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Feedback Report: Shaping young minds through the power of Education with LEADS

Introduction:

From September to November, I had the rewarding opportunity along with a few others from Sunnydale School to volunteer at LEADS. LEADS- just like its name suggests, leads underprivileged children of our community to a brighter path by providing them with high quality education services. LEADS was founded in 2007 which has been serving these children for all these years who have high dreams and curious minds but lack the financial capability and resources for their education. Romina Dewan miss who is the Founder Executive Director continues to put in countless efforts each day to improve the lives of the children coming to her organization along with her brilliantly crafted team of expert teachers Hamida Rahman, Padma Rani Dey, Afsana Parvin and Afroza Akhter who is the Project Officer. Under all of their observation and guidance countless children are now getting closer one step closer to their dreams.

Learning Through Teaching:

As a volunteer, I dedicated 3 days of my week to go and teach these young little children and each day has brought in uncountable experiences. These little children had very little access to run their education yet they were excited and curious to learn and explore and gather more knowledge. As each children walked in everyday, I admired these little young minds seeing how many struggles they were facing in their families and in their lives yet with a bright wide smile they came here to educate themselves in the best possible way. I was assigned with two students of class 3 named Tamim and Emon to teach English and Maths. The first day when I taught them maths, I was instead inspired by them seeing how positive and hopeful these two boys were despite the countless struggles they were facing. Tamim being the shy quiet one and Emon being the one who was a bit mischievous were curious about everything I taught them and put in a lot of efforts to learn new things. Tamim caught my lessons quite well while Emon took some time to grasp to the new lectures. Slowly these two boys were fluent in saying all the names of the days and months and as days went by teaching them became the most favorite part of my routine. As they came from a background where education was too hard to afford and their parents were doing jobs which paid them very low and it was hard to even run their families, these boys needed patience, kindness and compassion to learn the things I taught them. Another thing was that these two boys were also helping their parents by doing household chores after their school finished and both Tamim and Emon even looked after their little sisters and yet managed time to come to LEADS. At such a young age, they had to take such big responsibilities and face such the harsh reality of poverty yet the dedication to build a brighter future through their education remained strong.



Teaching Tamim and Emon

A Visit to Their Homes and Seeing the Harsh Reality:

One of the most eye opening experiences that I had was when we visited their houses. All of the children coming to LEADS almost lived close to each other and actually had to walk a long way to come to LEADS each day to study. One of the memory I will never forget is the smile on the faces of two of my students Tamim and Emon when I entered their houses. They lived in one bedroom houses, with a very small kitchen and a single bathroom which had to shared with other families and had very poor sanitation. Yet, the love, warmth and hospitality that their families showed towards us was beyond words. Despite them struggling with their finances, they served us fruits and snacks which was beyond my expectation.. We visited the houses of almost 7/8 children and all of them lived with very poor housing facilities and some even were sharing one bedroom with other families as well. Despite all these countless battles and struggles all of them had a smile on their faces and were so welcoming and loving that touched my heart beyond words. The most admirable thing was that despite struggling so hard in their everyday lives, the parents of all these children pushed these children for education and motivated them to go to LEADS and learn from us just so that their future gets changed.



Tamim's House



Emon's House





Observations Made:

My time with LEADS provided valuable insights into the students' learning experiences and the environment they grow up in:

- **Eagerness and Curiosity:** The children displayed an inspiring enthusiasm for learning, showing genuine curiosity and a willingness to engage, despite limited resources.
- **Influence of Environment:** Visiting their homes highlighted how living conditions—such as overcrowded spaces, lack of study materials, and financial constraints—directly affect their ability to focus and learn.
- **Progress and Confidence:** Over time, I observed significant growth in many students. Those who were initially hesitant to participate gradually became more confident in expressing their thoughts and asking questions.
- **Resilience and Determination:** Witnessing their determination to learn, despite daily challenges, was a powerful reminder of the strength and perseverance of young minds.
- **Importance of Support:** Even small gestures of encouragement and guidance made a noticeable difference, boosting their motivation and helping them believe in their own potential.

Why an organization like LEADS is an essential part of our community ?

An organization like LEADS not only provides a safe place for these little children to carry forward their education but also focuses on individual needs and the care each children needs. It gives hope to change their future and break the cycle of poverty and to establish themselves. LEADS is such a place where children coming in never leaves empty handed. LEADS not only provides children with education but also makes sure their learning is effective and also organizes cultural programmes and various other activities to make their learning a fun one.

Conclusion

All the days that I have visited LEADS, it has taught me something or the other. I went in to teach the students instead they made me learn from them. Visiting the students' homes and seeing the challenges they face daily was both humbling and motivating. It made me reflect on my own opportunities and privileges, and inspired me to contribute meaningfully to the community whenever possible. Education plays the biggest role in the life of a person and seeing how dedicated and passionate these children were even with such low resources and hurdles opened my eyes that education should be made to reach all places and in the lives of all. These children want to learn and change their lives but they lack the resources needed. All they need is just an opportunity and they are willing in to pour their hearts. There are countless children who have the will to study but cant due to financial struggles. For them LEADS is just the right place. As I complete my time here, I am filled with gratitude and countless experiences learnt. All the teachers present at LEADS have been immensely supportive while I taught and each and every single children I have encountered here will always hold a very special place for me. I know for a fact whenever I get time, I will definitely come here and interact with the children and contribute to their education.