

SAI SPIRITUAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE
1-3 August 2015
SUMMARY

About 500 delegates from nearly 50 countries attended the Sai Spiritual Education Conference held in Prasanthi Nilayam from August 1st to 3rd 2015. The conference had 2 main objectives: (i) for delegates to share their expertise, experiences and best practices in SSE globally and (ii) to review the SSE program at every level in order to develop concrete action plans that will address areas that need strengthening.

Day 1- 1 August 2015

On the opening day, several members of the Sathya Sai Central Trust were in attendance. Mr. S.S. Naganand began the conference with an inspiring address about the invaluable impact of Sathya Sai education on children who are transformed by their gurus into loving beings within a happy and blissful environment that is the school. These children graduate and go on to take on important positions in society and they transform and benefit the organizations they work in and local communities they live in. He urged that there be a meaningful exchange and cross-pollination of ideas from educators who have come from every corner of the world, and that delegates develop a clear plan on how to improve and expand on the implementation of values education.

Dr. Srinivas Raghavan, International SSE Chair and SSE conference organizer then led the audience in singing the Conference theme song "I see you", a song that has been translated into several languages.

In his inaugural address, Dr. Narendranath Reddy, Chairman of Prasanthi Council, emphasized Swami's key teachings on Ideal Sai Education. He distinguished between "secular" and "spiritual education. Secular education is concerned with the head- the acquisition of information and bookish knowledge, and the making of a livelihood; it can be described as "material science". Spiritual education is concerned with transformation of the heart and practical knowledge; it can be described as a "Divine Science". The important thing to remember is that Swami is the source of all knowledge- both secular and spiritual.

Dr. Reddy also expounded on the 4 "Mahavakyas" of Educare:

1. The end of education is character.
2. The essence of education is concentration and developing focus
3. The purpose of education is not for making a living but for living a meaningful life.
4. True education makes us realize our innate divinity and helps us distinguish between what is real and what is unreal.

Dr. Reddy also emphasized the pillars of the Ideal Sai Spiritual Education- the ideal student, the ideal teacher, ideal teaching techniques and ideal parents. Ideal teachers are exemplars of values and must practice these values before they can preach. There are 3 types of teachers: (i) complaining teachers who do their duty without love (ii) explaining teachers who do their duty with love and (iii) inspiring teachers who love without duty. Swami was of course a true model of what an inspiring teacher should be. Ideal parents impart values at home, and support values education by encouraging their children's participation in SSE. They set good examples for their children. Ideal teaching techniques are those that touch and transform the heart such as inspiring stories (parables, china kata), silent sitting (to hear

the voice within) , the use of potent analogies and metaphor that leaves a deep impression on the child. For example, Swami uses the handkerchief and all its parts (the cotton, the thread, cloth) to illustrate the idea of the Oneness of Supreme Being, Man and Nature. Ideal students have humility. They are not just “platform heroes” but truly put into practice the values, ever vigilant against a sense of doership in all their actions.

The inaugural address was followed by the presentation of 2 books by the SSIO Nepal at the feet of Swami. The books were Modules 6 & 7 of a 9-year SSE curriculum plan. This was indeed a tremendous accomplishment, given that overwhelming challenges that the Nepalese Sai devotees have faced during the recent earthquake in Nepal and the massive relief efforts they have been involved in since then.

Dr. Pal Dhall, Chairman of the Education Committee, clearly set the objectives of the conference, urging delegates to lay a solid foundation for launching the new phase in SSE, in which global networking and sharing of resources will lead to a unified global SSE program. He reviewed the status of SSE programs, and highlighted areas that needed strengthening. Some of the challenges he addressed in the current existing SSE program were (i) the lack of an agreed international framework for a unified SSE syllabi and standards, (ii) the need to incorporate more interactive and innovative pedagogy, based on recent advance in education including multiple intelligences, learning styles, positive emotions and (iii) developing content that is relevant and responsive to the current challenges that youth faced in a rapidly changing global culture. He also addressed the issues of student retention in Groups 3 & 4, identifying children, parent and teacher factors that contribute to the high dropout rate. Evidence suggests that children who stayed on in Group 3 felt lessons were relevant to their needs, were attached to Swami and His teachings, enjoyed music, bhajans and drama, and most importantly, had teachers who were caring, non-judgmental and inspiring, and used interactive teaching techniques. Dr. Dhal also stressed the importance of the parent’s role on being well-informed of the value of SSE classes for their children – how it protects adolescents against a range of vulnerabilities and provides a sense of belongingness to a caring SSE community, in which the adolescent is actively nurtured and mentored into young adulthood. In addition, teachers play a vital role in helping parents by holding parenting classes on topics such as discipline, character development, emotional coaching, and communication in the family etc.

Finally he addressed the significant gaps in the teacher training including the lack of an agreed international syllabus for teacher training is SSE (similar to what exists for SSEHV), the need to incorporate more interactive techniques as well as differential training based on the needs of different age groups, teacher retention and burnout and tapping into young adults as a vital resource in mentoring and being inspirational models for the SSE children. He also addressed the need to launch a trainer training program for SSE as well as a syllabus and standards for trainer training, as the quality of trainers in SSE will determine the quality of teacher training, and in turn the quality of SSE programs.

The afternoon session was dedicated to workshops in 7 cores areas of SSE, including curriculum pedagogy, quality of teachers, teen youth and parent involvement. These workshops generated lively in-depth discussions and exchange of ideas on improving implementation of the SSE program. The evening cultural program in Sai Kulwant Hall included an inspiring drama by Malaysian Sai devotees on the importance of SSE in daily life

Workshops by Zone 4

There were 7 Workshops offered by the Zone which was co-ordinated by Dr VijiRavindran and Dr Suresh Govind, National President, Malaysia. There was good participation and detailed feedback is provided in a document link.

1 SSE Curriculum

2 Student management & Pedagogy (Heart 2 Heart connections)

3 Enhancing the quality of Teachers/Teacher Training

4 Successful strategies to retain SSE Alumni and Sai Youth

5 SSE Group 4 -- Teen Youth Training

6 Practical application of SSE -- Showcasing successful community service projects involving students and youth

7 SSE Culture and Governance -- Creating a culture of excellence

Day 2- 2 August 2015

MsGeethaMohanram who spent most of her early life in the presence of Swami related her experiences with Swami as her Balvikas teacher. Swami shared stories and teachings with her which were age appropriate as she grew from a thegroup one age to teenhood. He encouraged dramas and bhajans by the children. She experienced the omnipresence and omnipotence of Swami even as a child. Her father became Swamis driver and thus Swami often came to her house in Bangalore and she travelled with Swami in His car. Swami also asked her to become a teacher trainer at a very early age. She narrated a story of how she travelled on her own to a training course one day in order to avoid the company of the elder ladies because of their 'boring' talk. She however found herself wandering alone in a deserted area with boys in the vicinity. Swamis sister came by with a car and gave her lift to the new venue for the training. Swami later asked her about this experience where she was taught an important lesson of keeping in the company of the elders to avoid problems.

Dr Lalini Reddy, Education Committee member and Director of South African institute of Sathya Sai Education, spoke on the evolution of Balvikas from 1969 to present LokVikas, teacher training outcomes and the components of SSE Educare programme. Initially Swami asked the mothers to relate stories from ancient scriptures, enacting dramas and bhajans and gradually other aspects were added such as teacher as exemplar, unity of faiths and the COD programme. From the 2000s Swami emphasized the integration of the educare concepts such as the 5 human values, 5 elements, 5 sheaths, 5 senses, 5 Ds, 5 resources using the 5 teaching techniques and an appropriate syllabus to promote development of the 5 domains of the human personality, balance of the elements in nature global peace and harmony. She emphasized the need to include the process of creation, mind and sense control and the intellect be included in the teacher training.

The next speaker was Mr. George Bebedelis, National Council President of Greece, and the Director of ISSE, South Europe. He expounded on the four core pillars of the Educare programme.

The morning session concluded with an overview by Dr. Rainer Benda about the expansion of the SSE programme in Germany.

NETWORKING FAIR

SSE Focus Area Workshops

Parent Awareness and Education - Dr Pal Dhall

Teaching pedagogy, teacher/trainer training- MsBerniece Mead

In the fair we talked about the SSE teachers manual used/followed by teachers and educators through out the United States. This manual presents the foundations of the SSE curriculum of The Five Human Values (Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love, and Nonviolence) and the many subvalues of these core values. The "Foundations of SSE Curriculum" section also covers Swami's teachings on other key spiritual principles and ideal practices - Sacrifice, Unity of Faiths, Brotherhood of Man/Fatherhood of God, Discipline, Ceiling on Desires (Use of Divine Resources), and so on. Each value, subvalue or spiritual principle or practice is defined and illustrated by pertinent quotes from Sri Sathya Sai Baba. This part of the manual could easily do double duty and be used as the basis of study circles on Swami's teachings. The SSE Teachers' Manual also provides Swami's words and guidance on the roles of teachers and parents, and presents the teaching techniques and structure of SSE lessons, emphasizing the teacher as exemplar. Model lesson plans are included for Groups 1 - 3. The appendices contain forms, handouts, and materials for SSE teachers, a collection of prayers and mantras from the world's religions, a brief section on learning theory and child development, and an extensive bibliography of trade-published stories and books that illustrate or relate to the human values, categorized both by age group and the five main human values. Baba said, "This book is very important".

Role Of ISSEs- Marianne Meyer

In the Fair we talked about the Role of the ISSEs Worldwide, and the following points were addressed:

1. Disseminating Sathya Sai's teaching to the Public, Educators and Educational Institutions. This is done through Instructional Programs, Training and developing SSEHV-related resources and material.
2. Giving Professional oversight and support to local Sathya Sai Schools,
3. Giving Professional oversight and support to Public & Private Schools, Community Agencies and other Projects using SSEH
4. Working in partnership with the local SSIO and offering SSE Training

During our Networking presentations the focus points on SSEHV were:

1. It is a Spiritual program focussing on Character development guided by the philosophy of Educare and pedagogy of Integral Education based on the 5 Human Values
2. It is for children, youth and adults worldwide as it is presented in a non-devotional language, being cultural adopted without diluting His spiritual message and teaching.

International SSE-- Online SSE- Srinivas Raghavan

Educare: Two Wings of Same Bird, SSE and SSEHV- Beth Clark and Doris Hampton

The dynamic qualities and common denominators of SSE and SSEHV were displayed on a banner and poster and a handout highlighting the similarities and differences between SSE

and SSEHV was provided. Posters were on display of Sathya Sai teachings on the Unity of Faiths and Unity in Diversity. Along with this, the booth also represented why the differences in the program delivery of SSE and SSEHV are necessary for the respective targeted audiences. A video was shown of “EducareAround the World” showing photos of children in Sai Schools, SSE classes and children in SSEHV Community Programs.

Professional Development- Dr Margaret Taplin

The purpose of this booth was to establish a network of SSE teacher trainers, to share their current good practices in the ongoing professional development and nurturing of SSE gurus. Visitors to the booth were asked to complete a questionnaire describing their best practices. Some of the key points to emerge from the networking fair and the subsequent workshop on the same topic were: - Ongoing training is different from initial training, in that the latter is concerned with the knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes necessary for survival as a teacher. The purpose of ongoing training is to add refinement and equip teachers to explore principles more deeply and enhance their pedagogical-content knowledge. - Ongoing training is concerned with a critical mass of gurus advancing themselves as a cohort – in their understanding and application of Sai literature, SSE core tenets such as CoD, environmental care, their understanding of the values, how to apply them in their own lives as well as how to teach them. - Ongoing training needs to focus on facilitating what comes from within.

SSE Curriculum- Reuben Naidoo, Roshni Singh, Rodney Pillay, Nishie Gounden, Lalini Reddy

The South African networking Station focussed on the SSE Curriculum. The station, which was decorated with South African paraphernalia, was called KULULWE UNKULUNKULU (meaning “Pathway to God”). The backdrop consisted of three posters which highlighted : 1. The purpose SSE in the context of the Sathya Sai Mission, 2. The Core Pillars of SSE and, 3. How the various components of SSE interact to sharpen the intellect. The third poster also focussed on the importance of parent involvement in the successful delivery of the SSE programme. The South African team printed a booklet highlighting aspects of the SSE curriculum and the SSE syllabus for Pre-Group 1 to Group 4. The booklet was distributed at the fair.

SSE Around The World Workshops

Sai Spiritual Enrichment – Pilot Study- Archana Patel

SSE Enrichment booth : is a summary of Region 3 USA initiative to enhance the SSE program across our Region. The goal is to inspire children (and teachers/parents) to practice the Value/subvalue. This is done by choosing one spiritual principle for a given SSE year, through polling the SSE Coordinators in each Center. The planning is done over the summer prior to the beginning of the new SSE year in Sept.

Seek Sai in Everything-Archana Patel, Robin Gellner, Priya Mehta

The SSE year is divided into 3 quarters of 10 classes each. The lessons imparted each class are awareness/inspirational/experiential types. The quarter ends with a sharing class where the children share their experiences of how they practiced the spiritual principle.

"SSE activities booth:- science experiments were demonstrated to highlight various spiritual principles, like Self-confidence, power of thoughts, control of senses harnesses spiritual energy .- quilt completed by an SSE student was displayed - highlighting the spiritual principle of unity in diversity."

Loving and Teaching God's 'Special' Children - SSE for Kids with Special Needs- Ramya Kumar

The SSE for Children with Special Needs program was launched as an offshoot of the national online SSE program. To support families, and teachers who work with children with special needs. The program utilizes experienced SSE teachers who also have professional training in special needs education strategies. The objective of SSE for Kids with Special Needs is EXACTLY the SAME as that of the mainstream program - To arouse the latent divinity within. This presentation shared various strategies to promote inclusivity, not only online, but also at the local center level program. It also discussed ways to integrate the child's academic and spiritual goals through the 5 Teaching Techniques. Believing every individual is precious to God and made for a purpose, we seek to fully include individuals with special needs in our Sai Center families. Encouraging them and their family on their spiritual journey. All children were created by God with unique strengths and abilities that they bring to the Sai family—this means kids with special needs, too! Our goal is to include all children, nurturing their faith in God As Swami says: All are expressions of the same God, as bulbs lit by the same current through manifold colors and wattage."

From the Child of a Seeker, To a Seeker...The SSE Group 4 Journey- Ramya Kumar

In Group 4, we have often found that students carry a very time consuming schedule centered around academics and extra curricular activities. Participation in SSE is no longer parent driven. It is in fact a student-driven process. The goal of SSE Group 4 in the Mesa Center (Arizona, USA) is to help students transition from being the 'child of a devotee' to a 'devotee'. The model works on preparing students for their independent spiritual journey and connection with God when they are away from home. Each year students pick between study (Head), devotional (Heart) or service (Hands) tracks and explore their connection to Swami through structured and unstructured activities. To allow for flexibility and provide a structure wherein students can practice responsibility and accountability, the class only meets in person once a month. A second meeting takes place over a conference call at the end of the month, at a time determined by the group of students. Overall, we truly believe that in order to set these students up for success and retain them with the SSE and Center at large, we need to meet them where they're at and build flexibility within a structure. "

Sai Global Connection – Ramya Reddy

At this international SSE Conference of 2015, I was fortunate enough to set up a station titled ""Sai Global Connection"", which was mainly about the current endeavor to expand SSE teachings through multimedia, specifically videos. I started working on this last year, and basically spread the message at this conference, as the mission was to establish a broad network of thousands of videos (about moral stories, multi-religious holidays etc) so that they could be of use globally. This conference was also an amazing experience for me, as I got to interact with people from all around the world, and learn much more about SSE. First, interacting with people from different countries allowed me to gain insightful ideas. And secondly, the workshops at the conference, as well as the other stations in the Networking

Fair broadened my views on SSE and its application in community. It was an amazing experience.

Join The International SSE Network and Take a SSE Quiz- Usha Narayanan and JeyaSriskanthan

We had three sub stations. Delegates were given the option of joining other SSE educators to collaborate to produce common curriculum, teacher manuals and lesson plans for the benefit of the whole international SSE community. Delegate also had the option of testing their knowledge around Swami's quotes on SSE through a quiz. Lastly they had the option of describing their fair experience by creating appropriate shapes using a bottle brush or pipe cleaner. Pipe Cleaner or bottle brush is a wire like material that can be bent easily into various shapes.

Sathya Sai Region 10 : ONENESS- Cultivating the spirit of Unity - ChitraNiranjan

This booth showcased the best practices and new initiatives that have helped enriched the SSE wing. These practices and initiatives have helped to standardize SSE practices throughout the region and build a unified SSE team. Since Region 10 heavily used technology to take the projects to devotees' homes , they presented a short video on these best practices. SSE camps focused on specific themes such as "Unity,Purity, Divinity", "Service Adoration Illumination", "Attitudeof Gratitude" have greatly help to create a fun learning environment for Parents, teachers and children. These camps not only catered to children's needs, but have incorporated Teachers enrichment workshops , and parent workshops to serve the needs of parents and teachers. Further enrichment workshops for teachers and parents were offered via the Region 10 online We channel every Wednesday at 8 PM CT. In order to help parents get more involved in SSE, unit wise presentations and parent participation weeks are held in every center. Participants expressed keen interest in joining these online satsangs .

Life, Liberty, LEAP-Sanjay Murali

LEAP stands for Life Enriched by Application of Principles. LEAP is an annual program for our SSE3 & 4 – children work projects over a few months which essentially is application of human values in the context of a problem they identify and work on solving. We had 2 projects exhibited at the booth. 1. Pilot Your Life: is a movement created by SSE4 to encourage daily acts of kindness. Subscribers to the program install a smartphone app and receive daily challenges. Over 60 conference attendees signed up for the program. 2. Friends for Cancer: program created by SSE3 that enrolls children to be buddies for cancer patients who are children. Program is targeted to go live on Swami's 90th birthday.Take aways/ comments: It was a wonderful opportunity for our children to share their project and for our Gurus to be part of this effort and interact with their peers from around the world. I wish I had more time to visit and learn from other exhibits. If I can offer a suggestion: there could be more time allotted for networking fair. I felt that I learnt more from interaction with fellow attendees than from speakers.

Empowering Children Through Children Led Projects- JayendranKanakadara

SAI - Share And Inspire (Empowering Children through children led projects)

Four children (ages 7, 9, 11 and 12) presented their experiences working on a collaborative e-magazine edited by children ages 7-15. Mixed with humour, innocence and creative display, the children captured the hearts of all delegates with their teamwork, self-confidence, articulation and enthusiasm. They explained how the team of 25 children work behind the scenes to edit the e-magazine and create the final product within 3 weeks after all submissions arrive. They gave away a bookmark to all with web address to all the 8 editions of this e-magazine and also an email ID to send feedback. Several delegates have also signed up for a Pilot SAI World edition, where the children will attempt to edit submissions from all over the globe, to create a beautiful offering to their beloved Sai in All.

tinyurl.com/shareandinspire. To send us suggestions/feedback please email - saishareandinspire@gmail.com

SSE With Fun- Vasuki D

"Sai spiritual education, is rich with values and teaching from our beloved lord, during the networking fair our Station titled ""SSE with Fun"" helps to focus on the method and mode of delivering such education in way that children can easily connect themselves and help them to understand the values. The topic also focuses on engaging the children in fun activities and learn while at Fun.Key response/feedback from conference:1. Based on the participation and interest expressed by SSE teachers around from all countries in the conference, every teacher is looking for different ways to get connected with kids and help them understand the value based teaching and assist them in their spiritual journey of life.2. Some of the artifacts we displayed included Value based online games online (Puzzle, Find the missing word in Bhajan, Match the following ...etc.) Teachers were fascinated with the idea of using technology that could assist them in in their ability to deliver quality education effectively.

Key Take aways:Seems a better option to come up with Value based games that makes the child to be involved in learning process, also come up with some online games that can be leveraged by all centers around the world. this will also help in standardization of content of education and uniformity in teaching and learning both by SSE teachers and SSE Kids."

AuSSE- Krish Naidoo

The key message emanating from the Australianstation is that the Sai Spiritual Education program will help strengthen the "inner world" of the children and thereby combat the spread of mental illness anddrug usage. Currently, one in five Australians is expected to suffer some form of mental health issue in their lifetime and problems related to drug usage appears to be reaching epidemic proportions. In order to foster community spirit, SSE children are encouraged to participate in the various programs, namely, "Clean up Australia Day" and "National Tree Planting Day". The SSE Alumni were surveyed and an extract from their responses was presented. The spiritual connection to the land, the unique fauna and flora was also displayed. A video presentation depicting the history and culture inAustralia was continuously screened.

Aroha-SSE National Cultural and Spirituality - Ravi Rudra, Sandy Misaghian, PriniWimalachandra, AshikaMaharaj

Our station which was called AROHA (Love) had a lot of interest on the topic SSE National Culture and Spirituality, we had term overview plans and lesson plans on New Zealand National Heroes, which were prepared in a very structured manner keeping with school curriculum requirements. There was also interest in our SSE national camp activities, and we had inquiries about how it was organised. As a development feedback for the future, it would be beneficial to allow more time to look around other stalls.

Activate SSE Through Activities- Chandrika Nair

"The booth attempted to show a myriad of activities that a centre in Malaysia had organised over 5 years using photographs and visuals on the laptop. Activities ranged from teen youth camps, kite flying, cooking for the poor, rebuilding homes of the poor, bonding dynamics using dance and get togethers as a binding force ; cultural and religious activities like Onam, Christmas and Chinese New Year celebrations all of which helped inter cultural understanding. The booth also attempted to show that the activities themselves were SSE lessons that incorporated all the 5 teaching techniques. SSE does not have to be within the confines of the classroom but can go beyond the 4 walls."

Malaysia SSE- VijiRavindran, Suresh Govind, SheetalBharwani

1. SSE Moulding a Destiny
2. SSE Heart to Heart Connections
3. SSE Capacity Building
4. SSE Harnessing Transformers
5. SSE Tending the Teens
6. SSE Expansion to Universal Love
7. SSE Connecting through Discipline and Love
8. Smiling Roses - These are 2 programs ROSE in Malaysia and SMILE in Indonesia - reaching out to children through English classes.
9. Game of DARTS - Program targeting drug/alcohol addicts, drop outs, relationship problems, suicidal tendencies etc
10. Empowering SSE Mothers

Highlights From Nepal-JyotiAdhikari

SSE after Earthquake, Nepali Songs and Lesson Plans

Uniquely Singapore SSE-TS Viswesaran

Uniquely Singapore as the title suggests, presented some of projects and initiatives that might be very unique to Singapore. We presented our 1)toddler program that 2 to 4 years old undergo with their parents, 2) Veda program for all SSE students, 3) Family to Family Seva program called the Saffron or Sai Action For Family Relief Of Needy, 4)Human Drama Festival, where where SSE alumni and youth take Swami's message to society through Drama, 5) Creative and Theme based learning principles.

Teacher, Tell me a story - Deepa Singh

It was amazing to put up a Thailand booth with a beautiful poster of Swami as if he is waiting to listen to the story too. The booth had a book where stories from Chiina Katha were taken and it was illustrated by Group III and Group IV students of SSE. These students illustrated it well and felt more than happy that their books have been put up in a fair. The other book was regarding SSE Students views about the class. Both books were too much in demand. After coming from PrasantHiNilayam, SSE teacher sent soft copy to around 40 viewers, who all requested to have a copy of both books. "

Sowing The Seeds Of Human Values - VerikaSekulic, Alida Parks, Marianne Meyer

The post of the Sathya Sai Institute of South Europe, the youngest child of SSEHV, founded in 2009, held a name Sowing the Seeds of Human Values and presented main activities that were going on in the countries of Zone 6: Greece, Spain, Italy and Balkan countries (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Macedonia, Croatia and Slovenia). Our countries are small, but the amount of activities is of very good quality and the participants gained a lot of knowledge that was not only external, but internal as well, which helped them develop as human beings and enabled them to make deep friendship and connections among each other, based on human values, thus becoming real brothers and sisters. We are particularly proud of our web site: www.issueducare.com. The site offers many information, pictures and alive reports from the field, as well as beautiful story on Marty and 7 issues of Educare magazines that can be downloaded for free. The aim of the site is to have information in all languages of South Europe that are part of the ISSE activities. We particularly liked the games and other activities that engaged visitors to have a deeper look.

Sai Startlet Program- Petra von Kalinowski, Marianne Meyer

Educare: Message of Love and Light: SSE and SSEHV- Voshchinin Valery, YuliaSemenduyeva, AlfiyaBabich

The banner displayed photos and photo collages of two events (SSE and SSEHV) on Zonal level, conducted by a team of SSE teachers and trainers of Zone 8. They were: Zonal Summer Children's Camp for SSE students and their parents and SSEHV programs for children of the public during International Medical Camps in World Zone 8. Presentations, slide shows and a video of these events showed types of activities, scope of SSE and SSEHV programs for different target audiences. As well as positive changes of character which took place in children, their parents and teachers as a result of implementation of these programs. The decor representing Russian birch trees, national costumes, ornamentation, toys, attributes of culture with deep spiritual meaning reflected peculiarities of these events and the atmosphere of Love and Light as Swami's Message in Zone 8.

SSE Class/Student Management -through the prism of Love and Joy -Premajugdish

In Mauritius station we had a Powerpoint presentation displaying our pre-registration documents and docs used during registration. We also talked about door-to-door SSE awareness, discipline in class and the five teaching techniques. The five teaching techniques was supported by a video in which we demonstrated new approaches to silent sitting, story telling and group activities. At the end of each presentation, visitors were given a pamphlet in which all information about our stand was summarised."

Miracle of Love-Sai Spiritual Education, United Kingdom-Vidyulata Narayan, Yoges, Thana Yogendran

"Our station entitled 'Miracle of Love' focussed on 2 key areas of the SSE programme, Unity of Faiths and Daily Life Application. SSE children in the U.K. have the opportunity to learn and experience the commonality of all religions as being the Five Human Values embedded in the teachings of all the faiths. This is brought to life through activities such as visits to places of worship, visits to the SSE classes by children from other faiths, inter-faith walks, sharing values through music, their active participation in the annual National Human Values Day, Sai youth led interactive exhibitions and service related activities within the local community. This was displayed through posters, banners and impact narratives from children, parents and teachers.

'Love in a Box' is a 'Daily Life Application' initiative taken up by the whole SSE fraternity as a loving offering to Bhagavan for His 90th Birthday this year. This involves a self audit by children, their parents and SSE teachers using cards which have the words 'Love is my form because.....' enabling them to record as many things one has done in a day/week to re-affirm 'Love is my form'. This is placed in a box and offered daily/weekly to Swami and also provides an opportunity for the children to share what they have put into practice following on from the SSE class with their friends, parents and teachers.

SSE on Air & E-media -Sarath Menon, Meenakumari, Ananthi Shankar, Suresh Menon, R Rajaram

Samples of the SSE lessons produced by us for Radio Sai were demonstrated on a lap top and CDs sold by Radio Sai were kept for display. Visitors were encouraged to use the headphones and listen to some parts of the lessons. We have also displayed sample issues (hardcopy) of the two E magazines which have been published by the region over the last five years.

Save the planet (conservation of natural resources) -Vijayashri Krishnan, MeenakshiVenkatesh, Jaikumari Srinivas, Suresh Menon, R Rajaram

Conservation: Save the planet, Wealth fromwaste, 'Educare for all', Parents' study circles & seminars and otheractivities to promote contact with SSE parents. Sample items produced by Gurus and children under the project 'wealth from waste' were displayed. A tree model was erected on which visitors were encouraged to pin their pledges for Conservation in the form of greenpaper leaves. (This innovative display caught the imagination of visitors and the model was subsequently gifted to VidyaVahini project for use in one of the schools).The novel program pioneered by the region under the name "Educare for all" was displayed by means of posters. Visitors appreciated our efforts to draw the SSE parents closer by providing them the knowledge base. Posters also included activities involving the SSE parents.

Spreading Light through Human Values - Mallika Shankar Shetty, Deepa Santosh Shetty, Suresh Menon, R Rajaram

For 12 Years Oman has been conducting Essay Writing & Poster Making Competition which has been recognized by the Government. This station will give an overview of how this is being handled & what impact it has created on the society & nation.We demonstrated the

efforts by Oman center to introduce the concept of value education to the local educational institutions. We displayed photographs of the Inter-school Essay writing & Drawing/Painting competitions held over the years in Oman along with some sample entries of Omani children. The display included local press reports about the event and copies of the testimonials from Omani government officials.

Sri Sathya Sai VidyaVahini-SatyajitSalian

The purpose of this station was to spread the word about the Sri Sathya Sai VidyaVahini project and discuss ways for delegates to contribute to this project. The Sri Sathya Sai VidyaVahini Programme was launched by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba on His 85th Birthday, 23rd November 2010. Its fundamental focus is in making schools, a place that facilitates holistic and integrated learning to enable transformation and character building as envisioned by Bhagawan Sri Sathya Sai Baba. Teachers and other professionals, volunteer in creating content which is made available totally free of cost. Human values integrated content is created for the subjects of Mathematics, Science and Social Science for the middle and high school levels currently. The volunteers and trainers also visit the supported schools in order to facilitate the deployment of SSSVV. In phase I, the programme is being implemented in the Sathya Sai Schools across the country. Pilots are being run in parallel to support panchayat schools and other government schools.

SSE From Guyana-

Day 3 - 3 August 2015

The keynote address was presented by Mrs Berniece Mead, National SSE Coordinator, USA who explained how as practising Christians, she and her husband went in search for something more. She began reading many books from around 1977. They then attended a meeting in Tuscan, California. People who had just returned from PrasanthiNilayam in India spoke about their experiences and also the need to start a childrens programme called 'balvikas'. As there were no guidelines she began to pen these down with the help of other devotees and planned on taking this to Swami upon completion. They started Balvikas with about 7 students doing light meditation and stories immersed in Sai Baba's teachings. She attended the first Balvikas training camp for overseas devotees in 1981. Swami spoke to them everyday of the training. He said childrens names had been divinely given to them and that a child is born into a family for 4 reasons. Classes may be small but boys and girls should however sit separately. In 1983 Berniece attend the 2nd Balvikas training course which included a little EHV. She was called to give a valedictory speech, but the lights went out at 9 and she could not prepare. In her talk the next day she related her experience when she was walking on a road and a little boy asked her to come home and meet his parents. She was in a hurry so she said she would come the next day. Before she left she asked boy if he knew who Baba was. He said Baba was Jesus Christ. Swami laughed when He heard her saying this. Swami emphasized the teacher as exemplar and good story telling. Swami called a village lady to tell them stories. Swami said that the programme is about bringing out human values-practising these values so that our divinity would shine. She asked a delegate what he had learnt. He said he would be a better husband, better citizen. So she realised that this educare programme is about becoming a better human being. We needed to

practice human values to manifest our divinity. He wanted delegates to take it to all our centres and to raising the level of awareness of everyone.

In 1993 she became national education co-ordinator. She worked on the SSE manual and planned on taking it to Swami. This was for the next 5 months her son comatosed and she could not go to India. Eventually she made the trip to Swami and he asked her why she was so attached to her son. He asked her to play her role of going around the country to train teachers. He said He is the director, we need to play our role and play it well. In an interview a young lady was asked where her husband was. Swami said she is thinking of her boyfriends. Swami said to Berniece to tell teachers to teach morals and tell the parents also to practice morals. After 9 months Berniece went to Prasanthi again for Swami's birthday and brought the completed manual. In New Jersey she was introducing the guidelines and signing the books when she experienced Swami in a person who approached her. She signed 'I am God, I am no different from God'. Why can't we experience Swami in everyone? When you get an invitation, don't have doubts just go. We have all been chosen. This is your role to play. You get to be this SSE teacher from previous births. Programme is about bringing light to our centres and to the communities. Berniece and others decided on 70% as a pass to move to the next Balvikas group. Swami said 'lets say that before you merge with God you have a test. Lets say you have to have 70%, but what if you don't have? Don't worry, the Grace of God will bring you home'. Just practice his teachings and you will receive His Amazing Grace.

SSE Speaker: Dr. Vijayalekshmy Ravindran, SSE Educator

Dr Vijaya had planned to share her experiences when they went for 1981 Balvikas teacher training in Prasanthi. But she said Creta and Berniece have done the same thing. Our Swami has great talent of giving difference experience to different people. Her story began in Kerala, a state with high literacy rate. When she was young she would tell everyone she wanted to be a teacher. Her mother was a teacher. She was in Chinmayabalvikas. Learnt a lot Sanskrit and all religions lead to same goal. All this knowledge was in the head. She held onto Krishna through challenges and later got married and went to Malaysia. After 14 years, in 1978, through a series of dramatic incidents she and her husband were called to Swami. Although their thoughts were not in line, they found common ground. They got an interview first time. Swami spoke about ladies not having to undertake great spiritual practices. When cutting vegetables, they should remember they are cutting out the 6 enemies. When rolling chapatis, they should think of how the planets revolve in the universe harmoniously. If a child is restless, the child will not be violent any more. A mother should remember they were chosen to be mother of a particular child. All mothers give their children a lot of love. SrVijaya started balvikas in Malaysia. SrSarla Shah helped her with manuals. Swami said we have to be roles models and emphasized placing a ceiling on desires. Swami said to men that they can be group 3 balvikas teachers, but group 1 and 2 teachers should be women. He said it is rare to be a women and those who have taken decision to be balvikas teachers are all blessed.

Women have 4 qualities: 1 Beauty, 2 Sankalpam- great imagination, 3 Sahana- mother earth is women and 4 Sankatam- You get a lot of sorrows, but through sorrow you evolve. This is prasadam from Swami. We must accept it, acknowledge it and learn from it. Then Swami gave us the word 'educare'. In the Bhagavad Gita, it is said all the people with clear intellect

will turn to spirituality. Educare is the Veda of 21 century, the Eternal Veda. It is our role to take it to all beneficiaries- for all the beings of all the worlds. We are his students. We should be happy about it. We must raise ourselves to the status of Guru. Parents - teachers - children must have heart- to- heart connection with all. We must be mothers to all children.

SSE Speaker: Mr. Avi Sarkar, SSE Educator

Br Avi has experience of implementing SSE in Laos and understands how we can maximize the benefit. He has daily SSE classes of 250 children attending 5 days a week at 2 centres- one in Buddhist and other in his private residence. They have seen changes in troubled children. SSE classes have helped the Sai Organisation to grow. Any activity in Laos in SSIO are organised by former and current SSE students. 20-25 officers in Sai Org are all former SSE students. He related the story of 3 groups of people who prayed for manthra to Lord Shiva. The devatas, asuras and manavas were blessed in the same way. The confused 3 groups had to unravel the mystery of the Guru who displayed compassion, charity and control of senses. We all these 3 gunas. In Prasanthiwe have devatas, those who go outside- manavas and those who go far away- asuras. Swamis message of love is spread through his teachings.

Br Avi projected that in the world we have 2 billion individuals are children. If we expose SSE to 2 million children at least, what impact it will have on the world. We fail to attract enough children in our course. We have to think outside the box about what we have to do. Feed the children who have an empty stomach. If English needed, teach English. We have to make it interesting eg. include yoga. Repackage classes. Strategy is important. Global unified strategy. We should offer good quality lessons and mention Sai. If we do not mention Him it is plagiarism. We are to ensure there is transformation. This comes from Sai Baba. We are here because we have been inspired by him. We should share His stories with all so that they also get inspired.

Life is like a bubble-it is short. We should ensure sustainability of the SSE programme, eg. building institutions. Swami blessed their school in Laos. They have completed building the biggest primary school in the country. A better individual will take over. How can we safely land in the hearts of children?

Ms Vidyulatha Narayana, SSE alumni, SSIHL alumni, SSE Educator

Mrs LeelaSundarao her grandmother was one the 9 ladies chosen by Swami to start Balvikas. Balvikas gave her the most sound foundation for life. As a balvikaschild she had the opportunity of to go to as many classes as possible. Both her grandmothers had classes. She had many opportunities to be in skits. Gurus treated each one of us as their own. When we stand in front of our children we should see Swamis Love. Gurus kept bringing out innate talents. Swami visited her home in Bangalore and Chennai and encouraged children to do some new item for functionseg. rangoli, skits, reciting Gita shlokas, BhajaGovindam. She was a student in Anantapur Girls College. Inspiring teachers who lived, breathe and loved Swami. This had a profound effect on her.

In her final year, they made preparations for Swamis visit to Anantapur College, and all had duties. They awaited the telephone call from Parti saying Swami had left for Anantapur. That year Swami had cancelled the visit. Most of the girls were very upset. Others like her decided to pray and sing their hearts out from 6pm to 6 am. It was moment of introspection. At 7 am the next morning there was a call from Prasanthi. It said Bhagwan had departed from Prasanthi. Swami had answered their prayers. Swami said He came because of their prayer. Sadhana of prayer and study of Sai literature- this brings great source of inner strength. We can communicate from our heart to His heart. Prayer is one of those important techniques. Swami has said he can change things like sky to earth, but the greatest miracle is the transformation of the heart. SSE programme confers that greatness to our children.

Conference summary

Dr Art-Ong Jumsai - member of Education Committee, Director of ISSE Thailand

No other teachers are greater than balvikas teachers, because you speak of Sathya Sai Baba. In Thailand Sathya Sai School also we teach about Swami as well and they all become devotees by the time they leave. SSE reminds all about his teachings. Now it is very important that we share His teachings because of all the problems, that are here before Prema Sai comes. So you are the greatest people who can change the world. Once in the veranda he invited 3 great scientists to go to have a meeting in his room. People said to Swami Jumsai is a scientist. Swami said he is a Sai-entist. He was also called into the room. Swami materialised something and started to teach how these thing come to being. He said it is so easy. He put up his hand and something started to grow inside. It was a small monkey and it soon became a full size monkey. It jumped all around the room. He asked the scientists if they understood how it happened and if they wanted the monkey. He asked Jumsai to bring the monkey and put it in his hand and slowly the monkey disappeared. Science could not give explanation to this at all. The scientists were perplexed. Sai is the creator of all things. He has shown this with the monkey. He is the real creator. He has left His physical body but he is in everyone and in everything. SSE educators are going to teacher future people to grow up in the new age of peace. Teach about Swami. Let them know His teachings which is the future of our world. We all have to do this.

Dr Pal Dhall – Chair of Education Committee

He is grateful to Swami who has graced us with this conference. He thanked Dr N Reddy for allowing EC to organise this conference. He said that no conference is complete without the Resolutions. As per the SSE conference Concept paper we need to harmonise the SSE the world over. In the future all campuses will expand. People will come from all over. All this enjoyment will be multiplied when you take the resolutions back home. Dr Dhall thanked Dr Srinivas Raghavan for organising the conference and Dr N Reddy who managed the conference organising team very well. We have schools and ISSEs, and SSEHV and SSE of the Sai organisation. We need clarity on this. We need devotees who are model citizens. SSE is to be run within Sai centres. The following should be promoted in SSE: faith,

morality, spirituality and culture. They are related but separate and relate to the development of children. In teaching SSE we need a strong focus on faith which we should not compromise. We need to look after our organisation, not merely to promote values but also to groom future leaders. We also need a core syllabus. We have a core syllabus for SSEHV teacher training certificate course, but we don't have this for SSE. We will be developing a core syllabus. Can we land this plane of SSE? Outcomes from this conference will be on the website. We will prepare the summary and give to Dr Reddy and it will come to you. It will have the recommendations. It may not as yet have the core syllabus. Please go and share the divine love and unity you have experienced here. Thank you for attending.

WORKSHOPS

1 Parent Education and Teacher Training

Presented by Dr Pal Dhall

In the workshop the focus was on the parent - teacher partnership in SSE and especially on how this relationship can be made most productive for the spiritual, moral and character development of the child. The workshop highlighted that although the parents are the most significant influence in determining the character of the child, important changes in the manner in which the modern family lives has thrown additional responsibility on the teachers and the community for the spiritual and moral development of children. For an optimal outcome the parents and the SSE teachers should work together in the several overlapping areas of moral and character development, values, beliefs, culture and identity formation.

The teachers were encouraged to develop an action plan to establish a working relationship with the parents of the SSE children in their charge in the knowledge of the many ways in which the parents and the teachers can come together to support optimal development of children.

2 Swami and SSE

3 SSE Guidelines

Conducted by Mrs Berniece Mead and Dr Vijayalekshmy Ravindran

A broad based guideline document drawn up based entirely on Swami's messages on Sai Spiritual Education encompassing all its aspects was prepared and discussed in detail by the participants. Each country could work out the finer details as per the cultural and religious background of the SSE children in each center without changing the broad based guidelines given. The document was well accepted as being very useful for drawing up specific programs for SSE classes. A copy of the document circulated is attached herewith.

4 Professional Development Beyond Initial Training

Presented by Margaret Taplin

1. How is ongoing professional development different from initial teacher training?
2. What factors can contribute to teacher burnout/attrition
3. What do SSE teachers need on an ongoing basis?
4. Advice for mentors
5. What are some strategies currently in use?
 - a. Groups of gurus work together over a period of time (e.g. 3 months) to prepare professional development workshops for their colleagues on topics such as CoD, the environment, the power of thought, for presentation to others in their cohort. (Suggestion: To collect a central database of these workshop outlines/PPTS)
 - b. Based on a needs analysis, appropriate experts are invited to conduct workshops on specific topics.
 - c. Buddy system with senior gurus
 - d. Study circles/regular meetings/retreats designed specifically for gurus
 - e. Focusing in-depth on one value/values message/theme ("My life is His message") for an entire year
 - f. Following the Self-Transformation Programme (STP) and keeping a spiritual journal
 - g. Quarterly meetings with gurus from across levels, and weekly/bi-weekly meetings within levels.
 - h. Technology-driven support through emails, WhatsApp groups and Facebook groups
 - i. Alumni networks
 - j. Gurus work in teams and take on specific roles in the classroom in order to cope with classroom management issues
 - k. Strategies for involving parents, parent briefings, using parent volunteers for special events, etc.

5 Bridging Educare's Two Wings of the Same Bird: SSE & SSEHV

Presented by Beth Clark, Doris Hampton

The dynamic qualities and common denominators of SSE and SSEHV were displayed on a banner and poster and a handout highlighting the similarities and differences between SSE and SSEHV was provided. Posters were on display of Sathya Sai teachings on the Unity of Faiths and Unity in Diversity. Along with this, the booth also represented why the differences in the program delivery of SSE and SSEHV are necessary for the respective targeted audiences. A video was shown of "Educare Around the World" showing photos of children in Sai Schools, SSE classes and children in SSEHV Community Programs.

6 International SSE Platform

Presented by Dr Srinivas and Usha Narayan

7 Overview& Bridge to ISSEs

Presented by Marianne Meyer

The aim of the workshop was to discuss how the Institutes can support teachers, parents, community service personnel and others through applications of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV). After a short introduction about the aim of the ISSEs, the dialogue took outset in the challenges met by the participants, when interacting with society. It was agreed that the way we communicate was the keyword and many examples on how to overcome these challenges was shared. It was agreed that ISSEs and the Sai Organization could work together, inspire each other, and learn from each other. SSE and SSEHV - even the target groups are different - have the same goal, which is to realize our true nature, the Divinity within. It was agreed that the difference between the 2 programs is the focus points used to achieve this. Both programs are spiritual, but whereas Swami's form is a central focus point in SSE, SSEHV is solely focusing on His Divine teaching.

8 Innovative& Interactive Teaching Strategies

Presented by IndheraniReddy ,VanithaMurugan, Lalini Reddy

This was an interactive session which engaged the participants in the innovative techniques. The spiritual basis of the strategies was explained including the impact on the different states of consciousness. Innovative ideas such as laughing yoga, the use of yoga postures, healing story- telling and the different types and examples of story types and healing tools such as tingsha and Buddhist bowls. Participants got to present choral verse and role-play (of poems and scenarios given). Use of puppets, sand art, games and mosaic was explained.

Interesting ideas that was shared by participants were the use of chocolate making in silent sitting and group work. Different individuals had to make parts of a mandala (mandalas as a way of evoking spiritual energy, meditation and healing) in different coloured chocolate and these were then finally put together to make the complete mandala; the use of scientific experiments to stimulate and maintain interest; taking the children out into nature; and changing the atmosphere of the classroom through use of plants,statues,scents and candles. A handout on the techniques was provided.