

## Case Study - Home Learning during COVID-19

**Name of the student-** Mithun Mansukhbhai Devipujak

**School (in which STP centre is located)-**Kumar Shala no.4, Dholka block, Ahmedabad, Gujarat

**DISE Code-**24070702115

**Head Teacher-** Mr. Hemant Vaghela

**Bal Mitra-** Mr. Parul Ben

### **Introduction of the catchment**

**of the school-** The school is situated in the Dholka town and caters to the students of the city. Most of the students enrolled in the school live in the slums situated in the city and the parents are involved in daily wage labour work. The average monthly salary of most of the students'

**About the school-** The school has a total enrolment of 349 students and the STP has 28 students. There are a total of 10 teachers and a Head Teacher deployed in the school. The head teacher is from Ahmedabad and has been providing leadership support to the school for 3.5 to 4 years..

**About the STP centre-** 14, all children mainstreamed, total students in 2020-21 14 students. There are students of around 15 students for the new session.

**Mithun, someone who aspired to be in school but was hesitant-** Mithun is 11 years old boy who joined the STP centre two years back. Because of the location of the slum where he stays with his parents, there was no school in the walking distance. For some reason, his family believed that they would need formal documents like birth certificate for him to be enrolled in the school. In the absence of these, they didn't

approach school for the enrolment and Mithun continued to spend his younger years being with the family and playing with other children and little later years in going for labour work with his parents. His parents are into daily wage labour work and generally work in agriculture fields outside the city.

**Journey of Mithun-** One of the parents of the STP centre that was already running in the school shared about another small slum that he shared had some out of school children. The *Bal Mitra* Ms. *Parulben* and the Head Teacher Mr. *Hemant Vaghela* visited the slum and undertook the survey exercise to identify the students who were not in school. When *Parulben* asked the parents and *Mithun* about why he was out of school, they shared that it was because of the lack of documents and because he feared that he would get beaten up by the teacher as he

didn't start school at the right time. Because of this, the family had accepted that the school wasn't for him. *Parulben* convinced the parents that she would be like an elder sister to *Mithun* and convinced him that she would never hit him or be angry with him. She also shared that the other students won't make fun of him and he will have a safe space to learn. She convinced him that because he is older, he will be able to learn faster and would soon be at the level of others. This motivated him to come to the STP centre on the day one. They did many activities together and the *Bal Mitra* also introduced him well and started delegating him some centre related activities to support her. Just in a week's time he became so comfortable in school that he started coming everyday and remained regular in school till the schools closed for the prevention of the pandemic.

**Educational journey of Mithun-** When *Mithun* was first enrolled

in the STP class, he couldn't recognize numbers and letters of the alphabet. He definitely had oral understanding of numbers and operations but he didn't have much exposure to the written language. In respect to speech, he had the problem of stammering because of which he used to feel a little conscious in speaking.

Because of his dedication to learn, the time he spent at home trying to revise what was taught and the discipline with which he kept attending classes, he soon started to read simple sentences and reached the level of basic operations.

**Education Continuity during the time of COVID 19-** Because of the COVID, his studies got discontinued in the previous academic session. After the national lockdown was lifted, we made sure that he is mainstreamed in the school (*In class 5*) and is receiving regular inputs from his teachers. As the

actual real merging of the STP students with the students of the new class in which they are enrolled is going to happen only when the schools reopen, the Head Teacher decided that the *Bal Mitra* should continue to support the students of STP centre of the year 2019-20 and Year 2020-21 too. In both year 2019-20 a total of 14 students were enrolled in the STP centre. Parul ben has made sure that the students getting mainstreamed continue to get her support so that their transition in the new class is smooth.

*Bal Mitra* has decided areas (6 different slums) for home learning and visits them every day. She makes sure that she teaches students in different groups and those needing more support get visited by her at their homes. She dedicates around an hour for academic learning and half an hour for fun activities.



**Home visits crucial for preventing dropouts-** The entire school team feels that if the students would not have been supported through home visits and taking classes in the common space given by the teachers in the community, many of the children would have dropped out again. Hence it was decided that the STP centre should continue to function and the teachers took the written consent from the parents of the STP class and some other classes too to come to a social space for attending the classes. *Parulben* shared

that the parents really welcome her in the community when she goes to teach during these times and really share their love and respect towards her for ensuring children's continuous learning.

**Risk communication-** *Parulben* along with continuing with the teaching inputs also made sure that she builds proper understanding of the parents and children about how they can prevent themselves from COVID 19 and the practices they should follow to stay safe. She shared the insights like drinking boiled water, ginger and spiced water, importance of hand washing, masks and nutritional food during the present times. She did it while she visited the students at their homes.

**Pedagogic methods-** *Parulben* used a range of tools for facilitating the learning of the students enrolled in the STP

class and of Mithun too. She used flash cards, Math and Science kit, charts, stories, Audio-Video materials and a lot of games to make learning interesting. She also asked the students to practice writing a lot and gave them homework to write. Picture books, word and sentence cards and Pragna kit really helped her to facilitate students' interest in learning.

During the COVID times, she uses her phone and mini speakers for introducing new rhymes, working on stories, baalgeet and for making them listen to Home learning classes broadcasted through DD Girnar channel.



**From fear to self motivation and autonomy-** Though *Mithun* was scared to be a part of the school when the teachers met him for the first time, the journey of the last one and half years have made him get really confident about his own potentials. Parul ben shared that just a few days back when she was in the community to take group class for the students of the present STP class; *Mithun* reached out to her and asked a question. He clearly asked, “Though I remember that you taught me this earlier and I think I understood then, I seem to have forgotten it now. Could you just repeat a little bit so that I can recall and then move to the next stage of learning?” His motivation and the way he is directing his own learning and believing in himself warms the heart of the teachers' group of the school and his parents.

**Collectively we win-** The Headteacher, teachers collective and the Bal Mitra collectively have been working towards the agenda of making sure that their block has every child in the school. The students of the STP centre participate in all the co-curricular activities of the school and the teachers find the initial support of a year for bringing the children upto a level, very fundamental for actual inclusion in the class after the children get mainstreamed.