

Yuvati Samooh (Adolescent Girls) Programme

The Yuvati (young girl) of today is no longer shy, timid and reserve. They are on the path of being the leaders of a bright tomorrow with self confidence and self reliance.

The objective of CORD's Yuvati Samooh programme is to mobilize and harness the energies of the young girls. This enables them to express their thoughts and personal problems through group discussions. Together, they find solutions to solve personal issues for their self development in all aspects of life. CORD Sidhbari's adolescent girls programme has nurtured thousands of adolescent girls since its inception in 1987. *Currently, the programme has 80 adolescent girls groups with 1168 members going through the cycle of transformation from cocoon to butterfly. Other sites of CORD in Tamilnadu & Orissa have not yet fully focused & developed adolescent girls programme but they have youth programme where young girls are also members.*

What is Yuvati Samooh?

Yuvati Samooh (Adolescent Girls Group) consists of unmarried girls above the age of 12 years. The group allows the girls to expand their knowledge associated with social issues, individual issues and reproductive health, in order to eliminate their hesitations. By doing so they are able to unfold and increase self-development.



Why Yuvati Samooh?

Yuvati Samooh is part of Yuva Mandal; which is a mixed gender group. However, there are certain personal issues specific to girls that cannot be discussed within the mixed group, thus a separate adolescent group is formed for these discussions.

How is Yuvati Samooh formed?

1. First, the Mahila Mandal group in the village is addressed.
2. Names of girls in the village are noted down.
3. The village folk are asked for the need of as well as potential of a Yuvati Samooh.
4. The girls of the village are asked to attend a Mahila Mandal meeting.
5. The girls that don't attend this meeting are visited individually at their homes.
6. Amongst all the girls, the most active girl with the good potential is selected who will be able to influence, motivate & inspire the others.
7. A meeting is held with the girls to discuss whether they feel there is a need to form a Yuvati Samooh.

Main issues discussed at Yuvati Samooh:

1. Spiritual Development (Adhyatmic vikas)
2. Physical Development (Sharirick vikas)
3. Mental Development (Mansick vikas)
4. Social Development (Samajick vikas)
5. Economic Development (Aarthick vikas)



Holistic vision & open discussions on these issues helps the young girls to explore their potential and remove their hesitations and uncertainties. The advantages of the Yuvati Samoohs though can't be seen directly are evident when slowly the personality of the girl unfolds and she turns in to a confident young woman. Many young ladies who were members of CORD's Yuvati Samooh programme are leading their women groups in their villages and helping other women to get empowered socially and economically.

Programme activities at the CORD centre:

- Adolescent girls group follow-up during holidays.
- Training of youth girls to enhance their capacity.
- To enable them in effective decision-making.
- Training of village volunteer resource persons for the villagers at the Panchayat level.
- To facilitate fieldwork planning by beneficiaries and by resource persons through of sharing information, resources, interest, skills, successful implementation, as well as its replication.
- Networking with stakeholders as per needs identified by youth groups from the field and the centre, collectively.
- Providing basic computer training to the village young girls through CYSY (Chinmaya Yuva Se Yuva) programme at the resource centre.

Programme activities at the Field level:

- To facilitate the meetings and discussions organized once a month by the resource person, initiating the youth's socio-economic and personal development.
- Organizing various programmes on the arising social problems in the society like alcohol abuse awareness, gender sensitization, female feoticide etc. These programmes also help build leadership among the young girls.
- Motivating and encouraging youth girls to take active part in general village council meeting in the Panchayats.

- Inspiring young girls to take part in various village level activities like road and temple construction, village cleaning, village waste management, plantation, water sources cleaning etc. thus increasing their voluntary spirit and contribution.
- To organize cultural programmes and competitions at the village as well as inter-village level.
- Motivating and inspiring youth by giving logical reasoning, to choose self employment, especially in the farm sector and also ensuring participatory Natural Resources Management.
- Networking with other Yuvati Samooh's for exchange of ideas and encouraging other groups through good examples.
- Exposures trips of Yuvatis acquainting them with different perspectives and helping them implement successful ventures.



Process adopted by the programme:

- Establishing connections with the Yuvati groups through interactions with Mahila Mandals.
- Mobilizations & sensitization of beneficiaries.
- Concretion with consensus of beneficiaries for formation of groups.
- Electing leaders and giving training in leadership and operational management, in addition to the ongoing capacity building.
- Registration of the Yuvati Samooh under the 'societies registration act'.
- Moving from instabilities to stability by increasing participatory educational programmes, motivating to increase a sense of responsibility and build ownership.
- Enhancing employment opportunities to strengthen self sustaining ventures.
- Networking with all other programmes components of CORD from Community Based Livelihood (CBL) for the various livelihood opportunities, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) for rehabilitating the differently able, Mahila Mandals for holding programmes and with the Panchayat for general council meetings.

Thus, the Yuvati Samoohs help in moulding the personality of the girl at a tender age, making her more progressive in her outlook and more liberal in her thinking. The girls who are a part of the Yuvati Samoohs generally gain self confidence, are pro-active and leaders, not followers.