

3day PLAY training workshop in Kota with NEG –FIRE



Participants- NEG-FIRE animators, staff,NEG FIRE partner NGO's representatives

Number of Participants- 20

Date – August 20-22, 2009

Day 1

The training workshop started at 9.30 am in the morning. For the first one hour new games were introduced with an objective of giving them an experience of the process without any front loading that will push them to think/react in "a particular way" .

Games played in the training

123Taali	8-4-2-1 Dance	Name race
Dibbi Dibbi Dappe	Zip Zap	Jaanwar ke nakal
Haathi ka bachha	Bolo Bolo Kitne	Ghar -Kirayedar

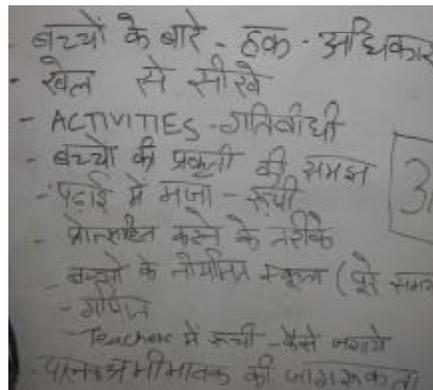
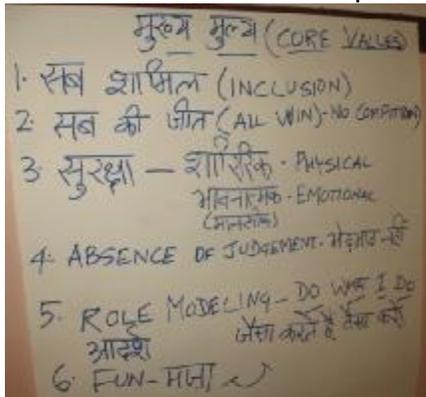
When we finished we posed a question to the group about "how was this experience unique" or "different from their previous experience of playing games".



The responses were-

Went back to my childhood, concentration, entertaining, knowing each other , no seniority, no winning/loosing, no age limit, no gender restriction, no place limitation, helped overcome inhibition, it was fun, environment was conducive.

We shared with them the core values of the cooperative process(Inclusion/Everyone a winner/Security-physical, emotional/ Absence of Judgement/Role Modelling/ Fun) and asked them to see how the core values are a direct reflection of their experience.



After the tea break the participants were asked to share their expectations from the workshop. They shared many expectations eg. –discussion on the issue of child rights, new activities, using games for education, how to motivate/ evoking interest in children, teachers, understanding children’s inclinations and behaviour etc.

Following the discussion, some more games were played with the participants and while playing instances of personal behavior was put forth that would be helpful or obstructive in facilitating learning. For instance, it was pointed out during one of the exercises that sometimes even for adults certain things are difficult to grasp. Therefore, there might be things that are difficult for children to understand. Adults must be sensitive to this feeling while working with children?

This is similar to saying that when someone tries out new things that challenge their well formed habits/meaning, it is difficult to break away from that despite specific instruction. For instance, while chasing someone even if we are asked to walk, our reflex is to run as our brain associates chasing with running.

We also shared with them how when one does any thing new a new memory is formed and repetition helps that memory become stronger .

Games continued...

Hum gaol tum goal	Water melon	Tom and Jerry
Leader Leader	Topi le lo topi	Itna bada Pahad

After Lunch playing continued, though the focus this time was on knowing each other better and at the same time accomplishing small tasks by working together .



While doing one of the tasks they were asked to look back at their own experience as a child and try and remember a teacher and share with their small group why they remember that particular teacher .

In the ensuing discussion lot of participant in their smaller group talked about a particular teacher and while sharing the reason many of them mentioned the physical form of punishment used by their teacher . Many of them justified that violence as having helped them to work hard or try more. This lead to a discussion about the place of violence in education today and how physical punishment can have serious consequences on teachers. Many of them shared how teachers today use violence for political, personal reason compared to violence being used as a consequence purely for committing mistakes. Ramsingh pointed out that violence cannot be justified at any cost as it does nothing for child’s learning.

More games ...

Mingle Mingle(small group initiatives	Bumpity bum bum – converting an instruction to a game	Imitation tag/daud ki nakal
Sher uncle	A jugu jaa	Bajra

While playing the games we continuously reinforced the core values by pointing out behaviours/action that either support or block a learning environment.

Safety is one of them, sometimes it is about physical safety and how we need to pay attention to physical space and make variations in the game to suit space limitation. While playing another we talked about how one needs to be conscious about finishing a game at an appropriate time so that children are not left with a feeling of having lost it.

Day One finished with a list of 21 new games that were shared.

Day 2 –



The second day started with revisiting all the songs learned on the first day. Participants were encouraged to lead the songs. Despite being tentative some of them tried leading and were given enough support.

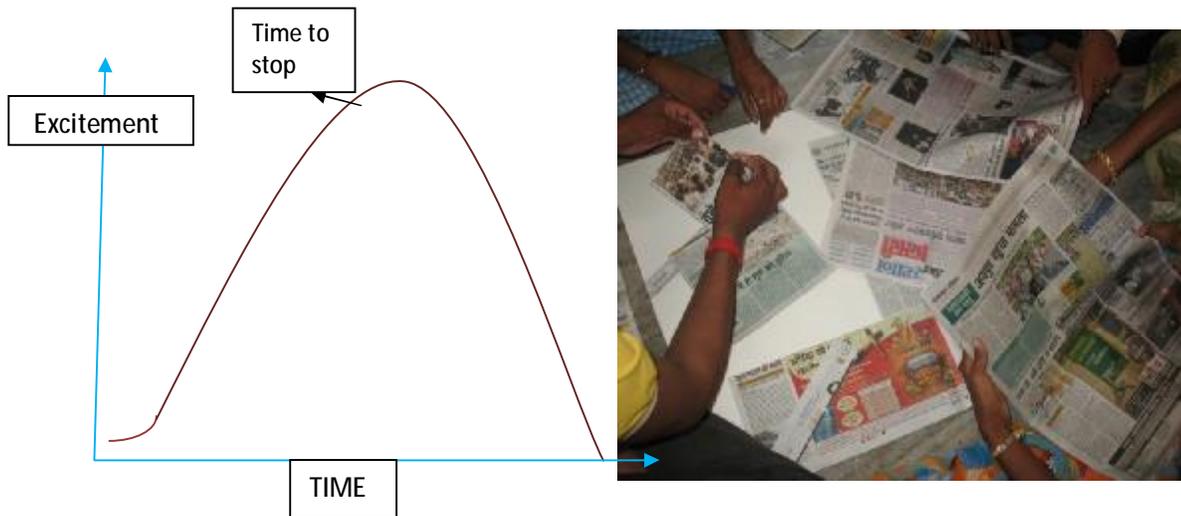
Since one of the expectations of the participants was to explore possibilities of activities that can be used to cover course contents of school syllabuses, we conducted a session of games that offer choices of covering some content through games. Examples of games that can be played for English, social science and maths were given.

The concept of holistic learning or 3H as we refer to it was also introduced. 3H i.e. Hand, heart and head learning involves activities where some learning can be introduced through the use of physical body parts, some through emotions(having fun) and where one needs to think(using head) as well. This ensures that the retention of what has been learned is much more compared to what children will retain if they were just told(listening) a lesson in class.



As the games were being played we also shared with them how while playing, each game needs to be introduced in a stepwise manner for better understanding.

For how long can we play a game is an important part of creating an experience that has a lasting impact. Participants had different point of view on these issues. We shared with them the bell curve that is plotted with time and excitement on two axis.



Following the tea break we introduced activities to explore the concept of Peace and conflict. Participants responded with words that they associate with peace and conflict and later created their own peace and conflict newspaper by selecting cuttings from 2-3 newspapers given to each group of 5 participants each.

Later while responding to their experience of making the newspaper a lot of them mentioned how it was a unique experience of looking at the newspaper with a subjective eye. They mentioned how it was easier to find news related to conflicts compared to peace news. One person also mentioned how we are used to look at news that has negative connotations. We also discussed how a lot of positive news we experience in our community are never reflected in newspapers.



Later on we did another activity called 'how important are our needs'. The purpose was to look at needs and rights and how they are distinguished. Participants went through identifying and eliminating needs that are important to them. Starting with 15 we finished at 5 needs. Responding to a question about what is the difference between the 15 needs and the 5 needs that most of the people are left with, one participant said that these are our rights.

Further expanding on that question we asked them what should be children's right? Participants added few more points to children's right.

Then we discussed how to differentiate between needs and rights. On this there was one common opinion that while needs may be sacrificed rights are essential for living. One of the participants suggested that by adding the dimension of 'dignity', rights can be distinguished from needs as " a need that makes it possible to live with dignity" is a right.

Following this discussion, 4 categories of child rights according to United Nation convention, 1998 was shared with the group.



Following another tea break we introduced an interesting activity of making a Demon(rakshash) that they were required to complete in 15 minutes in 4 smaller groups.

The participants challenged themselves and worked together in smaller groups to create unique demons. One group participants passed comment on the other group. We immediately pointed to them how we are trained through the schooling system and our cultures to put down others. We pointed how their behaviour within their smaller groups and with outside their smaller group are in contrast.

Lastly we sat in a circle and shared with them how to make a cap using a newspaper .



Finally, the final days' plan was shared with the group where they would be required to conduct a play session with a group of children in a school. The participants were asked to revise all the games in their free time. They will be working in 4 different groups with each group doing their prior planning and practice.



Day 3

As we started at 9am we got them in two groups after finishing the energisers. We had shared with them the plan for today on the last evening itself.

The two groups planned a mock session with a list of games with everyone taking responsibility for conducting at least one game. As the session happened they were given specific feedback on being in control, not to give lengthy instruction, being conscious when to finish a game, mixing instruction with examples etc.



Later on we checked with them how is playing different from conducting the games. Most of them said it is fun to play as there is no responsibility, conducting a game puts pressure and is very challenging. Arvind also asked why they get tensed when they have to conduct the game though they have fun playing the same game when someone else is conducting. We talked about how coming from a culture of performing we always put ourselves under pressure when people are around, the nervousness leads to focus shifting from ourselves to people who are around and we loose control.

They also pointed how as a participant one can notice 100 mistakes by others but when they have to conduct they can not focus on their own mistakes.

One of them said it is not just about playing they need to focus on so many other things that relate to conducting a session, like being in control, to see if everyone has understood, to see that environment does not offer any challenges, and being alert always.

All of them agreed that this is a challenge to conduct play sessions.



Now it was time to prepare for the real thing, the live session with school children in Kota. We divided them in 4 groups and told them to plan a session for 45 minutes each with a group of children.

For almost 40 minutes all groups after completing their planning applied themselves to practice all games and work on details of who and what. It was obvious from their behaviour that they understood the challenge and wanted to be well prepared.

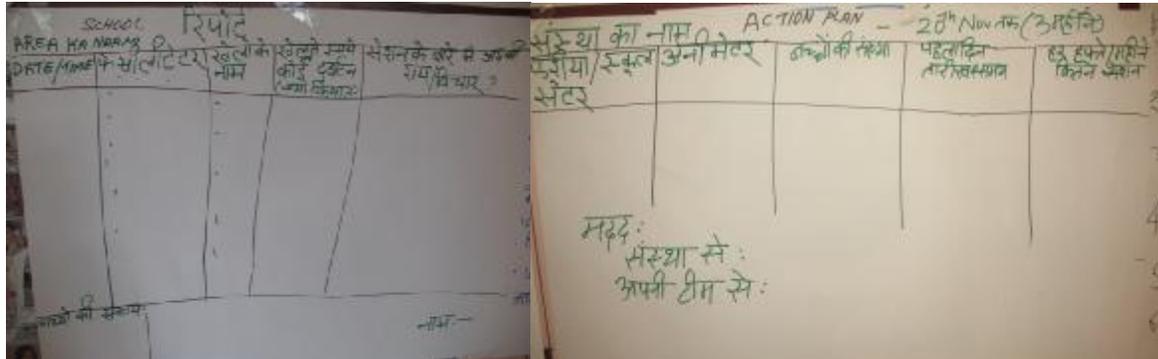


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We also got them to write a report of the session in a given format telling them how it is important to document their work post training.

Now it was time to look ahead and make an action plan for next 3 months with some dates. We also suggested a format to help them create an action plan. We asked them to sit in organisational groups for example Mahatma Phule organisation's representative sat together, likewise aajivkay from Sholapur, animators of NEG FIRE.



The coordinator suggested that we must also suggest them a way to document observation about a child they notice over a period of time so that any change can be reflected through their observations over a period of time.



All the participants have submitted their plan, a copy of which is with the coordinator and one with them.

We closed the session with another game and fresh laughter.