



Discover The Message Within And Share

Newsletter

No.7

January- June 2022



Introduction
of the Live
Happy staff

Activities with
the children at
Happy Home



Discover The Message Within And Share

Who we are

We are LIVE HAPPY NGO, from a small village- Assagao, Goa- India.

We strive towards bringing about eclectic solutions to societal problems through a Sustainable Development model.

Therefore our motto is to promote and achieve social empowerment by implementing a child-centered community approach.

Aligned with this mission we have a number of projects that run simultaneously to achieve this goal.

These are manifested into three main projects:

1. Live Clean

- Hosting regular clean-up drives and waste awareness programs in public/ tourist spots for a clean environment, in an effort to promote responsible tourism.
- Aid in waste management techniques and provide materials for awareness, within the community, in collaboration with different government organizations and public welfare bodies.
- Permaculture project, providing a medical herb garden and awareness for the rich biodiversity of Assagao

2. Live Empower

- Learning classes, addresses the need for quality education among children of the community. This venture is an attempt to fulfill the UN development goals for third world countries, for nurturing of the child's holistic growth.
- Awareness programs that seek to educate the masses about relevant topics in a society like basic human rights, hygiene issues, and empowering the girl child, to name a few. This is done by approaching local organizations like schools and colleges in aiding them to achieve this goal.
- Organizing and executing heritage walks through the promotion of heritage tourism. This is an attempt to preserve and protect the essence of Goan-ness, teaching people about culture and tradition to be implicated in business models.

3. Two Lives project

- Providing cultural exchange programs for students from around the world to volunteer with our NGO for long term projects.
- Approaching different institutions abroad and at home to be trained and involve themselves in Social Welfare/Work.



Discover The Message Within And Share

It brings me immense pleasure to see how our mission is taking its true form. Rewinding ten years back, we consciously started with project waste management, creating awareness on protection, preservation and restoration of the village Assagao. My partner, Co-founder of Live Happy, Beatriz Milla sharing her professional inputs and following up with projects running at NGO has been another source of strong foundation. However, the ground work is always challenging but with the coordinator and volunteers we have always overcome them and each time it gave us an opportunity to improve as an organization.

As we focus on creating a child-centered sustainable village model, our Happy Home, the learning space has always been supported by our well-wishers and supporters which brings us closer to our goals. Focusing on children, we have been working on crafting a structure which enhances individuals' abilities. We take this newsletter as an opportunity to introduce our upcoming project Live Vision, an eight-day program that includes ancient yogic techniques and many other child-centered modes of learning and achieving cognitive, affective and psycho-motor skills. This program will enable a child to introspect within and reach to their fullest capabilities to contribute in the society and create a good impact which is far more than their imagination.



Felly Gomes
Founder



Beatriz Contreras Milla
Co-Founder

While there is still a sense of being in the COVID tunnel, there is definitely light at the end of that tunnel. It is exciting to see the wide range of initiatives beginning to happen after the long period of social isolation, as people recreate community and foster greater social connection. Thankfully, so many communities are not seeking a return to the so-called 'norm' of those pre-November 2019 days. New eco-social contracts are emerging through the commitments and actions of different actors and movements that are addressing current crises and intersectional inequalities. Acknowledging that inequalities are rooted in historical injustices, minorities and vulnerable social groups, is a first step to assembling, pursuing and consolidating new visions of a new world for everyone, leaving no one behind.

Hence, so many friends and collaborators are requesting to reactive the programs with Live Happy NGO to build solidarity between different actors and movements. The mission of the network is to broaden understanding around the idea of a new eco-social contract.

We have the pleasure to announce that we will have two German volunteers from September and two Spanish students from February! Plus, more fresh news in the next months...

As always, enjoy the encouragement and insights that come with the reading of the stories captured in the articles and photos below.



Anushka Gomes
Project coordinator

“Children are not a distraction from more important work. They are the most important work” – C S Lewis

Over the years, Live Happy has been working towards various aspects of society, especially in the village of Assagao, be it environment, social, reaching out to people in need as well as helping the young minds of society to be better individuals and motivating them to be active citizens in the future.

Currently, we have tuition classes, holistic sessions and the bookworm team coming every Friday to conduct interesting library sessions for our children. We also have different riveting sessions conducted by experts in the field of education and community services.

We have 20 children coming to Live Happy regularly. We are aware of the challenging backgrounds our children come from and therefore, all the activities held at Live Happy are planned on the concept of inclusiveness. The activities and routines we follow help children develop skills like socialization, overcome their academic challenges, discover their talents and improve on their weaknesses.

I sincerely thank our creative arts and mindfulness facilitator, Sasha Braganza, our tutors, the Bookworm team, and our volunteers who have been constantly working with us to create a better community.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to all our sponsors and supporters who have reached out to us to help us continue our work.

Enjoy reading this issue as we give you an insight of our work done in the past six months of 2022.



January

New Year, new hopes, new wishes!

We had the first Holistic Learning session of 2022 on January 6. The session aimed to get children excited and inspired for the year ahead of them. The children worked individually and made bookmarks filled with words and doodles that projected their plans, activities and challenges they wish to take up this year. They also shared their thoughts with their peers at the end of the session. Two teacher volunteers conducted the third and fourth sessions. They had activities such as action songs, role play and craft activities to motivate students to use good manner words in day-to-day life. The next session taught children the days of the week. The children were divided into groups and had a craft activity that helped them remember the days of the week in sequence. The older children helped the volunteers in the teaching and craft activity.



Bookworm library sessions



Bookworm had its first session of the year on January 7, with children jotting down how they celebrated their Christmas and New Year's Eve and what they look forward to. They also had an origami dolphin craft done based on the story read to them. In the second session, the volunteers conducted activities including word puzzles and picture puzzles that gave a brief idea of the story for the session. They read an interesting story about fireflies to the kids. The children also had a craft activity wherein they learnt to make stick fireflies. The third and fourth sessions of the month were art-based activities. The Bookworm team explained to the children the concept of abstract art with some mesmerising paintings and illustrations by Mehli Gobhai, a prominent Indian abstractionist painter and illustrator. The children had to create abstract art expressing the emotion they feel the most. The volunteers handed each child a drawing book and instructed them to work on their cover pages. The children also did the regular book talk and willingly participated in the same and were confident. Children also learnt the difference between a painting and an illustration. Every session concluded with their regular book exchange.

After school learning



This month, the tutor conducted basic English classes, including phonetics, which helped the children improve their language skills. The younger children had to practice alphabets and tables, while the elder ones were guided in their school lessons. As the children also had their exams, we had two teacher volunteers who supported the tutor in taking up the kids' lessons.

February

Welcoming new faces at Live Happy

The holistic learning of the month started with outdoor games that helped children ease the stress of their academic assessment tests. They were excited and had fun playing charade and heads up. We believe that games like these positively boost the child's brain work and improve their confidence as they work in teams.

As Live Happy has a new batch of children this year, the creative arts and mindfulness facilitator made sure everyone knew each other well in the group as they will be doing all activities together in the future. They also had a collage activity wherein each child created a collage of their name.



Trees, Books and Children!

As Bookworm continued with the Mehli Gobhai Arts Programme in the first library session of February, the Bookworm volunteers shared Gobhai's tree book. Tree books helped children learn about the trees around them. They were also instructed to observe and paint the tree that fascinated them. The children were keen on painting the finer details of the tree they observed.

In the following sessions, the children were guided on how to make their tree book, shown with the help of Mehli Gobhai's tree books. The children then visualised the various aspects that they wanted to add to their tree book. They also had their regular journal writing and book talk where our children actively participated and encouraged their peers to read.



Test time

Children had their academic tests for which they had been preparing since January and with the tutor's and coordinator's guidance, they completed their test papers in time. The tutor also taught them basic mathematics that helped the older children revise their math. As the schools re-opened mid- February, we made changes in our timetable. We now have the academic hour from Monday to Friday along with the Holistic and Bookworm sessions at Live Happy. Our volunteers also put time and effort into teaching elementary learning that the children missed due to the pandemic.

Parent Meet

This month, the tutor and holistic facilitator had one-to-one interactions with the parents, updating them on their child's progress and how we support them to grow holistically at Live Happy. Since, in most households, both parents work throughout the day, there is limited interaction with their children. We shared some suggestions with parents on how they could initiate small conversations that would interest the child and make the kid comfortable in communicating with their parents. They were also made aware of how we could create an environment that will benefit the child and help them grow at their own pace. We were happy to see the parents present for the meeting, sharing their views and suggestions that we could consider to work with the children at Live Happy.

March



Vibrant ideas at Bookworm

Live Happy attended a workshop at Bookworm, Panaji along with participants from various organizations in the country.

The three-day workshop provided us with exposure to structuring the children's library. It also highlighted the various elements and concepts in organizing and maintaining the library. They also conducted interactive activities and sessions on understanding the various factors that were resourceful while interacting with kids in a different setting. The workshop enlightened us on the aspects to be considered while curating an inclusive library.

We also shared the library work executed at Live Happy along with our long-term plan of setting up a library space for the community. We interacted with other organizations and shared our interests and ideas during the workshop.

Empowering children

Holistic learning at Live Happy seeks to empower and improve children's educational and life skills that will help them in their overall development. For this month's holistic learning, we had outdoor games. The games improved teamwork and team management skills among the children. In another session, our creative arts and mindfulness facilitator instructed children to picture-draw their family and home surrounding. It helped us understand their family environment as they shared the drawings.



Stitching tree books

As the tree book project continued, many of our children had completed their books. Later, with the help of the bookworm volunteers, the kids stitched their tree books together. They also had their regular book exchange.



Educational visit

Students of MSW, Department of Social Work from Acharya Institute of Graduate Studies, Bangalore, visited Live Happy as a part of their Educational Tour. We had the opportunity to share the goals and objectives of our NGO, including the holistic structure of working following the SDGs. They witnessed the Bookworm session, got an insight into how we collaborate with the library organization and interacted with the children. We also interacted with the MSW students to discuss the challenges and the process of problem situations and solutions.



Interaction with the Author

Bookworm library hosted an author interaction with author, illustrator and cartoonist, Rohan Chakravarthy.

His books revolve around wildlife and nature conservation.

Our children and the kids of other communities had the opportunity to interact with the author, engage in challenging games and also had the book signed by the author.



Finals have approached!

The children had their final academic examination this month. The tutor and coordinator provided daily revisions to prepare them for the exam.

The tutor taught them mathematics which helped the older children with revision. The kids also learnt language skills. Our volunteers helped the children with their academic learning by explaining and preparing worksheets for revision.



Growing our own To-ma-toes

Ms. Rakshanda Mayekar and Ms. Ashwini Naik, our two teacher-volunteers have been assisting the tutor and volunteering in different activities at Live Happy since November 2021.

This month they conducted a session for the children on the importance of trees around us. They also interacted with the children to inform them about the different types of trees and plants and their significance.

In the latter half of the session, the children with the help of the volunteers planted tomato saplings in the Live Happy Garden.



April

Bookworm Reading sessions



The bookworm library sessions are always fun with their read-aloud, interesting activities, journaling, book talk and book exchange. In this month's library sessions, the children had an activity wherein they had to draw or write about their favorite memory. Based on the activity, the volunteers read a story and discussed aspects related to memory. For the following session, the children created mandala art using things found in nature.



Bookworm also organized an online session for the children at Live Happy. Resource person, Snigdha, instructed different science experiments that our children learned and enjoyed. Though the session was online, the volunteers and children had a hands-on experience that allowed children to move around to gather materials for their experiments.

The last session of the month was about knowing our flying friends. A read-aloud session on the famous Salim Ali followed by drawing a favorite bird in their drawing books was something that all our children enjoyed.





E-zone learning!

On April 2, 2022, Ms. Ruchika Pednekar conducted a workshop for the older children of Live Happy on basic electronics, including working with push buttons, switches, sensors, LED, buzzers, motors and minicomputer.

This workshop encouraged the children to learn a new skill and be aware of basic electronic devices. They also created house models and learnt the various electronic equipment used in a household. The workshop was a unique and fun learning experience for the children.

Summer Classes at Live Happy

As the children were ready for their summer vacation, they continued visiting Live Happy. The summer break was the best time to help the children catch up with basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills. Our tutor continued to teach the children in a fun and educative manner using different modes of learning.

We have ten minutes of meditation before the class, mindfulness activities and games to keep the children active. Overall, the summer classes aimed at improving the basic literary and arithmetic of the children. Our children visited us regularly for the summer learning classes. They were keen on learning and improving themselves.

Holistic learning

Holistic learning cherishes all aspects of the child's learning. It includes creating a safe, supportive environment that provides opportunities to help students deal with non-academic and academic factors that impact their growth.

As the children continued with their holistic learning sessions during the summer break, our two teacher-volunteers conducted the first session of the month. They cleaned in and around Happy Home with the children to create a sense of responsibility and keep their learning center clean and tidy. The children were divided into two groups - one to clean the center and another to clean outside. They actively participated and saw that the waste was disposed of in the bins. The children were served a refreshing kokum drink at the end of the clean-up.

The second session was about self-reflection. We wrote down three things that we learned over the week. The children also realized that even basic life skills learnt at home were crucial. For the third session, the children played hands and feet hopscotch which helped them master body control. They also helped their peers in completing the task. The holistic learning session of the following week was about knowing the things closest to the child. The children doodled and wrote the things and people they liked the most and shared them with their peers.



Being Period Positive

Project Laadli, an initiative by Pagaria Welfare Foundation, Mumbai and Menstrupedia organization, has been donating 'mini menstrupedia comic', an educational comic book that provides menstrual health education to young girls and women.

Live Happy also received copies of the menstrupedia. Along with the book distribution, we also conducted a session on Menstrual Health and Hygiene delivered by our creative arts and mindfulness facilitator, Sasha Braganza. The session had ice-breaker games and an introduction to the topic followed by an explanation of the menstrual cycle, hygiene to be maintained, reproduction, period pain management, required food and nutrition, and instruction on the use and disposal of sanitary napkins. Videos were shown for a better visual understanding of menstruation. After the session, the girls had an opportunity to clear their doubts and burst the myths about menstruation. We were happy to see girls having questions and wanting to know about menstruation and discussing the taboos and myths around it. We also had a quiz on the session conducted. At the end of the session, the girls received a copy of the menstrupedia comic book.



Live Happy Children's Summer Meet

We organized a children's summer meet for the children of Live Happy on April 30. We also invited the children who previously came to Live Happy.

The two-hour meeting included a greeting circle where everyone introduced themselves and greeted each other. We had outdoor team games and a craft activity. Children created a big wind chime of paper cups guided by the volunteers. Each child got a paper cup on which they had to draw and paint. The children actively participated all through. Refreshments were served at the end of the evening.

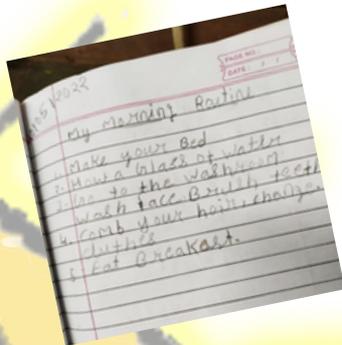
The meet-up aimed to develop a positive relationship with the kids and keep in touch with the older children of Live Happy.



May

Summer Classes

Summer classes not only helped the children learn basic literacy but also provided an insight into conducting simple daily tasks and routines essential for a child's well-being. The facilitator taught them the role of routines and schedules in daily life. The practice of having an ideal morning and night routine geared specifically towards setting up the entire day and keeping an open mind to switching up things when necessary was discussed. The tutor also conducted art and craft activities and fun games to keep the children active and make learning interesting.



Library time

The Bookworm team had their regular session with journaling, book talk, and read aloud followed by an art activity wherein the children drew about their favorite festival, portraying the preparations done by their family. The team also conducted library games that helped the children learn the various elements of books. It is also a creative exercise to introduce books to children. Children had book exchange at the end of the session.





Holistic learning

We began the first session with children sharing something about themselves - what they like to do, to eat, their hobbies and more. As there were new children, we wanted everyone to know each other and be friends as they all will be a part of the activities at Live Happy. The second half of the session was a fun activity. Children were put into teams of three and asked to jot down the different things seen at the Happy Home. We were amazed to witness the children minutely observing all the things and mentioning them to the facilitator. The activity worked on improving their observation as well as vocabulary.

Our Summer Memory!

Witnessing children's growth and development, the Summer Camp at Live Happy aimed at creating an environment in which the children can be independent, self-confident, socialize and learn new skills. The camp reinforced and empowered the children to discover more about themselves. We also structured the camp to enhance the skills of the children, including leadership, team spirit and creativity.

Our young and dynamic resource persons spoke about their journey and professional work that inspired and motivated the children to believe in themselves and work on their talents. We had dance, mandala art, lettering and a Bookworm session for the three-day camp. Yummy snacks were served as well. Overall, the camp was a unique environment, fun and provided a safe space for the children to enjoy and learn at their best.

Maka Naka Plastic!

Our addiction to single-use plastic has a devastating impact on our environment. We have prioritized convenience without considering the long-term impact of anything. Collective efforts to eradicate this problem is the best solution!

Sensible Earth conducted an interactive session for our children. Their movement #Makanakaplastic is an initiative to weed out single-use plastic bags and reduce textile waste. The team had an interaction with the children regarding the plastic menace, its threat to the environment and the quality of human life. The team also talked about how we can contribute to creating awareness among people for a sustainable solution to single-use plastic bags by replacing them with upcycled cloth bags. Our children had fun creating their very own upcycled cloth bags.



June

Monsoon and Books

This month the Bookworm team conducted group activities such as scrabbles, puzzle-solving and origami, and also had their regular book exchange program. The team conducted interesting art activities that the children loved. The stories read were fascinating and educative. Our children were able to express their views on the stories, categories them as fiction and non-fiction and shared what they learnt.

In the last session of the month, the children were introduced to the concept of caste. A very beautiful yet challenging story was read out to the children. The kids could think and question various aspects mentioned in the story. Every bookworm session also has journaling time. Children wrote and doodled the activities they've been doing over the week, things that made their week interesting and shared their emotional thoughts.



After-school tutoring

This academic year. We have a new tutor Mrs. Pallavi Chari, helping the children with their academic learning, reading and writing skills. The kids have been divided into batches according to their Class so that the tutor can provide undivided attention and children receive the assistance they need, with breaks at regular intervals to refresh their minds. We also had Kritika Mahela, an MSW student from Assam University, who interned with us for a month as a part of the academic curriculum. She assisted the tutor with academic learning and conducted educational activities for the children.



Puppeteers from Jaisalmer

We had a wonderful time with the puppeteers from Jaisalmer-Rajasthan, who visited Live Happy this month. The group narrated stories of war heroes, equality, and folk tales of medieval times through a string-puppet show for our kids.

The artisans also introduced and provided interesting information about their cultural art. Our children interacted with the artisans to understand the creation of the puppets from wood carving and their beautiful costumes.

Live Happy is thankful to the Bangla Natak team for organizing this fun and interactive session.



Un-School way of learning

Our children had an enriching session hosted by the team of Unschool at Barefoot, Parra. Un-school inculcates the concept of inclusion and provides a space for kids to come together and learn in a fun and meaningful manner.

Children created sticker badges with their names and the languages they know. The kids had an ice-breaking session with an activity wherein they had to act with a given situation and form a group to discuss the assigned questions. They also watched a short film, learning about having dreams, working on them and overcoming challenges. After the movie, we discussed the film and our dreams, and conducted an art activity on the theme “what is your dream”.

Towards the end, we made a paper plane of the drawing sheet, launched them away from each other and asked one another about the meaning of the drawing. It was a good learning experience for the children in a warm and child-friendly environment. Our children had a wonderful time making new friends and learning more about themselves.

- Kritika Mahela (Intern)



Assagao Heritage walk



The Assagao Heritage Walk is a part of our Sustainable Living Project. The walk aims to create awareness about preserving and celebrating the existing sites that were of great significance to the village during its early days. Amid the ongoing development and transformation of the village into a commercialized center for recreation, the heritage walk provides an insight into the village life of Assagao. We have had students from different colleges, tourists and heritage enthusiasts getting in touch with us with a keen interest in knowing the scenic beauty, architectural structures and history of Assagao. From providing an authentic Goan village experience to relishing the local Goan food and drinks with the serenading of Goan folk songs, the heritage walk generates a feeling of belongingness!





Sponsor a child!

Live Happy Holistic Learning Classes comes under the Live Empower Project of the NGO.

The Live Happy curriculum focuses not only on the academics but also strives towards helping each student to find, nurture and grow their unique strengths.

With this we hope to generate independent and creative and critical thinkers of tomorrow that formulate change by living with an example.

With your contribution and help we hope to make a difference in a child's life.

Your sponsorship will help us:

- provide tuition
- holistic learning classes
- snack to the child
- cover up expenses of the material for activities and other additional workshops

We will provide a detailed report of the child's improvements at the end of the academic year.

The cost of sponsoring a child for 12 months is Rs 6000

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