



Vasavya Mahila Mandali

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From the Editorial desk...

Vasavya Mahila Mandali is Lead partner to India HIV/AIDS Alliance since 2001, at present working with a network of 9 NGOs in Coastal Districts of Andhra Pradesh, India.

We are happy to introduce the second edition of our E- Newsletter with the current updates of the programme.

We hope you would find this resource helpful and can be shared with others. Your suggestions and comments will be highly appreciated.

Thank You!

G. Rashmi
Executive Director

VMM-SUPPORT GROUPS IN HOME/COMMUNITY BASED HIV / AIDS CARE AND SUPPORT

Support groups Concept was initiated in Home/Community based HIV/AIDS Care and Support Programme (HCBCS) with an objective of reducing stigma and discrimination by sharing their experiences and providing psychosocial support mutually within the community. This was successfully piloted in one of the implementing NGOs, with 15-20 people living with HIV/AIDS(PLHA), Family affected by HIV/AIDS(FAA)and community volunteers of both genders of ages above 18 years and was replicated to the entire network NGOs. By seeing this, the children expressed their concern towards child support groups and formed into children support groups in due course of time the word "support group" itself got stigmatized. Hence named as community core groups.

Support Group Activities:

- Emotional Support
- Bereavement counseling
- Developing positive Speakers
- Resource Mobilization
- Demonstrations on low cost nutrition
- Lobbying with corporate sector
- Mobilizing communities through children cultural teams
- Experience Sharing and learning

Impact of support Groups

- Decrease in suicidal tendencies and depression
- Reduction of stigma and discrimination
- Increased community acceptance
- Death preparedness among children
- Decrease in school drop outs
- Increase in awareness levels
- Active involvement in the program
- Community ownership in the program
- Second generation knowledge building

Initiation and impact of Support Groups

Rani (5) and Ravi (7) are two siblings orphaned by AIDS, and became dependents on their grand parents, who were too aged to go for hard labor and hence unable to cater to the basic needs of the children and even for them selves. Children started going for begging and feeding their grand parents. At this very tender age, unlike other children, they are deprived of love and affection apart from over burden. After the initiation of the support groups, community started accepting them

Views:

"I was really impressed by the role of support groups in reducing stigma & discrimination and in giving confidence to the people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA)"

K. Damayanthi, IAS
Project Director.

Upcoming meetings & Events:

Interaction with Media: A half-day workshop organised at VMM in Vijayawada. The work shop focus on sensitizing the media people on Home/Community Based HIV/AIDS Care & Support program and on the confidentiality issues in the programme

Staff Retreat: Is planned from 6-9 Oct 2004 at Araku valley near Vishakhapatnam.

Program Advisory Committee Meeting: November 2004

ESLM: The Experience Sharing and Learning Meet will be organised by Needs Serving Society In the month of November 2004 at chilakaluripet

CCP (pilot Interventions): the CCP pilot intervention is being implementing by Mahila Mandali, chirala

Recent Happenings at Vasavya:

45 Member team from CRS, Maharashtra, came for exposure visit to VMM Care& Support program and impressed by seeing the support group concept.

Mr. Prabhakaran Thomas, Principal Secretary of Women development and child welfare of Government of Andhra Pradesh has visited VMM

Mrs. Chennupati Vidya, President and G. Rashmi, Secretary of VMM are nominated as Program Advisory Committee members for All India Radio, Vijayawada for the period of 3 years

Mrs. Chennupati Vidya, President, VMM, is appointed as selection committee member for Sri Shakthi Purashkar Award of Government of Andhra Pradesh

Recent Events in HCBCS:

State level Child centered Review meet: The state level Child centred Review meet was held at chilakaluripet of Guntur district on 4th August 2004. Ms. Kate Harrison, from International HIV/AIDS Alliance, Ms. Mamta Panwar, from India HIV/AIDS Alliance, Mrs. Rashmi, Executive Director, staff of LP-VMM and nine implementing NGOs have participated in this meet. This meet was organised to discuss the issues related to children affected by AIDS and developing action plans for supporting them.

Picturing Hope: National level Media interaction at New Delhi and local at Vijayawada with 4 CAA and street children was led by a child mentor. The pictures captured by children in cameras were exhibited.

Global Care Initiative Team visit: The team consists of Dr. Reeta Roy Dr. Jeff Richardson, Mr. Craig Bender, Mr. Prateek Patnaik and Mr. Mathew Bedella of Global Care Initiatives of the Abbott Laboratories visited Vasavya Mahila Mandali from 6-8 September 2004, as part of their visit to Abbott funded CAA programmes in collaboration with the Alliance. They visited programmes of VMM, interaction with the media. They interacted with foster families of AIRTDS, NGO at Tenali They visited the field areas of Street Children programme of Partnerships for Sexual Health project supported by AP State AIDS Control Society. They also visited the Needs Serving Society, Chilakaluripeta and have seen the livelihood support programmes to PLHA families, training cum production centre and interacted with children support group members.

Workshop on Psychosocial Support to children: Workshop on 'Psychosocial Support to Children' was organised at VMM from 22-25 September 2004, for building capacities of implementing NGOs staff on providing psychosocial support to children. The resource person is from the NIMHANS Bangalore. The Objective of the workshop is to build the capacities of INGO staff on providing Psychological support to children affected by AIDS. The expected out come of the workshop is to have a clear idea on children psychological problems and dealing those problem

Reaps Initiative: The Railway women's Empowerment project in Vijayawada Division of South central railway has initiated a Revolving Fund for the micro enterprises to the HIV affected railway family members. VMM is consultant NGO for implementation of this fund and capacity building to the various stake holders like railway women's welfare Organisation, Railway Mahila Samithis and PLHA and their family members.

Corporate Sector involvement in HCBCS: KCP Ltd a leading sugar factory is addressing corporate social responsibility (CSR) by becoming a partner to VMM. Indian Tobacco Company at Chirala is in the process of implementing HIV/AIDS prevention linked to care programme with the technical support of VMM.

Media coverage: NDTV interviewed and broadcasted the life stories of children affected by AIDS titled as Grannies taking care of Grand children and children affected by AIDS back to school due to the reduction of stigma in schools and peers.

Information sharing: VMM shared the information and experiences with the teams from Telugu Net work of people's positive, Chetana positive net work and SAARDS

Thank you for your continued support of Home / Community Based HIV/AIDS Care and Support Programme.,

For more information about VMM visit our web site and contact:

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