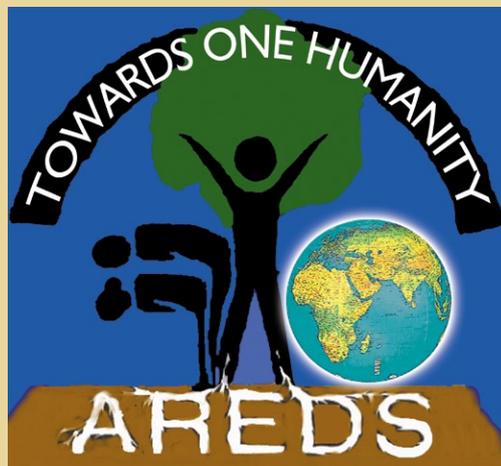


Dalit Children's right to Education

(Dalit = the lowest caste in India)

*AREDS Education Programme for
the emancipation of Dalit Children:
the future of a community which is
suffering the impacts of exclusion
for centuries*



AREDS

**Association of Rural Education
and Development Service**

**Tamil Nadu
South India**

DALIT CHILDREN'S EDUCATION



A Question of Chances

No Access to Quality Education

Even though the Indian Government has brought out a number of educational programmes such as compulsory education until high school, the status of children - especially in Dalit and rural communities - remains unchanged. This is because the government and schools still do not guarantee Dalit and rural children access to quality education, exposure, nutrition, health care and socialisation.

Lack of space to build capacities

The school syllabi do not help children much in developing and building their capabilities. They exclude the life experiences and fail to bring out hidden talents in the pupil.

Lack of opportunities

Education today is becoming increasingly commercial, with a craze for English medium schools. In urban areas, there are many private Matriculation schools, which are very expensive, where the high-class and middle-class children procure admission by paying fees anywhere between Rs.5,000 to Rs.10,000 per child. There is no chance for the rural and Dalit children to get admitted, as they don't have access to this type of finance. Also, there are no such schools in rural areas for Dalit and rural children.

Who suffers?

Children from the families of Dalits, landless poor, agricultural workers and unemployed in rural areas are the groups deprived of their right to good education.

Result

- Rural children are not able to compete with the children who access quality education
- This prevents them from going for higher education
- When they grow up, these children are therefore either unemployed or under-employed
- Lack of sufficient income and the resulting poverty persists among these people

AREDS' Intervention

AREDS - Association of Rural Education and Development Service - is a non-profit and non-governmental organisation founded in the year 1980. It is continuously guided by the conviction that "Education should precede development, and development should be achieved by the collective and conscious numbers." AREDS has committed itself to facilitating opportunities for rural children, especially Dalit children, to have access to standard education and continues its support by helping Dalit children to pursue higher education. Having realised the rights of children not only to education but also to learning with no burden and helping them develop their many unacknowledged talents, AREDS runs a Play Way School in Pothuravuthanpatti and the AREDS Children's Theatre School in Renganathapuram Road.



1. AREDS Play Way School

The school is situated in Pothuravuthanpatti village in Krishnarayapuram Taluk. AREDS established this school in the year 2003 in a village and not in any urban place, to facilitate rural and Dalit children to have greater access to standard education.

THE SCHOOL'S ULTIMATE GOAL IS...

To provide standard and quality education through play way methods.

Objectives

- To create an opportunity for rural children to have access to standard education
- To provide the opportunity to learn with qualified teachers in natural surroundings aided with good infrastructure
- To bring education and learning close to nature and realities
- To help children develop their own potential and talents



Presently, there are 55 rural children among which 50% of the children belong to the Dalit community. AREDS Play Way School has both nursery (Kindergarten) and elementary (Primary School) up to standard V. Higher standards will be added yearly according to the strength of the children.

2. AREDS Children's Theatre School - ACTS

THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS...

To provide a space for rural poor children and Dalit children to express and enhance their talents and to build their self-confidence among the children in the struggle for liberation.

Objectives

- To provide facilities to children to mingle and interact with other caste children of different age groups and with those from the opposite gender
- To provide children with theatre and drama, dance and art workshops and lessons, which build their self-confidence
- To provide facilities that will allow children to set their sights and goals higher than what they perceive to be their future

Programme package includes

- Sessions with AREDS Playback Theatre Company
- Street Theatre
- Music and Dance workshops
- Performing arts
- Competitions
- Capacity Building and Brainstorming



Weekend Package Programme - 2 days for 40 students for 52 weeks

12 Summer Package Programmes - 5 days each for 40 students.

Other materials and items including musical instruments.

Result

2650 students are benefiting every year through this programme and will become efficient in learning about life experiences through the art of theatre, dance, music and folk arts. Children will start to think analytically, develop the capacity to plan, act and to reason out.

A special call to you!

- Do you wish to join us in empowering Dalit children?
- Do you want to take part in providing them with quality education?
- Do you wish to give Dalit children a chance for a successful future?

If you say yes to the above questions, now is your chance! Please fill in the tear-off leaf and send it to the following address:

**AREDS
Renganathapuram P.O.
Krishnarayapuram Taluk
Karur District, 639 108
Tamil Nadu, India.
Phone : +91 4324 250618
Fax : +91 4324 250617
Email: aredsind@gmail.com
URL: www.aredsindia.org**