

Blink Foundation

HISTORY

Blink's beginnings have taken shape from a number of efforts that endeavoured to establish a platform wherein the youth can openly discuss, understand and celebrate differences. At a juncture when such space and opportunities were absent, the conceived potential impact helped the founders consistently work on establishing such a platform. Convinced of the need to help youth access such a platform, the Blink Foundation was formed in October 2014, to promote the need and use of a vibrant module that instigates quest based wellness education, connecting knowledge experts and students over an interactive web portal.

VISION

To nurture a society that celebrates the dignity of differences. Blink's 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 programmes also try to widen the circle of impact through mass participation and peer coordination.

MISSION

Blink facilitates a virtual and real platform to connect, converse, contribute, and be convinced, co act and celebrate a well informed and inclusive society.

OBJECTIVES

- * To promote education , impart learning on traditional values, Indian culture, importance of family, peaceful co-existence; values of peace and inter-religious understanding by developing the appropriate sensibilities -physical, cultural, spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social and the ability to make proper value judgment through the spirit of questioning, debating, learning to understand and internalizing them through various activities

- * To undertake charitable activities in the field of education by providing education and training to youth from schools, colleges and from all sections of society at no fee or concessional fee or such other means with a view to make them responsible and to render assistance to institutions engaged in such activities and to encourage a culture of questioning and learning the value of celebrating differences, to empower the volunteers to facilitate session based programs in schools and colleges using design-thinking concepts.

- * To develop a quest based, wellness centric social platform and act as a knowledge repository, to connect and create a network of large pool of Knowledge Patrons to provide answers through a web portal at no fee.

KEY PROGRAMME COMPONENTS OF BLINK FOUNDATION

I TheChange Agent Programme



Recruitment Process of the Change Agents programme.

In its endeavour to nurture a society which celebrates individual differences, Blink Foundation focuses on conducting many of its activities with youngsters, specifically, school and college students.

The ***Change Agent Programme*** is a key programme component working towards achieving Blink's ideology. College students across streams, spread across the Chennai city are called Blink's '*Change Agents*'.

The Change Agents are selected through a rigorous selection procedure. These Change Agents are thereby equipped with the knowledge and knack of transmitting sensitive information on various issues through Blink's *Intensive Training Programme*. Guided by a panel of eminent trainers, the Change Agents are exposed to storytelling, team dynamics, theatre, public speaking, leadership skills etc. They are also provided with subject knowledge on issues pertaining to Social Concerns, Religion & Culture, Environment & Health, Moral & Ethics, etc. which should be transacted to the school students, i.e. '*Change Class*'.

The Change Agents acquire skills to interact confidently through a series of well-prepared modules. Change Agents become the first and accessible source of information to the students, who in turn are exposed to the same quantum of information, without any biased or pre-conceived notions.

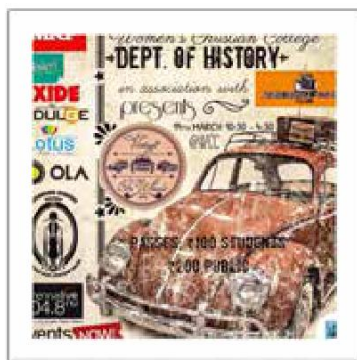
Oriented on value based life skill education and social issues, Change Agents are encouraged to initiate small actions at their own levels to promote such co-learning. Blink Foundation supports the Change Agents to conduct debates, street theatre events or other events to spread awareness on social issues.

Activities Undertaken under the Change Agent Programme (2016)


Social Initiatives

As part of the ongoing social initiatives undertaken by the Change Agents, the following activities took place this year.

Blink Foundation, the social partner of the rally.



Change Agents and Blink Foundation volunteers at the “Vintage of Wheels” rally.

-  On March 19, 2016, the History Department of Women’s Christian College, conducted a fundraising event “*Vintage on Wheels*”, for cancer afflicted women and children. For this event, a “*Vintage Car and Bike Rally*” was organized, in association with, The Madras Heritage and Motoring Trust. Blink Foundation was the proud ‘Social Partner’ of the rally, with its Change Agents being the ‘*Event Volunteers*’.**



Training and Induction programme of the selected Change Agents.

- ✚ A ten day Orientation programme for Change Agents was conducted to help them prepare for their roles as knowledge transmitters, by training them on different life skills and ‘Child Rights’ issues. It was organized from May 15th – May 25th. Thereafter the Change Agents began their yearly school visits on timely basis.



Poster Campaign materials and sensitization drive during Kalam Yatra

✚ In a bid to keep the dreams of Dr APJ Abdul Kalam alive in the hearts of the youth, Ignited Minds, Blink Foundation and Agni Foundation jointly embarked on a journey titled “*Kalam Yatra- A triptoreignite His Dreams*”. The journey aimed to reach out to youth both in educational institutions as well as in public spaces spread across rural and urban Tamil Nadu, to revive Dr Kalam’s thoughts and beliefs in the power of the youth to bring about national transformation and development. The journey which culminated on 27th July 2016, with a candle vigil from Gandhi Statute to Marina beach was the longest signature campaign undertaken and recorded in the Limca Book of Records.



Change Agents at the annual feedback session.

✚ The annual feedback on Change Classes was taken from the Change Agents wherein questions pertaining to their experience in schools, challenges faced with knowledge transmission, classroom handling, curriculum effectiveness as well as the impact on personal growth were assessed.

✚ *Capacity Building Initiatives for Change Agents*

Blink Foundation regularly organizes a series of knowledge workshops on life skills and social issues to enhance the social and personal development of the Change Agents.



Colourful and fun Holi celebrations at the Blink Foundation Office.

- ❖ As part of the Holi celebrations on 24th March, a workshop on ‘*Understanding Transgenders*’ and their issues was conducted for our Change Agents. Ms.Lalitha, a renowned activist who works with transgenders in Delhi, conducted the workshop.



Glimpse of the activities conducted during the 'Rural Camp' for Change Agents at Mount Scenario School, Sivagangai District.

- ❖ As part of increasing their understanding on life issues, 15 Change Agents went for a rural camp organized in Mount Scenario School in Sivagangai district. Organized on August 26th and 27th, the Change Agents reached out to nearly 500 students from 3rd to 10th. These Change Agents took sessions on Child Rights and other value based education sessions through the medium of action songs and other fun activities.

The First Executive Committee 'Change Union' of Blink Foundation.



- ❖ On 27th November, Blink Foundation formulated its first Change Union, an Executive Committee that represents all Change Agents of Blink Foundation and undertakes the formal planning and execution of Blink Foundation programmes and events.

The Look Up Initiative

Understanding how gravely caught, the youth of today is, in the clutches of technology and social media, Blink Foundation has set up the 'Look Up Initiative' to engage the youth in meaningful activities. The 'Initiative' focuses on engaging the youth in physical exercises and learn how to gradually break away from the grip of technology and gadgets over their lives.

The following activities were conducted to this purpose.



Change Agents and Blink Foundation staff having fun at their beach outing.

- ❖ As part of the *Look Up Initiative* for the month of July, Blink Foundation organized a volleyball game on a beach; in a bid to get the young Change Agents re-live their childhood, understand the significance of physical fitness as well as develop a liking for outdoor activities.



Change Agents and Blink Foundation staff at the 'Blink It On' session.

- ❖ The Look Up initiative conducted its September month's fun filled game event – *Blink It On*, on September 25. It constituted 5 main events, namely "Minute to Win It", Talent Hunt, Eco Walk, Treasure Hunt and Dodge Ball.



Poster for 'Change Union' inauguration function and Project Saapadu event features.

- ❖ To celebrate differences among cultures, under 'Project Saapadu', all the Change Agents prepared their traditional food items and came along with friends for a potluck meal organized for the Change Agents on 27th November.

II THE CHANGE CLASS PROGRAMME

School Students exposed to Blink's Ideology through the medium of Change Agents are thereafter called the Change Class. Blink Foundation conducts value based education classes for students from 6th - 12th standard.

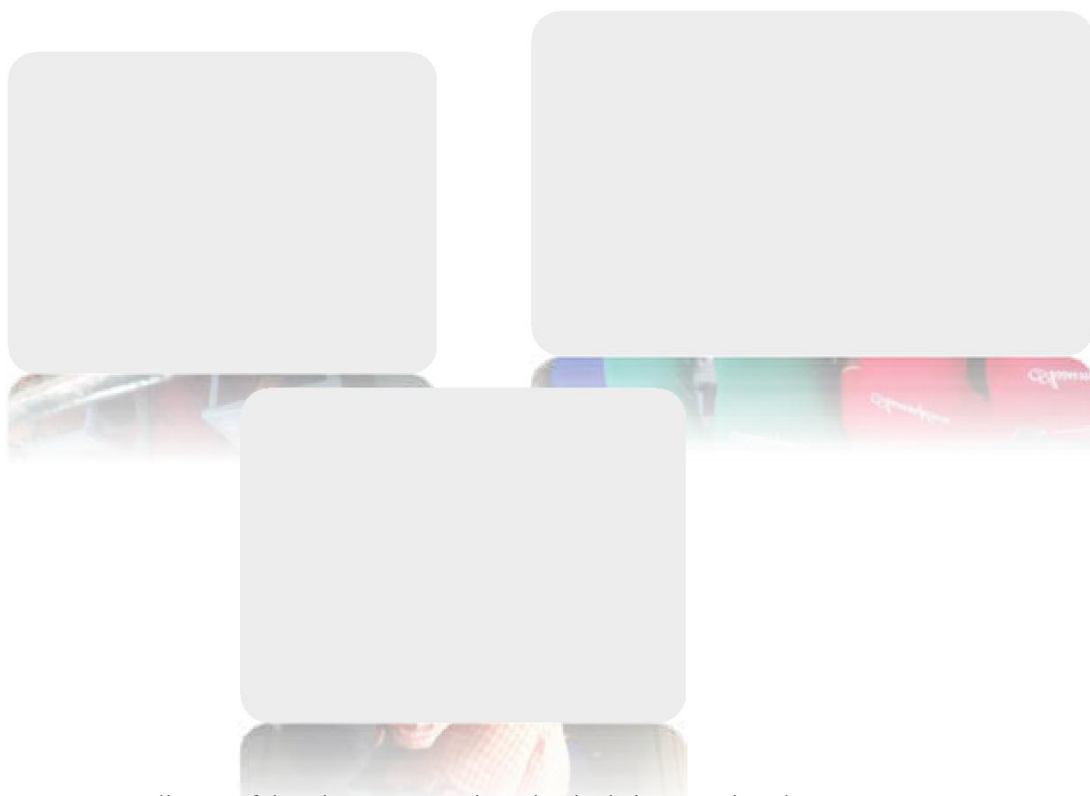
These students are taught and guided by these Change Agents with the assistance of structured worksheets and sessions.

Activities Undertaken under the Change Class Programme (2016)



Young Change Class school students awarded with 'Leader of Change' award for their active engagement and exemplary performance in the sessions.

- ❖ Certain students/change class, were awarded for the changes adopted by them, in becoming, well informed responsible young citizens. Held in St Britto's School on Feb 29th, the winners were awarded the '*Leader of Change*' award by, assessing their performance and participation in the Change Class programme, held through the academic year.



Glimpse of the Change Agents in action in their respective classrooms.

- ❖ The Change Agents visited the scheduled classes this year as well. The Change Class/students got to know the significance of Child Rights and participated in many life skill development sessions.

III www.letsblink.in

Apart from classroom based education, for addressing real time questions on critical life issues Blink Foundation has set up a web portal titled '*letsblink.in*'.

This portal brings together Change Advocates and experts, i.e. Knowledge Patrons together.

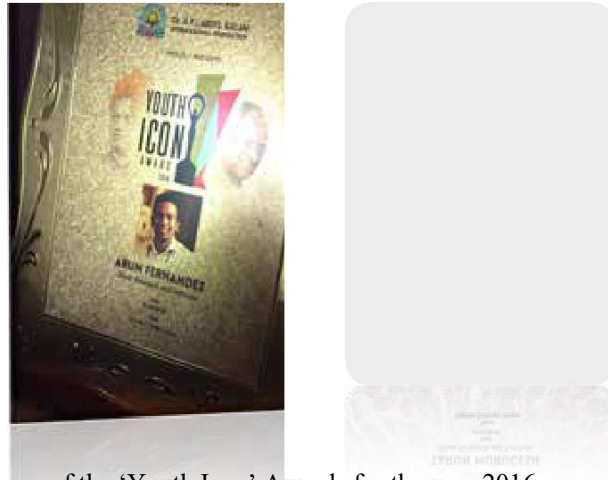
Questions posted by young minds, are answered by the Knowledge Patrons, encouraging them to, analyse new perspectives, discourses and reasons unaddressed by the mainstream school curriculum. Updated and regular questions & answers sessions keep taking place, leading to critical thinking and creating more space for dialogue and resolution. In doing so, spread of misconceptions are checked and healthy dialogues encouraged, thereby feeding in to the cycle of collective reflection.

DATA SHEET

Particulars	Figures
Number of Modules ready for training	12 worksheets – term 1
Number of trainers available to train the Change Agents	8
Number of Change Agents who have Volunteered	47
Number of schools where Blink classes have begun or about to begin	3
Number of colleges where Blink cells are/ will be established in 2015	4

III OTHER BLINK FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES

🏆 Achievements



Winners of the 'Youth Icon' Awards for the year 2016

- ❖ The 'Youth Icon Awards' for 2016, instituted by the Take Care and Dr APJ Abdul Kalam International Foundation were given away on 12th January. The winners for this year were Mr Tarun Murugesh and Mr. Arun Fernandez (Director, Blink Foundation) ,for their contribution in Research and Studies division.



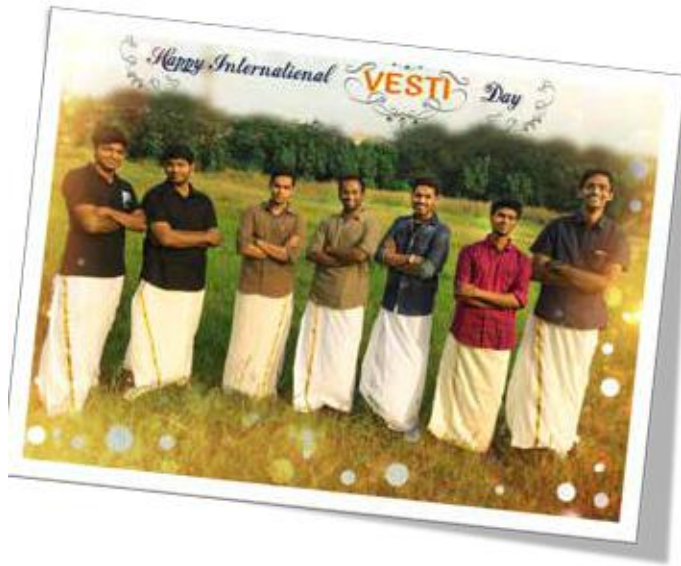
Celebration time at Blink Foundation.



- ❖ Blink Foundation, celebrated its second anniversary, on 15th October, by celebrating the contributions and achievements of its 25 Change Agents, since the past two years in 12 different categories.

🚩 *Employee Engagement and Capacity Building Workshops*

Veshti Day celebrated with much gusto.



To celebrate the rich cultural heritage and encourage the usage of the traditional attire among today's youth, Blink Found the ation Staff and Change Agents wore the traditional 'Veshti', emphasizing its cultural Richness, on 6th January.



Overview of the workshop on Cognitive Enhancement.

- ❖ CHILD in association with Blink Research and Services organized a 2-day workshop on Cognitive Enhancement on 28th and 29th January. The workshop was specially designed for students, teachers, parents

and professionals, keeping their respective field needs in focus. The workshop intended to enhance the concentration skills of the participants, helping them identify their potential strengths and weaknesses in a precise manner.



Young students from all walks of life, participating in the different sessions organized as part of the IRAP.

- ❖ *IRAP (Inter-Religious Awareness Program)* - An Inter Religious Faith and Dialogue Session was organized from April 26th – May 1st. It sought to strengthen students understanding on different religions by bringing together religious priests from different faiths and denominations. The session saw talks, exchange of dialogues, question and answer sessions, field trips for students, particularly the foreign exchange students, to help them understand the diversity within India.



Poster of the workshop organized by 'Living Spark'.

- ❖ On June 12th, in an initiative to enhance the team spirit in the staff, a team building workshop titled '*Human Being- As an integral Consciousness in a self-actualizing Cosmos*' was conducted by Mr Barnabas from Living Spark and by the Directors of the Blink Research and Services.
- ❖ In September, Blink Foundation along with Rotary International and Rotary Club of Adyar conducted a debate titled "*Is Religious, International and Economic Peace possible by 2030 in India*".

