

Tamar Youth Conference

27 - 28 February 2023

Eklavya Model Residential School, Salgadiah, Tamar



Group photograph during Tamar Youth Conference at EMRS, Salgadiah

Introduction:

The team of Let's Make A Difference was welcomed with garlands along with a tribal dance performance by the students. The Tamar Youth conference is organized every year at the Eklavya Model Residential School. It is a government run school under the supervision of the Kerala Public Schools Trust. The team of volunteers had arrived from different parts of the country, namely, Jamshedpur, Mumbai, Nagpur, Osmanabad, and Delhi. The conference was attended by 354 students of 8 - 12 grade. It is an all-boys school with students coming from districts adjoining Salgadiah. They belong to Scheduled Castes and Tribes of the Jharkhand region and come under low-income socio-economic background.

Day 1 (27 February 2023):

The conference began with an inauguration ceremony, attended by the director of the school, Mr. Sharat Chandran, the vice-principal, Mr. Akash, the course convener, Mr. Viral Mazumdar, and the team of volunteers. The course convener was honored with a token of appreciation, and the participants, who were seated in the auditorium, eagerly waited to hear the message delivered in the conference.



The Volunteer team of Let's Make A Difference ceremoniously welcomed by the Students of EMRS, Tamar

The conference started with a prayer *Itni Shakti Hame Dena Data*.

The course convener introduced the concept of Quiet Time, which is a process of writing down one's conscious thought that they realize and reconcile with the people that they did incorrect with. The participants were shown a powerful presentation on the Quiet Time. The session progressed to cover important topics such as substance abuse, intake of vulgar content, indecent language, and negative emotions which clogs the metaphorical pipe and renders the land barren (meaningless life). The session was an eye opener, as if someone had put a mirror to show them their mistakes. Then, the participants spread themselves in the school premises to have a quiet time. One by one participants came forward to share their thoughts and experience during the quiet time.

The Quiet Time session was followed by a volunteer team's presentation on their personal experiences on the four values in the ABC of MRA. The team talked about how often we lie and for some it becomes their nature. Cheating in the examinations to gain good grades provides momentary satisfaction, but in the long run proves bad for the one who does it. Corruption is another form of dishonesty that the people in power exercise to their benefit and how being honest and firm helps tackle such sticky situations.



Group discussion

The participants then broke into groups for group discussions, where they talked about the circle of trust and the importance of sharing in the group. The group discussions were focused on the four values, and the participants could speak about their experiences with pornography, lack of concentration and focus, and mindsphere being engulfed by thoughts of a girl.

After the group discussions, the last session before the end of the day was about concentration. The exercise helped the participants focus and made them understand the importance of concentration. The day ended on a positive note, with the participants realizing the importance of the four values and how they can bring about change in themselves and others. The conference provided them with a platform to learn, reflect and improve, and the participants left with a sense of fulfillment.

Day 2 (28 February 2023):

Quiet Time on Mind, Ego and Consciousness. A child when born comes with no burden and baggage, although while growing up she/he accumulates vices, pain, hurt and broken relationships. The participants were left with a question before the quiet time - *What have you lost due to your ego?*

The session on pyramid of life where more focus was given to habits, career and short term and long-term goals. The demonstration of the golf balls, marbles and sand complimented the exercise. The participants wrote a lot about their bad habits such as anger issues, abusive words,

looking at the girls in a vulgar manner among others. Then the participants wrote one positive commitment.

The Let's Make A Difference team hosted an elaborate lunch for the students and teachers of the school. They were appreciative of the good meal they had. Being in a poverty-stricken place they do not have the opportunity to have better food that we often take for granted. They were grateful for the opportunity and our team was satisfied to look at their happy faces.



Special lunch served to the students at EMRS, Salgadiah

After the lunch, they had their last group discussion on Habits, Career, Goals. On a positive note, students had a rudimentary idea of what they want to be professionally, but they lacked the knowledge of how they can achieve their aspiration. Post group discussion, the participants, teachers and the entire Let's Make A Difference team gathered outside the main building for a group photograph.

The final leg of the conference involved the closing ceremony and address from Mrs. Laxmi Nair, Director Madam, Mrs. Shanta Baidyanathan, Mr. Dubey and Vice Principal Akash. The Let's Make A Difference team was presented with a token of appreciation and certificate. Then, the deserving participants were handed over the certificates.