Aarohi

NEWSLETTER

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Aarohi Bal Sansar is growing!

Yes! That's right! Aarohi Bal Sansar (ABS) has added a whole new floor to its building. The inauguration ceremonies took place on Sunday August 17th, coinciding with Aarohi's 22nd birthday. The brand new building will hold: two classrooms; one big art/craft room; a computer lab with 15 stations; Internet facility; and Principal's cabin. This extra space will reduce the crowding in the existing classrooms as in the past these rooms were often used for assemblies or art/craft activities. The build will particularly benefit the primary school children by freeing up more space for them in the lower floors.

On behalf of every one at Aarohi we are indebted to the Kusnacht community, Switzerland and Shri H.K. Dua, member of Rajya Sabha, for their extremely generous donation. These efforts have made it possible for previously disadvantaged ABS students to have access to quality facilities regardless of their remote location.

Matruh Samuh
(Mothers' Group)- Do they work?

Aarohi works extensively with women in the remote Okhalkanda Block on improving their health status as part of our 'Arogya Project'. The main focus of the program (which is running its third phase of a 5-year term) is 'Mother and Child'.

This is a short note by Huda Mistry, an intern from TISS, Mumbai on her experience on the effectiveness of Matruh Samuh (Mothers' Group).

"I conducted a short research project to analyse the effectiveness of forming Matruh Samuh as a tool to spread awareness about the health issues suffered by mothers and children in the area. Following my experiences on the project, I conclude that it is a very effective tool and Aarohi is successfully employing it. A typical Matruh Samuh consisted of both married and unmarried women of reproductive age. Aarohi's supervisors would raise several relevant health issues for discussion in the group. On the whole, it appears women are interested in knowing about what affects their health and most importantly how they can seek help of Aarohi supervisors who proactively respond to their concerns."

Two instances revealed the importance of such a tool:

Saraswati Devi is a member of Matruh Samuh in Khansyu village. She is 40 years old, married and has four children. In one of the meetings, Aarohi supervisor, Bhanva talked about a common condition among mountain women called 'Leucorrhoea' which is characterized by a foul smelling vaginal discharge and low back ache". The cause of Leucorrhoea could be lack of personal hygiene, hormonal imbalance or presence of a sexually transmitted disease. Saraswati Devi realized she maybe suffering from this condition. She spoke with Bhavna who immediately guided her to a doctor to receive medical attention. Yashoda is 16 years old. Her mother is a member of Matruh Samuh in Khansyu village. She was suffering from urinary incontinence. Although the condition was keeping her from being with her friends and enjoying her free time, she was too embarrassed to speak out about her condition. Furthermore, her family has very little, which meant she was unable to seek due medical care from a doctor. Her mother discussed this situation with Aarohi's supervisor who immediately informed the doctors at Aarohi's hospital in Satoli. Following this, Yashoda was brought to Satoli and was provided treatment completely free of cost. Yashoda is much better now.

The goodness is the same... but the bottle is new !

On 16th October we will formally launch our new product packaging at Grameen Himalayan Haat, an annual event, organized by Aarohi through the support of local community. Its objective is to promote village level entrepreneurship and preserve the tradition of village fares.

After looking at market trends, the Livelihoods team felt the need to revamp its product packaging. The exercise to re-package started more than a year ago in collaboration with Brand Union, a leading design in Singapore, as their CSR project with Aarohi. There will be no change in the composition of our products, which will remain pure, natural and handmade. However, a lot has gone into designing the new packaging in order to boost sales, taking into account our customer feedback and suggestions. The new packaging will be out in our retail stores in two months time and we welcome your comments. Do check our website www.aarohi.org for more details.

The launch will take place at the 14th Grameen Himalayan Haat at Satoli from 16th-20th October.

FROM AAROHI'S KITCHEN

"Jholi"

(Yogurt curry with radish)

Ingredients

Butter milk or yogurt (sour the better): 1Kg
Gram flour: 200g
(75g for curry and 125g for pakoras)
Cumin seeds: 1/2 tsp
Turmeric powder: 1/2 tsp
Radish: 100g
Potatoes (optional): 100g
Green chilies: 3 or according to taste
Coriander Leaves (chopped): 1/4 bunch
Oil: 2 tbsp
Salt: To taste

For seasoning:
Red Chili powder: 1/2 tsp
Whole Red Chilies:
4 in number
Garlic (finely chopped):
4 little cloves
Ghee (clarified butter):
1 tbsp

Method

1. Mix sour buttermilk, gram flour, turmeric powder and salt in a bowl.
2. Heat oil in a pan.
3. Add cumin seeds and wait for it to pop.
4. Add chopped green chilies and cook for one minute.
5. Add the buttermilk mixture.
6. Bring it to boil and reduce the heat and cook for 10 – 15 minutes
7. Wash radish and peel the skin.
8. Cut radish into small pieces in any shape you want or grate.
9. Add radish to curry.
10. If you want to add potatoes repeat above three steps.
11. Cook until the curry has a consistent thickness and radish/potatoes are cooked.

Seasoning:

12. Add ghee/oil in the pan.
13. Add whole red chilies, chili powder and chopped garlic. Cook till garlic is golden brown.
14. Temper the curry with this mixture.

Enjoy with plain steamed rice:)

News from Aarohi office

On September 14, 2014, after more than a decade of service to the people of rural Kumaon, Pradeep Gupta stepped down as Secretary of Aarohi. Pradeep had come to Aarohi in 2003 when he read the book "Oona: The Mountain Wind". It was also in that year that he had taken voluntary retirement from Punjab National Bank where he had been working for over 20 years. When he visited Satoli it was clear to him that it was in the mountains where he would like to spend the rest of his life.

Associated with Aarohi, Pradeep took over managing the Education and Livelihood sectors in the initial years, finally taking over as Secretary in 2008. He is till very much a part of Aarohi and is befitting the role of Education Advisor to Aarohi Bal Sansar. He shall also spend more time teaching in the school.

We are delighted to welcome Sheeba Sen as the new Secretary of Aarohi. Sheeba has been associated with Aarohi for over a year and half now. A lawyer by training, she has worked in a law firm in London for three years followed by a brief stint of working with coffee farmers in Chikmagalur, Karnataka.

She is committed to doing her bit for the development of rural Kumaon and in that spirit has fitted well in the Aarohi family. With all our best wishes and prayers, together with her we look forward to continue doing what we know best- serving the communities of rural Kumaon.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Gina Ali Khan

My stay at Aarohi...

"I see my experience with Aarohi as being similar to some of my favorite song lyrics: "Let's start at the very beginning, a very good place to start ..!". This is because it took me nearly a year to reach this charity sitting amidst the beauty of the Himalayas. I first heard about Aarohi through a friend of mine who told me about the fantastic work the growing NGO was doing in the remote villages of the mountains. As a result: I volunteered almost immediately in April 2013 for July 2014.

I teach in an international school in Pune and was really keen to come to Aarohi and share my learning and teaching experience with this wonderful little school! I arrived at ABS bursting with ideas: teaching strategies; powerpoints; apps; websites; books. During my time with the school discovered a whole new world of teaching and learning; the happy faces of everyone around and the affection with which I was met and my ideas received, completely disarmed me. Here was a school that had students who came joyfully and eagerly from many kilometers away to learn from teachers who taught with genuine joy and love for teaching. I realized that this little school brims over with love and happiness at every moment of the school day.

On reflection, I think I learnt more than I shared at Aarohi. Yes, I shared new teaching methods of extending learning, strategies, time lines, action plans and held learning focused meetings. However, the warmth and genuine affection of everyone in Aarohi is something that will remain with me forever. So, thank you Aarohi for showing me your caring, nurturing ways and for enriching my life!"

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

You can become a member of Aarohi or make a donation towards any of our projects. You can reach out to your family and friends and talk about our work. You can help spread the word.

For more information email us at info@aarohi.org

DONATE ONLINE!

We have partnered with GlobalGiving offering an easy and safe platform for online giving. **Go to www.globalgiving.org and search for 'Aarohi'.**

JOIN HANDS

We welcome doctors, teachers, managers, designers, musicians, theatre persons, IT professionals or anyone with a desire to share his or her skills to volunteer with us. Aarohi encourages creative ideas and provides a unique opportunity to experience a different way of living and working.

All contributions to Aarohi are eligible for Income Tax Exemption under section 80G of the IT Act.

Aarohi

Aarohi is a voluntary organisation founded in 1992. It is registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. It is also registered u/s 80 G and 12 A of the IT Act and under the FCRA.

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