

Best Practice 1

Title of the Practice: ‘Sujeevanam’

Objective of the practice

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan or Swachh Bharat Mission was a nation-wide campaign in India initiated by our honorable Prime Minister for the period 2014 to 2019 that aims to clean up the streets, roads and infrastructure of India’s cities, smaller towns, and rural areas. In accordance with the Swachh Bharath Abhiyan, the institution also tries to keep the Campus spick and span. The Plan envisaged a periodical campus cleaning drive which had to be coordinated by the NSS Units under the supervision of the Programme Officer. It also aims to transform society through conduct of awareness campaigns and focused action in the nearby villages.

Goals

- To introduce and aware students to real concerns of environment and its sustainability
- To ensure the protection of the environment through effective waste management measures
- To give awareness about products that avoid or minimize waste generation
- Increase reuse and recycling rates of products
- To increase public understanding and shape community perceptions on the dangers of plastic pollution and available solutions, thereby empowering more people to take action.
- To ensure that people are aware of the impact of waste on their health, wellbeing and the environment

The college focuses on the 3R initiative in waste management. The principle of reducing waste, reusing and recycling resources and products is often called the "3Rs." Reducing means choosing to use things with care to reduce the amount of waste generated. Reusing involves the repeated use of items or parts of items which still have usable aspects. Recycling means the use of waste itself as resources. Waste minimization can be achieved in an efficient way by focusing primarily on the first of the 3Rs, "reduce," followed by "reuse" and then "recycle." The college not only gives awareness to the students but also to the nearby villagers also through the NSS volunteers. They try to implement some practices also in this regard.

The context

Our country faces major environmental challenges associated with waste generation and inadequate waste collection, treatment and disposal. Waste segregation at source and use of specialized waste processing facilities to separate recyclable materials has a key role in a society that values convenience. The current ‘throwaway’ lifestyle encourages a linear approach to the production and disposal of products, rather than a circular approach that regards waste as simply another resource. Nowadays people lead busy lives and value convenience; as they go about their

day rushing between activities, the purchase of single-use products is often the most convenient choice. The consequence of this convenience comes in the form of high quantities of waste. In an era where societies around the world are becoming more conscious of the issues surrounding waste, each one of us has some responsibility in this regard.

The Practice

The college adopted the waste management policy of “Generate Less Recycle More”. Waste is separated as biodegradable (organic wastes) and non-biodegradable (plastics etc) and segregated at source by providing separate dustbins. Dustbins of blue, green and red colors are used. Dustbins are arranged in all department staff rooms, labs, library, and near every flight of stairs. Cleaning and emptying the dustbins are being done on a regular basis. The organic waste when decomposed by vermicompost is reused as organic compost for the plants in the college campus. Plastic waste is handed over to ‘Haritha karma sena’ on a regular basis. Green protocol is observed in the campus. Green protocol leaflets prepared by the students are displayed at many places in the campus.

Less Paper Office

Most of the office work is done digitally. Student attendance uploading, university registration for examination, admission procedure, E-grants and scholarships are not completely paper free, but managed with less paper along with digital support. Moodle platform helps teachers to avoid use of paper for assignments and notes. Assignments and projects are usually evaluated online. For class tests, questions are compiled in smart phones by teachers to reduce consumption of paper. All the communications are made through electronic mode only. Single sided used papers are reused for writing and printing in all departments.

Pen Collection Drive

Aiming towards sustainable development, NSS volunteers collect all discarded plastic pens from the campus to send them for recycling. In order to continue the collection process they placed card board boxes in all classrooms. The final collection of used pens from all classes is on every Friday evening. They hand over the collected pens to ‘Haritha Karma Sena’ for recycling.

Avoidance of plastic

Earlier single use plastic cups and plates were used in the college for various functions. Being aware of green protocols, college authorities purchased steel plates and glasses for serving food during functions in the college. Students of the NSS unit began to use plantain and ‘Vatta leaves’ for serving light refreshments. They are motivated to keep their own plate, glass and water bottle with them wherever they go. Students are advised to bring lunch in a durable or reusable lunchbox, especially steel lunch boxes and steel bottles. In this way a culture of reducing waste is instilled in the students. Plastic bottles are collected from the campus and are handed over to ‘Haritha Karma Sena’ for recycling.

Cleaning drives

On the campus and nearby villages, a mass cleaning drive is being conducted at regular intervals. Adavi eco tourism center, Pathanamthitta ring road are some such places where students do the cleaning regularly. Every year students collect a huge amount of plastic waste from these places and hand it over to 'Haritha Karma Sena'.

Awareness surveys on plastic disposal were conducted at various houses in the adopted colony and various parts of Konni Grama Panchayath to know about the waste management policies adopted by them. Awareness are provided on the sorting of waste materials, composting systems etc. Our student volunteers go to each and every home of the adopted colony and explain all these things in detail. They also distribute green protocol leaflets to them. Besides the adopted villages these things are done at various parts of Konni Grama Panchayath. Cloth bags prepared by Bhoomitra Sena with a logo of " plastic upayogam parimithappeduthoo, bhoomiye rakshikkoo" are also distributed to them.

Evidence of success

- Plastic consumption in the campus was minimized.
- Students and staff avoided plastic cups and disposable plates.
- Everyone are now using steel lunch boxes and water bottles.
- Plastic bottled water is using nowhere in the campus.
- Students are keeping their own plate, glass and bottle with them during long journeys or camps
- College has a large set of steel plate and glasses for serving food on any special occasions.
- People in the adopted villages are aware of the harmful effects of waste on health and environment.
- They started adopting proper waste management systems.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- Initially students were reluctant to leave the use and throw culture.
- Villagers also showed such a reluctance to waste management policies in the beginning.
- Plastic alternatives are usually more expensive and hence it requires some funding for initial purchase.
- Constant evaluation is required in the case of villages and towns for which the students are not getting enough time due to their hectic academic schedule.

Best Practice 2

Title : ‘Santhwanam’

SAS College believes in the overall development of the students. The College pays special attention to inculcate values in the students at every opportunity. ‘Santhwanam’, a unique endeavour of the College, is an extension activity aimed at reaching out to the marginalized and underprivileged.

Goals

- To create a culture that infuses extension as a core ingredient of true education
- To foster inter connectedness, civic consciousness, kinship among students
- To empower and improve the socio-economic conditions of the marginalized people

It is a platform for providing hands on experience to students in uplifting the local community and bringing about social change. It also provides learning experiences and opportunities for growth to students, helping them discover their inner strengths, developing innate worth and encouraging them to contribute to the needy, less privileged sections of society.

The context

The poor patients with different diseases come to the Government General Hospital, Konni to undergo better treatment by the Medical Experts. The patients suffer a lot with the diseases and do not even have enough money to buy the medicines. Medicines alone cannot completely cure a patient. He/she needs proper and timely food. Due to lack of nutritious food they are getting ill-health. By identifying the problem of patients, we took up the initiative to give food to them once in a week in association with Blood Donors Kerala (BDK), Pathanamthitta Chapter, who arranges ‘Snehasadya’, an initiative to feed the needy in many hospitals in Kerala. The hospitals will not receive food from the general public due to safety measures. So in association with BDK, our college NSS team decided to supply meals to the patients and their bystanders on every Sunday. Besides this the NSS volunteers always tries to identify underprivileged people from the society and provide support for them also.

The Practice

‘Vishappurahitha Konni’

Students prepare and serve lunch (Kanji, payar, achar, pappadam) for the patients and their bystanders on every Sunday. The college provides food for around 70 people in the hospital. They meet the expenses by finding sponsors, or using their own pocket money. Most often students avoid birthday celebrations and that money is used for such a noble purpose. Teachers and other staff of the college also contribute during any special celebrations of their close relatives.

‘Naipunyam’ oru Kaithanginuvendi

The NSS unit is making lotion, soap, soap powder etc during free time. Using the profit they earned, the students try to provide help to the needy people of the society. They identified an old woman above 70 years from the local ward who was leading a lonely life. She is unmarried and was earlier taking tuition classes for little kids. Now because of her old age related problems she is not able to do her job. On women empowerment day she was honored among others with 'ponnada'. The students came to notice that she was living in a house without door. So they took steps to raise fund through the program 'Naipunyam' in which they sold the handmade soap and lotions and the profit was used to buy and put a strong door for her house. Her house was in need of some maintenance work and that was also provided by the college NSS Unit. We are giving some financial aid and food provisions to her on a regular basis.

'Sudarshanam'

Our NSS volunteers in association with the Department of Social Justice, help elderly people coming alone to visit Sabarimala. They accompany them to and fro and if needed carry them in trollies.

Every year on NSS day, September 24, Our college NSS unit visit Prathyaasha Bhavan, a nearby orphanage and provide food provisions. The orphanage has more than twenty old aged people above 70 years old. The students also donate cloth and medicines for their needs.

'Snehasparsham'

Our NSS volunteers help an old aged lady whose son had died in an accident. She had no other children and relatives for her help. They visit the lady at the end of every month and supply food provisions and money.

Evidence of success

- To a certain extent, it solves the problem of poor patients, who come from faraway places of the district suffering with different diseases. Patients do not depend on others for food and they can recover speedily from ill-health
- Underprivileged people get confidence and hope on their lives.
- The students were taken outside class rooms and they got a different learning experience. It has made them more sensitive to the needs of society and promoted a spirit of social commitment as evidenced from their feedback. The strong social orientation imparted to students was strongly revealed during the recent floods that ravaged Kerala.

Problems Encountered and Resources Required

- One of the major problems encountered is lack of sufficient time to conduct the activities because of the academic responsibilities of the students.
- Second main problem is the difficulty in raising funds.