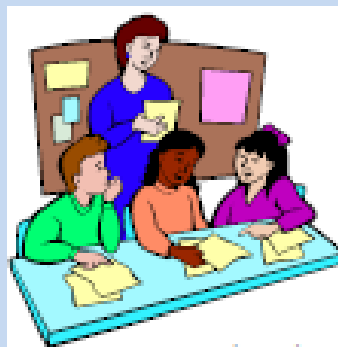


## SRI SATHYA SAI AWARENESS PROGRAMME FOR THE YOUTH



### The Objective

The youth are a precious asset for any nation. Why are the youth considered as a precious asset? Is it because the youth are energetic? Is it because the youth are able in body and so can undertake more physical activities than the elders? Is it because the youth are unexposed to wickedness and politics and therefore look at life positively with dreams and ambitions? Is it because the youth are willing to forge ahead, irrespective of the hurdles, with their vision firmly fixed on their goals? Is it because the youth have new ideas and are willing to experiment with change?



As a student in school, an individual is subject to the disciplined life of the school, protected and is the recipient of human values. The number of students per class is relatively low and therefore, each child in school receives the attention of the teachers, is observed and corrected, if the need arises.

However when the same child enters college, the child is suddenly exposed to unlimited freedom. This freedom, is welcomed by the child like a reined horse which is suddenly set free. While change is always to be welcomed, the child is often required to exercise an enormous amount of discrimination – whether to attend lectures or not to - whether to use the freedom given in the right way or in the wrong - whether to use the time after lectures constructively or to let it while away – whether to do what the others in college are doing or to do something different – whether to go by what the conscience guides or what the rest of the student community is doing – whether to adopt a particular style of dressing, consuming alcohol, smoking, drugs or to abstain from the same! Many times, the options available to the child are so tempting, that the child gets led away on to the wrong path, succumbing to peer pressure or starts becoming confused, unsure; which leads to a lack of self-confidence.

The emphasis of the present education system on academics alone and not on overall personality development has resulted in disabling the youth from achieving an all-rounded personality and realising his inherent strengths.

Swami often says, **“Youth is the stage in life when the slightest turn towards the wrong will spell disaster. This is the golden period in your life-span and if you spoil this fine opportunity in careless living, your future will be ruined.”**

### **The History**

Swami often reminds us that not only Him, but **each of us is God** – only He is aware and **we are not aware of it**. It was decided therefore to aptly name this programme the “Sri Sathya Sai Awareness Programme for the Youth”. The Sri Sathya Sai Awareness Programme for the Youth or the Youth Awareness Programme as it is briefly referred to was conceived of in the year 1991 / 92 to make the youth aware of their inherent divinity, of who they actually are, to realise their own capabilities, their place in and duty towards society, primarily through the means of competitions. The themes of the various competitions would be centered on human values and national integration.

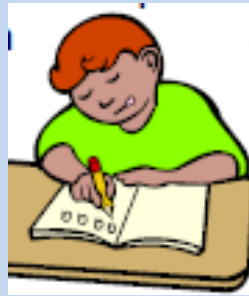
Initially, inter-collegiate essay writing, elocution and quiz competitions were conducted in over 75 colleges of Mumbai. The preliminary round of the competitions were conducted at the college premises and the finalists were invited to Dharmakshetra - the venue for the final round – which was a 2 day youth camp.



The youth camp was an over-night camp, during which the final rounds of the competitions would be conducted, the students would be given themes related to values and would perform role plays, sing devotional and value-based songs, do meditation in the morning, learn yoga and carry out situation analysis. Prizes were awarded to the final round winners at the end of the 2nd day. The finalists were taken for an educational tour to Puttaparthi.

**The objective behind each competition:**

### **Put Down Your Views (Essay) Competition**



Baba emphasises that good thoughts are extremely important in character building for the youth. This competition is organised with a view to start the right thinking process in the mind of the students. The aim is to create a deeper awareness of the eternal human values.

### **Express Yourself (Elocution) Competition**



Baba stresses the need for all to practice the unity of Thought, Word and Deed. This competition aims at encouraging the students to research into

topics pertaining to human values and national integration and further to organise the thoughts logically to be presented publicly, with self-confidence and conviction, before the audience comprising the teachers and students. The benefits of the good thoughts translated into good words are felt by the audience and the speaker.

### **Poster Making competition**

Art is the means of exhibiting the inner thoughts of man. It is said that Art reflects the Heart inside. This competition is conducted to encourage students with talent and to enable the students with an artistic bent of mind to participate in the programme.

### **Seminars**

In order to enable the youth to realise the importance of the human life and the true essence of education, Seminars were conducted in the various colleges on the theme „Management of thought, breath and time“.

**The Sri Sathya Sai Human Values Festival of Music, Dance and Drama**  
The festival which was organised under this programme on 7th of December, 2002 at the Lala Lajpatrai College auditorium was a resounding success and was witnessed by over 600 citizens of Mumbai – noteworthy of whom were Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma, Shri Lalit Sen, Shri Jackie Shroff, Shri Shashilal Nair, Kum. Richa Sharma, Smt. Neerja Pandit, Dr. Shirahatti and several Principals, Vice Principals and lecturers of the colleges all over Mumbai.

Over the years the programme, although fundamentally remaining the same, has evolved. The Put Down Your Views (Essay), Express Yourself (Elocution) and Poster Making competitions organised under this Programme, are conducted in colleges all over Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. While the preliminary round of the competitions is conducted in the colleges, the final round is held at Dharmakshetra. The prizes and merit certificates are awarded to the winners at the Finale function. At the Finale function, exhibitions of the best posters are put up, seminars are organised on themes such as “Personality Development”, “Curriculum for a Powerful Living” etc., dramas on “National Integration” are put up, audio-visual presentations on Babá’s life, message and works are made. Youth icons are invited to give a talk and later present the winners with the prizes.

Commencing with this academic year, the programme has been subdivided into 2 phases : Phase I – the competitions and Phase II – involving the students of the colleges in Seva activities. The students will

be invited to take part in grama seva and any service activity in the institutions where seva is being carried out (Sai colonies and other institutions) by the Organisation!

Fundamentally the character of any nation is reflected in its youth. In light of the above, it is imperative as a precedent to the development of the country that the development of the youth be engaged in.

Let us, who have been fortunate to be guided by the Divine Himself, participate in this activity and make more youth aware of their inherent Divinity – thereby being instruments in making India really shine!

For further details on this activity, to enroll as a volunteer, please contact:

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**JAI SAI RAM !**