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Introduction:

Theatre training has been one of the main focuses here at Haadibadi, we believe that it leads to the holistic development of a child and has the potential to exponentially raise a child's ability to be fearless when telling their stories and allows them to grow in an environment that is nurturing.

Our Director Ravikiran Rajendran is a theatre maker, actor and director from Bangalore. Who has encouraged the use of the theatre form to educate the students at Haadibadi. We have taken multiple workshops over the past years, including a month-long endeavour with Mantra4change called Saavirada Ramayana(list out theatre work).

Saavirada Ramayana

Mantra4Change and Haadibadi organized a month-long Theatre Summer Camp – Rangasadagara which culminated in the performance of Saavirada Ramayana at Ravindra Kalakshetra. The Summer Camp was designed for students between the classes of 5th - 8th from the Government-run schools in the Anekal Taluk.

What better way to get children to explore expression than through theatre, which is built upon numerous artforms? Rangasadagara was a massive success, it received the participation of 150 students from twelve districts. Some of the best artists from across Karnataka trained them in the art of Theatre, Music and Dance, they were also trained in backstage duty and props creations, activities that are just as important as the other art forms in creating a discipline that is required for theatre.

At the end of Rangasadgara, the 150 students who were present were given an opportunity to perform Saavirada Ramayana at Ravindra Kalakshetra.

Children react in a unique way to every new form of expression. We saw that the introduction to different forms of intelligence was emancipating for children who were led to believe, from conventional educational systems, that the only intelligence is one acquired through rote learning. These children learned that their stories are not inferior to other 'mainstream' stories out there and must be told. They ate up all the lessons at Rangasadagara with a love for learning that was a splendour to witness.

Saavirada Ramayana had four episodes, *Maaruthi Vijaya, Alilaayana, Lava Kusha leele* and *3 01 Ramayana.*

In *Maruthi Vijaya*, we find Hanumantha who bears a curse of having to forget his potential until he is reminded of his strength by the others. As a society, we are fighting the battles of overcoming societal curses and realizing our potential and believing in self. How does Hanumantha deal with it?

Alilaayana dwells on the idea of being able 'to dream'. To dream is essential for the child and helpless. To dream is to hope of a better world and a better life and to attempt to steal that hope, that dream can be the cruellest thing meted out to children and the vulnerable.

Lava Kusha deals with the bonding of brothers from a simple neighbourhood, scars of battle, struggles of children of war, the dilemma of single-parent-child.

In *301 Ramayana*, Hanumantha goes into the earth in search of Rama's ring and what is found there is a fascinating realization to Hanuman and us. *301 Ramayanas* is both an epilogue to the whole three episodes and the larger idea of the thousands of Rama and Ramayana we have across the country. Be prepared to be enthralled by the magical under earth world.

The performance was the first of its kind, helping break the stigma around government-school educated children. It was witnessed and lauded by officials from the education department, authors and theatre performers from across Karnataka at Ravindra Kalakshetra.

Here is the link to trailer of Saavirada Ramayana

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAcq0jBv-9U&list=PLc1R2bCkUJqQVsN44dqjr7kVvxj2ZfWxT>



Sandbox Collective Theatre in School Project.

Sandbox Collective Theatre in School Project is a continual effort by Haadibadi to incorporate theatre in schooling from a young age. During 2019-2020, we have conducted a total of 84 sessions across the four schools, three of whom have performed. The total number of student participation in our Sandbox initiative stands at 100.

The Sandbox series of workshops have shown positive results in our children. There were specific goals that we aimed for with Sandbox, namely, to develop trust and confidence in themselves and their peers and to overcome inhibitions, stage fear and social restrictions.

From comparing our base-line and end-line data we believe that our goals were reached. For procuring the data we used a self-assessment tool that was administered by the children themselves before and after the completion of the workshop. Thirty per cent of the total students said that they've overcome their shyness and will be more active in their class activities and discussions.

Theatre creates an environment where a child's eccentricities, fueled by their expansive imagination, are allowed to flourish, this builds confidence in a short period of time. They look to people they admire to tell them that it's okay to be different in a world of normal.

Confidence is a very important part of education, it is what allows a child to express their ideas, unfortunately, children from government schools, who despite being intelligent are often made to feel like they're unequal to children from private schools. After the Sandbox workshop, the children were asked about how confident they feel before and after the workshop, we saw a thirty per cent increase in the number of students who said they feel confident about themselves. This subsequently leads to a better quality of learning. Another important slant we looked into which was if students actively ask questions in class to clear doubts, Asking questions in class is imperative in a learning environment, it challenges the teachers to come up with new, innovative ways to teach students and it helps the entire class get better clarity of a concept, we saw a twenty-five per cent increase in the number of students who said they were confident enough to ask questions in class.

Saniya from GMPGS School Sarjapura was one of the most self-conscious and shy among the students, during the first four sessions of the workshop she refused to participate. But as the workshop progressed she discovered that she liked singing and found herself in songs, by the end she performed in two of the six plays which were organized. Her teacher was overwhelmed to see her shyest student get on the stage.

Vijay S from GHPBS School Sarjapura was initially very aggressive and missed many of the theatre classes, however, his interest was piqued during the mime classes. He enjoyed it immensely and with the help of the organizers he developed and performed a solo mime act. The appreciation he received from teachers, who were very pleased, has improved his interest in learning and taking up leadership roles.

We have been fortunate enough to have had great responses from many other students, their stories can be viewed here. The base-line and end-line data that we have collected via our self-assessment tool are available for you to view here.

Here is a preview of the workshop

Here is the link to trailer of Saavirada Ramayana

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bAcq0jBv-9U&list=PLc1R2bCkUJqQVsN44dqjr7kVvxj2ZfWxT>

Malgudi Days

One of the most popular works of RK Narayan, Malgudi Days was adapted for the stage for the students of Airforce School, Hebbal, Bangalore. The show was premiered as part of the Annual Day Celebrations of the School. The popular work of literature was adapted to stage by Ravikiran Rajendran and directed by Ajithlal Sivalal. The performance had a cast of 82 actors. The play brought the audience an experience of travelling back in time and the parents who witnessed the show absolutely loved the journey.