



**On
December 7, 2013**

**At
Dream Valley Resorts
Bokaram, Moinabad,
Hyderabad**

**Dr. PRK Prasad Centre for Rehabilitation of Blind and
Visually Impaired
LV Prasad Eye Institute
Hyderabad 500 034**

The purpose of organizing this camp is to guide children who are blind and low vision towards personal growth through programs that revolve around education, recreation and socialization, in an outdoor setting. More specifically, the camping experience help participants develop self concept and self confidence, build social skills, develop the value of responsibility and respect for others, and equip them with knowledge and skills to help them make the most of their everyday living. The vision rehabilitation center of LV Prasad Eye Institute is organizing such camps since 1999 and the experience shared by the participants enabled to conduct its 17th camp on 7th December, 2013 at Dream Valley resorts.

The morning of the 7th December saw 293 members gathering in the car park at LVPEI ready for the Rehabilitation Centre's integrated adaptive Camp.

The fun started with a sing-a-long which consisted of many rounds of 'If you're happy and you know it...' and several speeches to welcome everyone, including one from the chairman of LV Prasad Eye Institute, Dr Gullapalli Nageshwar Rao. A massive cake was then cut and shared amongst the children and adults followed which they were piled onto 4 big buses ready to depart for Dream Valley Water Park!

It was a long, crowded journey but it was well worth it to reach the lovely venue. Everyone was greeted with refreshments on arrival and then gathered in a big green park under a massive marquee which provided shade from the hot sun. After everyone was settled and all of the equipment had been loaded off the bus, the games began!

Refreshments were provided as soon as the participants settled down at the resort. Shortly after that the participants were divided into different age groups viz. 4-8, 9-12, 13-15, 16 yrs and above in order to take part in various games. The volunteers along with staff members from LVPEI had organized a whole lot of games such as 'Tug off war,' 'frog-jump,' 'running race,' 'lemon and spoon,' 'blowing and bursting balloons,' 'transferring balls' and 'tomorrow's director.' Games such as hitting the targets and naming kitchen items were organized for children with multiple disabilities.

Groups of visually impaired children took part in 12 different games which all provided excitement and the chance to get competitive! A favourite among spectators and participants was the tug-of-war which saw teams pulling their side of the rope so fiercely that several people ended up on the ground! The most competitive game was between low-vision and blind young adults who showed incredible strength as they fought for victory. Thiru, a patient of LVPEI said the tug-of-war was the highlight of his day! Prizes were handed out to reward all of the winners.

Another great game was the frog-race where the children had to leap across the park to the finishing line. The first challenge came with trying to line up the children at the start in frog-like positions. Then the whistle was blown and some children shot off to the other side of the park while others seemed a bit confused about the object of the race.

The whole process was very entertaining and the children seemed to have a great time hopping around.

More fun was had during the balloon popping game when teams of children had to blow up balloons and burst them under a time limit. The speed at which they did it was very impressive with the winning team managing to pop 14 balloons in the time allowed.

The staff also showed their competitive streak when they joined in with the games. During the staff running race, Mahalakshmi amused everyone by crossing the finishing line only to realize that they also had to run back! Races were also arranged for siblings who included sprints, frog race and a lemon and spoon race.

After all this hard work, a well deserved break was taken for lunch. Everyone gathered in rows under the marquee where staff and volunteers helped to distribute the delicious food. The picnic set-up provided a chance for parents and kids to talk and get to know each other in a relaxed setting.

The rest of the afternoon was spent enjoying the water which many people said was their favourite part of the day! Dream Valley had a fantastic selection of pools and slides which could be enjoyed by both children and adults. Although, when speaking to a few visually impaired young adults they pointed out that the water was too shallow! Other than that, they thoroughly enjoyed the day and said that it was even better than last year due to the location being a water park. The boys also said: "For every event run by LVPEI, for sure I am going to be there!" and "I had a really very good day! I enjoyed it a lot!"

Events like this provide a unique experience for these children. When we spoke to a volunteer who helped organize the day, she explained: "These children don't often get the opportunities to come to these places, so we give them that opportunity and do our best to make sure they are comfortable." We also asked if she thought the day was a success and she replied: "Definitely, definitely! If you ask any kid they will explain to you their happiness!"

Speaking to a very satisfied father at the end of the day, he told us that it was their first time at a place like Dream Valley: "We weren't sure how our daughter would feel in the water, whether she would be scared or whether she would enjoy it. She loved it and we will definitely bring her back in the summer!" We then asked what the best part was and he replied: "The highlight was the way she cried because she didn't want to leave the water!"

Thiru's father told us that he found the day educational because he found out new ways that visually challenged children can enjoy themselves. When we asked about his experience he said: "Very fun day! Fantastic!" And he commended the staff and volunteers for their organization and teamwork. He has decided to make a donation to support these kinds of events at LVPEI in the future!

Another parent told us that generally his son doesn't mingle with other children but today he was laughing and playing with everyone which was a pleasure to watch! He also said: "It is great to know that what my child is going through, other children are going through the same thing." Events like this are obviously a perfect way for children and parents to meet other people in similar situations in a fun, enjoyable setting!

Clearly the whole day was a great success and was thoroughly enjoyed by the visually impaired/blind children, their siblings and parents, the LVPEI staff and the volunteer helpers! Bring on the next Integrated Adaptive Camp!

Clients shared:

Mohan-(Age-28):

"I am glad to have taken part in this camp. I am an IT instructor at LVPEI and very soon I will be getting a transfer to Visakapatnam. But I must say that I do not mind taking leave from my work and coming to Hyderabad to be a part of such camps."

C.H Raju-(Age-21):

"I enjoyed the whole day. I was confused which water game to play because all the games were so good. All the staff and the volunteers took care of us very nicely. I would like to thank LVPEI for organising this fun camp."

Mrs. Gayatri Balasubramanyam-(Parent):

"My daughter, Janavi had so much fun in the fun camp. She was very happy looking at the geese which were present there. As a parent I was glad that she was able to enjoy herself. She had a great time playing in the water. She did not want to come out of it. The camp was well organized and we did not have any difficulties with the arrangements."

Janavi-(Age-5):

"I was very happy playing in the water. The fountain and the water fall was fun to play. I had ice creams, chocolate and so many good things to eat. I took pictures with my daddy playing in the water. I enjoyed a lot."

Rahul-(Age-27):

"I never went to such fun camps. It was really nice of LVPEI to organize such an outing. It was an encouragement to all the Visually Challenged as they do not get to be a part of such camps otherwise. I enjoyed the games and on the whole the day was really great."

Akansha-(Age-5):

"I had so much fun, so much fun Mamma, I can't tell you how much fun I had. I want to draw and write about it so that I can tell my babies about it when I grow up."

Glimpses of camp events



Camp inaugural; Cake cutting by Dr. GN Rao, chairman LVPEI and Mast. Sai, the youngest participant of the camp



Getting ready to start



Happy entry to the park



Get together – camp participants



Tug off war – Toddlers



Tug off war – junior group



Tug off war – Senior group



Hitting the target, game for the multi-handicapped children



Transferring balls - Middle group



Balloon blowing and bursting – Middle group



Frog race – Game for siblings



Lemon and Spoon – Game for siblings



Volunteers Mr. Pulla Rao, Mr. Nagagurappa and Mr. Manoj preparing the kids for the competition



Water ride



Water games



Rain Dance



Refreshment – Volunteers Mrs. Uma Sudhakar and Ms. Megan Raistrick assisting the children



Lunch Time – Volunteers Mrs. Uma Sudhakar, Mrs. Gayathri assisting the children



Refreshments – Assisted by volunteers Mrs. Akhila Ravi, Mrs. Gayathri, Mrs. Uma Sudhakar and Ms. Deepthi



Distributing school bags – Common gift to participants



Prize distribution to winners by volunteers Mr. Ravi and Mrs. Gayathri



Prize distribution to the winners of Toddlers by Mr. Narasimhulu, Tech-Mahindra Coordinator



Prize distribution to the winners of Seniors by Mr. Ravi, Volunteer, LVPEI



Prize distribution to the winners of 'Hitting the target' by Dr. Beula Christy, LVPEI



Prize distribution to the winners of 'Frog Race' by Ms. Mahalakshmi, LVPEI

Outcome



Acknowledgement: On behalf of LV Prasad Eye Institute we thankfully acknowledge our supporters of the event

Mahindra Satyam Foundation, Hyderabad
Students of Meridan School for the Boys and Girls, Madhapur
Jersey Creamline Parlor, Hyderabad
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