

Community and Parent Engagement- Early Childhood Care and Education

Parental and community engagement is a vital part of any educational initiative. With the introduction of Pre-Primary in Himachal Pradesh in 2018, parents of age-appropriate children were motivated to enroll their children in the Pre-Primary classes. Besides teachers and other Government functionaries, parents and other community stakeholders have been playing an important part in ensuring success of this program.

To further strengthen this innovative program and engage parents proactively following should be done:

1. Enrollment Campaign at Community Level
2. Establishing Mother Groups and Conducting Meetings at Community Level
3. Periodic Events at School Level

1. Enrollment Campaign at Community Level

Objective

To motivate the parents to enroll their age-appropriate children in Pre-Primary

Frequency: Once annually at the beginning of academic session

Strategy

- The teacher will conduct a meeting with SMC members. A map of the area will be prepared and teachers and SMC members will be assigned areas for enrollment campaign. Door to door visit should also be done by the team to enroll children and develop connect with parents
- Meeting with parents of children whose children are enrolled in pre-primary will be done. These parents will be encouraged to spread the message among their contacts
- Awareness about the intervention should be done with help of posters, pamphlets at appropriate locations across the community
- Meetings with Panchayat representatives, mother groups, parents etc.
- Awareness rallies should be done across the community
- Parents who are willing to enroll their children in pre-primary should be taken to the pre-primary classroom and activity demonstration by the teacher can be done for these parents



Video: Enrollment Campaign Strategy



Pic 1: Community Mobilization

Material

Hard copies of posters, pamphlets, community outreach kit, e-posters etc.

2. Establishing Mother Groups at Community Level

2.1 Creation of Mother Groups

During Early Years, a child spends most of his/her time with mother. In this initial phase, the support of mother is vital for ensuring early development. For this, mother groups should be created to strengthen this bond between mother and child. Therefore, establishing a connect of development appropriate activities for engaging mothers is required.

Through these mother groups, the mothers are able to play a more active role in their children's development, improve developmental outcomes and influence the household environment to make it conducive to their learning needs.



Pic 2: Mother Groups Creation in-Progress

Objective of Mother Group

- To connect mothers with development appropriate activities being conducted in the school
- To ensure that mothers can conduct development appropriate activities at home through simple means
- To create an echo system where cross sharing on development of children is done

Process of Mother Group Creation

- Teacher will arrange meeting of mothers whose children are enrolled in pre primary
- Orienting mothers on importance of Early Childhood Education and objective of mother group
- Create a mother group and enlist 5-6 mothers of preschool children in the group

Ideal Group Size: 5-6 Mothers (depending upon the geographical condition, the group can be common or hamlet-wise)

2.2 Mother Group Meetings

Meetings of Mother Groups should be held on **fortnightly** basis. Agenda from idea card will be followed in the meeting. For this purpose, **SeekhenSikhayenBooklet** (consisting of ideas for conducting meeting) will be used. Each idea card in this booklet is divided into four parts.



Video: Mother Group Meeting

- ✓ In the first part, **welcome of mother group** is done through balgeet and review of past activities is conducted.



Pic 3: Welcome Activity During Mother Meetings

Annexure-II

- ✓ In the second part, an activity has been designed for mothers and mothers will get some **hands-on experience of development appropriate activities**. They will be motivated further to do these activities with children.



Pic 4: Development Appropriate Activities

- ✓ In the third part, **capacity building of mothers** is done on different aspects like **healthy food, good habits, gender discrimination, disability** etc. Through discussion and some videos will be shown to them.
- ✓ In the fourth part, a **worksheet** will be given to the mothers which they will use for conducting activities at home.



Pic 5: Worksheet

- ✓ At a later stage an alternate **idea video** can be given to teacher who will share the same with the mothers during these meetings



Idea Video

- ✓ **Cross sharing of ideas and learnings** done by children can also be shared during these mother meetings

Material

For these meetings, "**Seekhen aur Sikhayen**" booklet consisting of 20 ideas can be used. One idea can be used in each of the mother meeting.



Pic 6: Seekhen aur Sikhayen



Document: Seekhen aur Sikhayen

3. Periodic Events at School Level

Objective:

- To orient the parents in particular and community at large about different development appropriate activities being done with children.
- **Frequency:** Each event should be conducted monthly, occasionally or on annual basis accordingly

3.1 Readiness Mela

It should be conducted at the beginning of the session. The objective should be to understand the readiness of children for enrollment in grade 1



Document: NIPUN
Mela Margdarshika

- Readiness melas are to be held under NIPUN Himachal.
- These Mela shall be held during beginning of the session at school level.
- Different activities defining 5 development domains of Pre-Primary should be displayed in these readiness melas.
- Children and parents should be given the opportunity to conduct activities across all development domain stalls.
- Sample assessment of different development specific activities should also be conducted
- This will help parents understand the readiness of the child towards Grade 1.
- The participation of SMC, Panchayat representatives, Aanganwadi workers and community volunteers etc. should also be ensured in these melas.
- While conducting these melas, a separate stall for ECCE should be established where material, demonstration of development appropriate activities in context of ECCE should be done.
- The component of ECCE Day will be a part of Readiness Mela. Aanganwadi workers, Asha Workers will also be a part of this event and apart from the above listed activities, the component of health and nutrition will also be catered.



Pic 7: Readiness Mela

3.2 Thematic Days

- Theme based days should be celebrated every month with an alignment of theme mentioned in the activity calendar
- In these, specific tasks can be assigned to children, for example on colour day; children should be asked to wear specific colour dress. On similar lines fruit day, vegetable day etc. can be celebrated
- On such days, parents should help the children by telling them about the specified activity and should send the children prepared accordingly
- Festivals and other special occasions should be celebrated so the children know about importance of these events

3.3 Sharing of Child Report Card

The report card for early years is a communication tool to address learning gaps of children and formulate strategy. Therefore, after observation-based assessments on children report card (baseline, midline, endline), teacher will share report card with the parents individually.

3.4 Graduation Ceremony

- Distribution of Report Card to the children in presence of parents will be done.
- This event can be categorized as Graduation Ceremony where the teacher will distribute the report card to children.
- Teacher can also present a glimpse of activities that were conducted with the children throughout the academic year.



Pic 8: Graduation Ceremony

Alignment of Pre-Primary program should be done with different community-based activities being conducted in the school.
