



# 2015

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# ANNUAL REPORT

We nurture a society that celebrates the dignity of difference



# About Blink Foundation

Blink Foundation is a nonpareil platform, bringing together School students and renowned Scholars from all over the world. We aim to nurture a society that celebrates the dignity of difference. To achieve this, Blink enables action through both contact and content by offering value Education programme in schools, and web portal that acts as Knowledge Depository.

## Vision

To nurture a society that celebrates the dignity of difference. Blink's strategies and action draw from the values of tolerance, understanding, acceptance and celebration. We intend to create a collective sense of responsibility towards understanding difference, and to widen the circle of impact through mass participation and peer coordination.

## Mission

To facilitate a virtual and real platform to connect, converse, contribute, and co-act and celebrate a well informed and inclusive society.

### 📌 Founder Note



Arun Fernandez

Blink's beginnings have taken shape from a number of efforts that endeavored to establish a platform wherein the youth can openly discuss and understand difference. At a juncture when such space and opportunities were absent, the conceived potential impact helped us consistently work on establishing this platform. This encouraged IDCR to establish an intercollegiate student movement called the Peace Rangers program in 2007 which convened many programs, notably the Inter Religious Awareness and Practices (IRAP) In 2012 that created an Open space for college students to reflect on their religious belief, understand others' and introspect their roles as peace keepers through workshops, field trips and structured discussion facilitated by eminent speakers from the field. In 2014, we stepped up our efforts forming Blink. Our strategies and actions draw from the values of tolerance, understanding, acceptance and celebration. Intending to create a collective sense of responsibility towards understanding differences, Blink's programs strives to widen the circle of impact through mass participation and peer coordination.



Our Team



# January and February



## Social Action

- Created awareness about how Blink Foundation works amongst the students through various orientation programs by visiting colleges.
- The Colleges we visited include Loyola, Stella Maris, Ethiraj and MOP Vaishnav.
- Students were further oriented about the Change Class, and then called for Interview.
- Interviewed Students based on their strengths, weaknesses and willingness took up our Intensive training session.

## Capacity Building Program

Training programs for change agents (college students) was conducted on various topics viz.

- Theatre
  - Public Speaking
  - Possible Self
  - Class Dynamics
  - Psychodrama
  - Team Dynamics
  - Story-telling
  - Social Concern
- Students were trained by experts in 2 batches each with 17 and 30 students respectively.
  - The topics were covered for 5 sessions to a single session depending upon the requirements and the intensity of the topic.
  - The training spanned 18 days.
  - A demo Change Class was presented by the Change Agents and then evaluated by an Expert panel grading them based on the various qualities required for teaching.



## Every Smile Counts

### Charity



- Our Change agents came up with a campaign with the objective to bring in smiles. It was held with the name 'Every Smile Counts'.
- Blinkers distributed snacks to the general public in Marina Beach, Nungambakkam and Choolaimedu.
- The campaign also spread through a few charitable trust, hospital and hostel for the poor.

## Celebrating Difference

A video on Celebrating Difference which talks about how different we are was released. The slogan "Come on – Let's celebrate the difference" conveys our vision, which is acceptance and celebration of difference in society.

- In line with the main objective of Blink Foundation aims to nurture a society that celebrates every dignity of difference, the video too emphasized the same.
- Many of us would agree that we have evolved as a society, where we have grown to become more inclusive. We have to give a lot of credit to the new generation for their open-mindedness.
- We keep hearing almost on a daily basis about someone being discriminated against based on their gender, religion, and orientation amongst other factors. We know that discriminating anyone on any basis is wrong, and that we need not just accept differences amongst each other, but also celebrate them. Every one amongst us is different, and that's what makes us unique. It's time for us to stop dividing ourselves over these differences, and instead, celebrate them. This is the mindset we need to inculcate in the youth.



# March and April



## Campaign Castaway

- Campaign Castaway is an initiative to eradicate social evils by painting social messages on garbage bins. The idea behind this was to paint messages that highlight several social issues, and how such regressive thoughts that lead to these issues belong only in the trash bins, and not in us.
- Before the launch of our website, we started with a pre-campaign named as 'Campaign Castaway'. We associated with Agsar Paints for this initiative. 'Campaign Castaway' consisted of student volunteers from various colleges. Initially it was initiated to paint trash bins in and around the city. The objective of 'Campaign Castaway' was to dispel regressive thoughts, and telling people that trash bins are where such thoughts belong. Our volunteers painted messages on social issues – for example, 'Stop gender bias', 'Stop inequality'

## Flash Mob performance

As part of the pre-campaign events, we also had flash mobs across different locations in Chennai. Our Title Sponsor Agsar Paints and RAACK Academy of Dance tied-up with us for the same. The theme was to emphasize on gender equality. We aimed to make people realize that all genders are equal, and no gender is superior because equality is what Blink believes in. Equality is human right. All of us deserve to be treated equally. And very critical is the premise of gender equality. At Blink Foundation, we believe that, as a society, we are collectively capable of accepting gender equality and cast away all the discriminatory practices that have made lives difficult for many. Now is the time. Let's understand and celebrate the difference that makes each one of us unique.

## Goodbye Kuppai



Through the Goodbye Kuppai video, a message was intended to the general public that the rag pickers are not the Kuppai karans as termed by the people but the actual Kuppai karans are the ones who spoil the city by disposing waste in an inappropriate manner.

- These rag pickers are not in the lookout for recognition but what they ask for is respect from us.
- We must realize that it is them, who keep our environment clean. They in turn helps us to lead a healthy life. During our busy schedule, we forget to realize how important they are in contributing to our clean and green environment.
- No matter what is the dirt, they pursue towards their drive for keeping the city clean and it is for all of us. We believe that anything within the boundaries of our home is what we should care about. But for them, it's the entire city that matters.





## May and June



### Stella Maris Orientation

On 12th June, 200 NSS students from Stella Maris College were given orientation on persistent social issues in our country that needs immediate attention and strategic intervention. Enthused by the wide scope of becoming a Change Agent, students began to enquire about the possible ways of associating with Blink's activities. Later they were trained in the necessary traits, and made Change Agents. They later went to schools in order to present Change class.

### Corporate Training in EFL

On 8th May, Blink organized its first orientation programme for the corporate sector. Expo Freight Logistics permitted Blink team to interact with their employees and educate them on critical social issues. These issues till now were not even recognized as serious issues by many. Learning about the Blink's web portal and its potential to change young minds' attitude towards differences, the participants were intrigued to engage their children in the same and also get in touch with grey eminences on specific themes.





# July and August



## Stella Maris Change Agent Training

Blink's first partnership with Stella Maris College was established with its NSS cell to train College students. After which, they become Change Agents and go teach in schools. Sister Sundari inaugurated the function, with her kind words and prayer. The function was also graced by the presence of Ms. Deepa Athreya - Founder and CEO of 'School of Success' and our Storytelling facilitator. This batch from Stella Maris composed of 30 students from the evening courses. We owe our thanks to Dr. Nirmala and Prof. Hariot for helping us initiate the training.

## World Day Of Prayer

In order to promote the message of peace and harmony through the words of Pope Francis, IDCR organized the World Day of Prayer. Blink's creative team took the responsibility of preparing a video of this event where Fr. Sekhar of IDCR read out the phrases of Pope Francis to the audience present. The event also featured cultural programmes on the same theme.

## St. Britto's first term feedback

One of the first schools that tied up with Blink while initiating the Change Class programme was St. Britto Academy. The first term of the Change Class successfully completed, and it was time for feedback and review from the School management. Recounting the positive impact among the children, the Principal had also expressed interest in making Blink's Change Class an ongoing project in their School. The children and teachers were appreciative of the interactive quest-based module. They also remarked about the source of information and inspiration, which the Change Agents have become.





# September and October



## Learning with Disabilities Workshop

Blink's Academic Director Mrs. Jayashree Ashok and Mrs. Renu Nair of CHILD conducted a workshop on 'Understanding Students with Learning Disabilities' for the teachers of Kendira Vidyalaya group of Schools. Total of 25 teachers from different parts of the country attended the programme. It was a half day programme, after which the teachers questioned on their difficulties in teaching slow learners in their respective classes. Following lunch, Mr. Arvind, Head of Public Relations and Finance at Blink gave a talk on Blink's activities and its impact in schools.

## Change Agents Monthly Meeting

On Gandhi Jayanthi, Blink Foundation organized a meeting with all the Change Agents to plan for the grand launch of 'Idea India 2020' on October 15th 2015 and to welcome new Change Agents to Blink Family. The meeting started off with a few ice breakers and then delved into the timeline of the programme. Around 120 Change Agents had gathered in the IDCR training hall.

## Idea India Speech Competition

A full day event as part of the 'Idea India' speech competition hosted by India Reigns with Blink Foundation as the organizing partner took place in the IDCR training hall. Over 40 participants from arts and engineering colleges shared their perspectives, thoughts on National Development and Vision 2020. The panel of Judges included Mr Joseph Emmanuel, Editor in Chief of India Reigns and Mr Arun Fernandez, Founder and Director of Blink Foundation. The competition concluded with lunch sponsored by India Reigns. Winners were awarded by Hon. Governor of Tamil Nadu K Rosaiah.





# November and December



## Change Agent Orientation

Blink had planned to organize a Rural Camp for its team and Change Agents to facilitate their understanding of rural issues and the rural landscape in order to make sense of the social issues one comes across. In doing so, the opportunity also allowed the team to ease out, reflect upon their experiences and share their insights for future planning. Given these objectives, it was important that the team was oriented about the camp. The orientation programme for the rural camp was held on 18th at Blink Office and was facilitated by Ms. Jayashree Ashok, Academic Director of Blink. Change Agents and the core team members were taught creative math, categorization and other basic strategies and methods to be used when dealing with rural atmosphere.

## Rural Camp in Mount Senario School

A small group of recently trained Change Agents were selected to attend the rural camp in Sivagangai District, coordinated by Mount Senario School. 5 members representing Blink's core team and 11 Change Agents took an overnight train journey to be welcomed by the Principal of the school, Fr. Suresh Micheal at the railway station. The camp started with a small introduction to the school students about celebrating difference and the activities of Blink Foundation. Then an action song was performed by the Change Agents, which broke the ice between the students and the team. Learnings from brain gym and super brain yoga were also shared with the school students, who vowed to practice it everyday.

## Storm Calms down

As the holiday season started in Chennai, so did the monsoon. What poured in as the usual drizzle, gradually evolved into a storm shaking the spirit of 'Namma Chennai'. Water everywhere, people stranded in their own homes, houses wrecked, lives washed away, roads filled with water thigh deep, sunken buses, broken bridges, phones with no network, ATMs with no money, grids with no electricity, delayed media attention. Water, food, shelter weren't the most important things anymore, survival was the biggest concern. Our Change Agents stepped in with their helping hands, and helped affected people.





## Blink so far – Fact sheet and annual target:

Particulars	2015	2016 Projection
<b>Number of Modules ready for training</b>	18 worksheets	36 worksheets
<b>Number of trainers available to train the Change Agents</b>	8	12
<b>Number of Change Agents who have been Trained</b>	135	250
<b>Number of schools where Blink classes have begun or about to begin</b>	3	10
<b>Number of colleges where Blink cells are/will be established in 2015</b>	4	7
<b>Number of School Students attended Change Class</b>	930	2500



BLINK.BE THE LINK



**Be the link to nurture a society that celebrates the dignity of difference**

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