

### Our community based Kindergarten Activity

#### End of year celebration

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of April, Mohanam kindergarten opened the doors to all the parents, in order for them to be presented with the work by the students. The event was very cheerful, with all of the childrens paintings and drawings of the year being exhibited.

At 6pm, the children were all set to shine in their multi-colored costumes and facial make-ups. They took to the stage with great joy: singing, dancing and acting. The parents were delighted and clapped and cheered for the performance. At end of the performance the parents, too, entered the stage and expressed their gratitude towards and pleasure received from the work that Mohanam is doing.



Dear Friends,

Wow! 2015 is a great year for us with lots of fun and friends, lots of challenges; we have achieved a lot as you will read in the overview in this newsletter.

All this was made possible through the collaboration and contributions of parents, children, teachers, volunteers, staff, sponsors & donors, for which we are grateful.



# Mohanam Quarterly Newsletter

## Volume 3: Issue 1:



Following this, some small gifts were distributed to all the children.

The evening ended in a heartwarming dinner that had been prepared by and was also served by the parents. The spread consisted of a huge variety of foods and was enjoyed by children and parents alike. This amazing day and evening is something to look forward to for many more wonderful years to come.



### May

The month of May brought a lot of vigor and excitement to the Mohanam kindergarten. The heritage house that has been our home for the last fifteen years was finally given a full makeover. The entire building was renovated and repainted and a kolam added fresh colors to the inside courtyard walls. After that stock taking, room cleaning and material re-distribution all resulted in a spic and span space ready for a new batch of arrivals. As the cleaning came to an end, all the teachers met to plan for the year ahead and prepared themselves for the old and new kids and new adventures to come.



## June

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of June, the Mohanam kindergarten welcomed 32 new children into the comfortable sanctuary that the building had become. Mohanam now has a grand total of 61 children, divided into three groups, according to age. The 2-3 year-olds still follow the project method based on the principle of play, whilst the older ones have switched over to the Montessori method of education.

Uniforms, books and notes were distributed to all the children.

During the first two weeks, children stayed only until lunch, allowing them the time to adjust to their new environment. Soon enough they had all settled in and seemed happy to come to Mohanam. By the third week, the kids were staying on until 3pm.

Healthy lunch and snacks were provided, and another year of joy and learning has started to unfold!



## Cultural Performances

### Tamil New Year program

On April 14<sup>th</sup> the Mohanam children offered a cultural event as part of the Tamil New Year program at Bharat Nivas. It was a wonderfully successful program and a great opportunity for the village children to stand in front of many international people. On the day there were many special programs, with human unity at the forefront, all much enjoyed by the kids.



### Summer workshop

On 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> May Mohanam organized a two day summer creative workshop at the Bamboo lands. During the first days creative paintings of nature were produced, with some 20 children participating. Mr. Umapathy taught the children about being creative using natural materials. On the second day Mr. Anbazhagan trained the children in creative drawing. It was a good learning opportunity for the 25 village children that participated.



### Water House, 7<sup>th</sup> year anniversary

On May 7<sup>th</sup> the Mohanam water group celebrated its 7<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, at Mohanam. Mr. Dhandapani, who is the coordinator of the project, was invited and expressed his appreciation of the women's commitment. He stated that "this is the most successful women empowerment and local livelihood project in the Auroville bioregion." Village elder Mr. Ganesan agreed, saying that it has been the most excellent work that he has seen in his lifetime.



**Rural Tourism P.R.A exercise:**

We planned to conduct a P.R.A exercise because we wanted to collect the oral information pertaining to the villages' profiles and history and to map the social structures as well as the state of infrastructure of each village.

To start with, a date was set and the relevant of various age groups were informed. More than 85 women from Alankuppam, Sanjeevinagar and Annainagar villages were invited, some members of the women self help group.



The P.R.A exercise was conducted on June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2015 at the Mohanam cultural centre itself. As the people had assembled, the program was kicked off with an introduction session, during which the importance and procedure of the P.R.A-exercise were clearly explained.

Then people were divided into groups and set out to prepare Alankuppam, Sanjeevinagar and Annainagar village maps on the ground. Secondly, they had to add all the known resources on the map, and third, they coloured all of the maps and resources. All the people present showed much interest and involvement, guided by the Mohanam resource person Mr. Dhandapani.



### Women consciousness workshop

On June 14<sup>th</sup>, we conducted a one day workshop on awareness for the local women.

Dr. Premilathamizhvananan, Head of the department in Annai Theresa College, Pondicherry, talked about subjects such as health, family, and how to behave with children, all relevant to village life.

Being a government officer with special focus on the empowerment of women and income generation programs, she talked about how to deal with a variety of common family-related problems. Giving many examples of problems and their solutions, it was of great interest to the 80 plus women that participated.



### International Yoga day retreat program

On June 22<sup>nd</sup> twelve young boys left Mohanam for Thiruvannamalai and a first ever two day youth leadership training trip. We arrived at around 6pm and suddenly spotted two big mountains, and there we set up camp. At around 9pm a camp fire drum circle took off and the boys learned about behaviour and personality and enjoyed very much. The night offered good, deep sleep.



Hearing the story from the elders

On the second day, the international youth day, we woke up early in the morning, to the birds singing their beautiful songs. We went to the Ramana Ashram, inspired by local village elders' stories of the ashram. At the end of the program the boys were asked to express their feelings over the last two days and the boys reported that it had been a different experience to them and that they had learned many new things. They also much appreciated eating together during these two days.



Sharing the day with team





We are very grateful to the Friends of Mohanam our staff, the volunteers and the sponsors, who prepared and manifested the various programs. Also thank the local village communities which have helped and supported us in so many ways.

*With love and gratitude*  
The Mohanam Team

The contribution of Auroville, the parents and the participants it is not enough to cover all the costs of our program. Without the financial support of our sponsors we would not be able to offer this rich variety of programs.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO DONATE?**  
**HERE'S HOW**

The easiest and simplest way to transfer money is by "SWIFT" (electronic transfer) from anywhere. Go to your bank and give them the following information, with your donation.

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**Name of the Account Holder:**

Auroville Unity Fund

**Account No: 1 0 2 3 7 8 7 6 508**

**Purpose: Mohanam Cultural Centre**