each class. Staff too contribute for the same.

Required items are procured from the accumulated fund and are handed over to the institution. These items vary from grocery, stationery material, clothes, medicines to book shelves, water purifiers etc.

Few institutions accept only monetary aid and hence the collected amount is handed over to such institutions.

Students and staff together visit the institution and spend time with the inmates be it underprivileged students, specially abled students or elderly homeless people. During the

visit students conduct various fun activities to engage the students/ elderly people. They actively engage and entertain everyone, bringing smiles and moments of joy to each one's life.

A separate committee of staff is formed to manage this Social Outreach Programme. Each department is required to submit a report to this committee after the visit. A consolidated report is later presented to all the staff members of the college.

5. Evidence of the success:

Over the period of last few years, several organisations in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad have been benefitted with the aid provided.

This initiative of Social Outreach has inculcated the value of care, compassion and empathy among the students. Many students have often shared their feedback of being touched with the experience they had during the visit. DAAN UTSAV has certainly helped develop a fresh perspective towards life among the students.

The Social Outreach Program has always been appreciated and has received excellent support from the student and teaching fraternity. The efforts of St. Francis College in reaching out to the needy have also been applauded by the authorities of various organisations to whom the aid was offered.

6. Problems encountered and resources required:

There are various organisations in the vicinity who require financial help. The college alone cannot meet the requirement of everyone in need. Nevertheless, conscious efforts are taken by the committee to reach out to the different organisations every year.

Though there are no major problems encountered, pandemic did affect execution of the social outreach programme in the year 2020-21. As it was not desirable for the students to visit in big numbers to any of the organisation, only the representatives visited and handed over the items purchased. Few classes preferred to contribute and hand over the amount to the management which in turn was collectively donated to the organisations in need. Though everyone was not actively involved due to the challenges each one was battling on personal front, pandemic did not dampen the spirit of giving and the social outreach programme was successfully concluded.

2. Title of the practice:

CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM – for the NON TEACHING and SUPPORT STAFF

2. Objectives of the practice:

The Non Teaching and Support Staff of St. Francis College for Women play a very significant role in successfully operating the functions of the college. It has always been a practice by the management to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the non teaching and support staff.

The key objective of the Capacity Building Program is to enhance the capacities of the non teaching and support staff in all aspects of life. The program aims at acquainting them with basic knowledge of key areas important for their holistic development. All the non teaching and support staff are encouraged to participate in this program conducted by the faculty members of the college itself.

3. The Context:

Along with the Teaching Staff, Non-Teaching Staff and Support Staff are equally important for successfully carrying out the operations of the college. The management does not differentiate between the two when it comes to all round development of an employee of the college.

The Capacity Building Program helps create an awareness among the participants regarding various aspects like managing their personal finance, cleanliness, nutritious diet and many more which helps them to take informed decisions with confidence in their personal lives. This confidence is reflected in their work too, thus, facilitating enhanced productivity at the workplace.

4. The Practice:

In the beginning of the academic year, a tentative schedule with the topics to be covered department wise is prepared and shared with respective HODs.

The schedule is also communicated to the Non Teaching and Support Staff.

Representative staff members from teaching faculty of each department brainstorm and decide on the modality of conducting the program. According to the plan, required material to be shared with the participants is arranged. It varies as per the topic of the program. Eg: handouts, presentations, practical exercises to engage the participants, demonstrations etc.

Various departments of the college, namely - Department of Environmental Studies, Department of Economics, Department of Botany, Department of Commerce and Department of Nutrition have actively participated in the conduct of the Capacity Building Program.

Various topics covered during this program are as follows – Solid Waste Management, Basic Operations in Banking, Primary Health Care through Medicinal Herbs, Financial Literacy and Balanced Diet.

During few sessions interesting activities or competitions are conducted to engage and motivate the participants and prizes are announced while for few others participants are entitled to receive certificate of participation.

The overall program is well received and appreciated by the Non Teaching and Support Staff of the college.

5. Evidence of the success:

This program has equipped the participants with awareness of managing their personal health as well as their finances. It has made them more confident individuals who are now capable of effectively handling their tasks at workplace.

As the sessions of the program are conducted by the inhouse college staff, it has helped in establishing much required 'connect' between the teaching staff and non-teaching staff.

The non teaching staff is keen on knowing and exploring more about the topics discussed. Many of them have shared their positive feedback and expressed their desire in attending all such sessions that would be scheduled in near future.

6. Problems encountered and resources required:

There are no major problems in executing the program. The only limiting factor is getting entire non teaching and support staff together at the same time for multiple sessions. At times due to urgent administrative work few of the non teaching staff members may miss the session. Also, the teaching staff conducting the session should be well versed with local language too to cater to those who do not follow English. A well planned schedule and enthusiastic response of the participants has helped in successfully executing the Capacity Building Program at St. Francis College for Women.