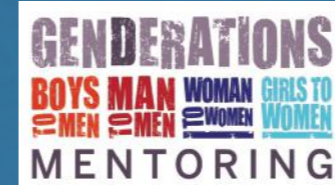




**Dr Sadhana Natu**

- Designation : Associate Professor and Head Department of Psychology, Modern College of Arts Ganeshkhind, Pune
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- Teaching Experience: 30 years of Teaching Experience at Undergraduate and Postgraduate Level
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- Conducted hundreds of training sessions



# Evaluation Report



Progressive Education Society's,  
Modern College of Arts, Science and Commerce  
**Savitribai Phule Pune University**

**GenDerations Mentoring Program in Pune Schools**

**Dr Sadhana Natu**

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**GENERATIONS**  
BOYS MAN WOMAN GIRLS TO  
MEN MEN WOMEN WOMEN  
**MENTORING**



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**GenDerations Mentoring Program  
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**August 2018**

## **Acknowledgment**

This study was commissioned by GenDerations Mentoring International Founder, Stefan Hermann, now residing and working in Pune. I would like to thank Stefan for approaching me with this study in mind. It gave me an opportunity to go back to School Settings and interact with stakeholders in school settings. I have worked in the Newspapers in Education (NIE) Times of India Project as a Resource Person conducting sessions in schools in Pune. I have also conducted several training programs for school counsellors, teachers and senior staff of schools. As a Practising Clinical Psychologist, Researcher and Educationist who has been facilitating a ‘Speak Out’ and ‘Peer Support Group’ called DISHA for 18 to 22 year old, Young Adults, in my College for the last 27 years, this Evaluation seemed like a really good opportunity to connect mentoring in school education with higher education and use my analytical research skills to help GenDerations to move forward.

I would like to thank all the stakeholders whom we interviewed, for their time and insights: Principals, Parents, Counsellors, Adult Mentors and Students. We started by interviewing Stefan, who gave us the framework which helped to put things in perspective. The young students: peer mentors and mentees were the cornerstone of the study and their responses were exhilarating and enlightening !

I would like to thank Krutika and others in the GenDerations team for their help.

I would like to thank my colleague Nashome Crasto who assisted me in all the data collection and interviews. I would like to thank my Life Partner Satish Deshpande for the technical support in alignment and putting this report in good order.

I am confident that this Evaluation Study will help the GenDerations team to chalk out their future course in their work and impact more and more schools with Mentoring!

**Dr Sadhana Natu**

## Introduction

The Generations program is loosely designed after the Boys to Men Mentoring founded in San Diego, USA in 1997. It is politically independent, non- sectarian, culturally inclusive, and financially independent. After working in USA, Germany, Switzerland and Southern Africa, successful pilot programs have been conducted in New Delhi and Pune (GenD India School Program, 2017). The programs are designed to guide young boys and girls in their transition from adolescence to adulthood. Generations uses well trained volunteer mentors to guide young people in acquiring a secure sense of identity, a mature orientation towards their lives and an ability to recognize and articulate their feelings in resolving their own personal and interpersonal conflicts.

The stated **goals** of the program revolve around working on self; inter personal, academic as well larger social goals of the students. The programs include: Parent Orientation, Adult and Peer Mentor training, Group Mentoring (Truth Telling Circles), Owl weekend and Rites of Passage Adventure. Some of the Core Elements of the program are: safety, integrity, speaking truth, respect, community, service etc. A General structure and curriculum of the program has been evolved. Some group agreements are agreed upon. The practices and Standard operating Procedures, including MOU formats have been worked out. (GenD India School Program, 2017)

The feature of the program that stands out is: While interacting with students these principles are followed: **LAMB** Listen, Accept for who they are, **Modelling** healthy behaviour, **Bless** them for who they are and will become. These behaviours are avoided: **FRAP** Fix, Rescue, Advise and **Project** on. These principles resonate with the cardinal principles of Counselling and Psychotherapy. The sample curriculum includes topics such as: Trust, Integrity and accountability, Honesty, Heroes, Owing our strengths, Belonging, Anger, Bullying, Goal Setting, Becoming a mature person, Completion or ending. The choice of topics is really good as it takes into consideration the felt needs of this age group as well as the challenges they face.

Group Structure and General Curriculum: A Typical Circle Agenda for Truth Telling Circles (TTC) – (90 minutes)

- 1) 5-15 minutes - check-in with name; a current feeling; a challenge; a success. Help to encourage involvement and develop feelings vocabulary.
- 2) 10-20 minutes - group agreement review; clarity process (if necessary) Review of group agreements and recommitting. The following includes a description of a typical circle agenda, a possible eleven-week curriculum, and the Group Agreements which guide group interaction.
- 3) 30-45 minutes - topic discussion or following up on a check-in topic. A mentor introduces the topic by telling a story from her/his life. S/He models truth-telling and how to be vulnerable without feeling shameful. Then the students are invited to share their feelings and experiences on the topic.
- 4) 5-10 minutes - check-out: name; a feeling; something gained from today's group. Creates participation, naming feelings, and sense of success.
- 5) Pass: a ground rule , that nobody is forced to share while participating in a circle

There are a certain signs that are followed follow during a Truth Telling Circle. They are:

1. Confidentiality agreement - During the start of first circle/whenever a new adult/student joins the circle, we promise about confidentiality by the show of our hands.
2. Raising hands - Raising hands means "I connect with what you are saying" and not necessarily I feel the same.
3. Ahe/Aho - This term is taken from native America, which says "I hear you".

4. "I" statements - We encourage using of "I" statements rather than we/you statements

The Group agreements include confidentiality, honesty, showing up and respect.

Experiential learning is a part of the Peer Mentor Training programs as well as the Truth Telling Circles. It includes innovative and useful techniques such as 'working on the rope, conveyor belt and car wash'. These exercises help the participants to learn about team building, self- growth and many other aspects of personality and emotional development.

These are the values and behaviour that binds the group together, is what we learnt from our detailed interaction with all the stake holders.

The program also emphasizes data collection and evidence based practices such as: attendance records of TTCs, pre post matrices in both the schools, pre post questionnaires for parents and students and testimonials. These are very Good practices and need to be strengthened. The GenDerations Program has been going on in Dr Shamrao Kalmadi High School since the last 2 years and in Vikhe Patil Public School since the last 6 months.

It is against this backdrop that the current Evaluation Study was commissioned, planned and executed.



### **Objectives and Rationale of the Evaluation Study:**

The Evaluation Study was taken up with a rationale of analysing the impact of the work done with a view to review, reflect and make changes as per the analysis and recommendations in the future course of action. With this rationale in mind the following objectives were framed:

1. The perceived impact of Generations program on the students( Peer Mentors and Mentees) will be analysed
2. The views of select number of Stakeholders ( Principals, Counsellors, Parents, Generation Adult Mentors and Founder Stefan Hermann) will be analysed
3. Based on these analyses, recommendations will be made for the Way Forward

### **Procedure and Data Collection Description:**

Methodology that was used employed Qualitative Methods such as Focused Group Discussion, Key Informant Interviews and in- depth semi structured Interviews.

We, Dr Sadhana Natu (Principal Investigator) and Ms. Nashome Crasto (who assisted me in research) collected data from all the stake holders: Students, Principals, Counsellors, Parents, GenDerations Adult Mentors and Founder Stefan Hermann using various locations that included schools and other set ups. We recorded the interviews after seeking permission of the respondents, transcribed them and also took field notes. Both kinds of material have been used for analysis. Ethical guidelines have been followed and the respondents were told the aims and objectives of the study and readily agreed to participate in the Evaluation.

Separate Interview schedules were prepared for all the in- depth semi structured interviews and the probes were decided for the FGD. Some questions were added spontaneously depending on the response given.

### School Profile

KHS				
Academic year	6th graders	7th graders	8th graders	9th graders
2016-17	20	-	23	-
2017-18	25	21	20	12

VPMS				
Academic year	6th graders	7th graders	8th graders	9th graders
2017-18	28		48	

The Outreach of the Program has been 121 students in KHS in two academic years and 76 students in VPMS in one academic year.

## **Review of Literature**

A comprehensive literature review on mentoring, value based skills, life skills and emotional intelligence in adolescence was undertaken as a part of the evaluation of the GenDerations Program being conducted in two schools in Pune. The main aim was to provide information regarding the existing programs being conducted and find commonalities and differences in those programs compared to GenDerations. Both Indian and international studies were collected to present a broad overview.

Trends across nations suggest that adulthood in the future will require greater social versatility, including abilities to function in relationships that are less scripted by community norms and that bridge multiple social worlds. Changes in adolescents' nonfamily experience include more time in institutional settings; more involvement with peers; and more cycles of developing (and ending) relationships with a heterogeneous set of adults, friends, and romantic partners. Analysis suggests that the youth will have greater opportunities to develop more versatile interpersonal resources required in the future, but that many adolescents will have restricted opportunities to acquire these resources. (Larson, Wilson and Verma, 2003) This underscores the need for a Mentoring Program such as the one conducted by GenDerations.

### **Mentoring:**

A study conducted by Rhodes and Du Bois stated that the formation of close, enduring connections between mentors and youth, foster positive developmental change. Effects of mentoring programs are typically small in magnitude, but they increase systematically with the use of program practices likely to support relationship development. (Rhodes, 2008)

Another study explored the experiences of volunteers and the development of relationships within the two largest contingents of one-on-one mentoring programs: community-based programs and school-based programs. The emphases of school-based programs were studied, along with the quality of developed relationships between youth and mentors. A survey was completed by 1,101 mentors in 98 mentoring programs. Over 90% of mentors in both types of programs said that they felt close to their mentees, but more community-based mentors felt "very close" to

their mentees. Results suggest that a school-based approach to providing disadvantaged youth with volunteer mentors is a promising complement to the traditional community-based mentoring model. (Herrera, Carla, 2009)

The high prevalence of drug abuse, delinquency, youth violence, and other youth problems creates a need to identify and disseminate effective prevention strategies in the form of school based programs. While conducting research on the same lines, Crusto, Wandersman et.al. have identified 9 characteristics that were consistently associated with effective prevention programs: Programs were comprehensive, included varied teaching methods, provided sufficient dosage, were theory driven, provided opportunities for positive relationships, were appropriately timed, were socio-culturally relevant, included outcome evaluation, and involved well-trained staff. (Crusto, Wandersman et al, 2003). Mentoring as a core theme has driven many school mental health programs in India, such as the ones conducted consistently by Sangath, Goa.

### **Life Skills**

LSE is a novel promotional program that teaches generic Life Skills through participatory learning methods of games, debates, role-plays, and group discussion. Conceptual understanding and practicing of the skills occur through experiential learning in a non-threatening setting. Such initiatives provide the adolescent with a wide range of alternative and creative ways of solving problems. (WHO, Geneva, 1995)

Bharath Srikala and Kumar Kishore conducted a study to assess the difference between the adolescents who were in the Life Skills Education (LSE) program (NIMHANS model) for a year and the ones who were not in the program in the following areas: Coping, Self-esteem, and Adjustment in various areas and Psychopathology. 100 teachers, whose feedback was compiled, observed positive changes in the classroom behaviour and interaction among students in their program. According to their self-report, the students in the program in comparison to those not in the program were significantly better adjusted to the school and teachers; opined that they were capable of coping with issues with better self-esteem. (Srikala and Kishore, 2010)

A study conducted by Emily De Biase at the University of Connecticut employed 10 core sessions of the Well-Being Promotion Program (Suldo, 2016), a multi-component Positive Psychology Intervention (PPI) with the goal of improving daily happiness and classroom behaviour in a sample of high school students at risk for poor school outcomes. It was found that the PPI enhanced student well-being and fostered a number of behaviours important to student success, such as a positive attitude towards learning, increased school satisfaction, improved social skills, and increased academic engagement. (DeBiase, 2017)

Students whom we interviewed felt that the GenDerations program offers ‘more’ than the standard LSE because it is more open and non- hierarchical!

### **Maintaining Confidentiality**

A study published in the Journal of Youth and Adolescence has listed benefits of adolescents keeping secrets. The paper proposed that secrecy may have developmental functions that bear particular importance in the period of adolescence. A cross-sectional study conducted to examine the links between secrecy, psychosocial well-being and emotional autonomy among 227 younger (12– 13 years) and older (16–18 years) adolescents showed that keeping secrets from parents was associated with adolescents' feeling of emotional autonomy. (Finkenauer, Engles and Meeus, 2002) Confidentiality in Truth Telling Circles is the key element in GenDerations Program is validated by other studies.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

A comprehensive mission for schools is to educate students to be knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring, and contributing citizens. This mission is supported by the growing number of school-based prevention and youth development programs. Yet, the current impact of these programs is limited because of insufficient coordination with other components of school operations and inattention to implementation and evaluation factors necessary for strong program impact and sustainability. The GenDerations program has successfully incorporated most of the principles of EI without making it the only criterion of the program



## **Belongingness to Groups**

Relating to others in group situations requires a wide variety of cognitive, social, and emotional skills. In order to promote positive youth development it is important that youth participate in school and community groups and take time to understand and foster the development of those social competencies. (Newman and Newman, 2007)

The successful negotiation of peer relationships is central to psychosocial development in adolescence. Peer social support has a positive impact on well-being, buffering youth from feelings of anxiety and alienation, providing advice and understanding as young people face new challenges, and helping young people feel valued, especially during times of rapid change (Hirsch & Dubois, 1992).

Friendships serve as a secure base and buffer that help adolescents to cope with the psychological challenges of the social ecology of high school. Through these relationships, adolescents develop a stronger sense of belonging to their schools and society. (Hamm and Faircloth, 2005) All these studies highlight the ‘need for structure’ in the lives of adolescents, which is taken on board by the GenDerations program in an organic manner.

## **General studies on adolescents**

A sense of connectedness has been found to be protective against an array of health risk behaviours including substance use, risky sexual behaviour, and violence. Research suggests that positive connections are beneficial for all adolescents— across gender and racial, ethnic, and social class groups. (Bernat & Resnick, 2009)

In research conducted Jeffrey Wilks to measure the impact of parents and friends on decision making, parents were rated as more important than friends overall, problems were more frequently discussed with close friends. Parents were perceived as most important in certain “future-oriented” areas, whereas for “current” decisions, friends' opinions were more valued. (Wilks, 1986)

In the area of self-disclosure research was done to know how much to adolescents share with their parents. Adolescents reported whether they fully disclosed, partially disclosed, avoided the issue, or lied for six core areas that bridged personal autonomy and safety concerns. Five patterns were identified: two in which adolescents were likely to either share information about all issues or lie about them and three in which adolescents used a combination of strategies that included sharing some information while concealing other. (Cumsille P, Darling N, Martinez L, 2010)

These studies highlight the risks, hazards that the adolescents face and also the fact they do not disclose everything to their parents! Given the ever mounting complexities and challenges of urban living in Pune, the need for peer mentors, adult mentors in schools is accentuated and GenDerations seems to be filling in these gaps in the psycho social needs of adolescents.

Pune has many initiatives on Fun with Science, various hobby classes, activities in performing arts for school going children. But programs that aim at adolescents acquiring emotional management skills are few and far between. Garaware Bal Bhavan which runs activities aimed at all round development of children and adolescents and also trains volunteers to conduct these sessions for the last 30 odd years in a consistent, economical and creative fashion is worth examining and studying for GenDerations team.([www.garwarebalbhavanpune.org](http://www.garwarebalbhavanpune.org)) Other such efforts in Pune include : Balranjan Kendra at Erandawane, Pune

( [www.balranjankendra.org](http://www.balranjankendra.org) ) . There are many such centres all over Maharashtra

(Unfortunately, the published material on all such centres is not available in English!)

## Data Analysis

### I. Focused Group Discussion of Peer Mentors from KHS

#### Objectives

- Understanding the intricacies and need of participation in TTC
- Understanding the process of participation, roles etc.

#### Participant Demographics

5 Peer Mentors, who were students currently studying in Std. X with 2 years of experience as Peer Mentors.

#### Outcomes

- They expressed that soon they felt ease in participation, but it did take getting used to. Their initial discomfort gave way to genuine bonding overtime.
- Before this activity, they were opening up to parents or friends, but this sharing was unique as they learnt to speak and to listen. “ I want to share when something good happens and also when something bad happens”



1st Peer Mentors, currently 10th std. at KHS with school counselors and GenD founder Stefan Hermann

- Opening up has been possible due to lack of judgement and discrimination.  
“In our day to day life, elders give advice but listening is missing, it is present here”.  
They felt they learnt problem solving and hence sharing became easy.
- They abide by LAMB and not FRAP as their guidelines while being mentors. They have picked up listening patiently, treating 6th graders as equals and thinking of mentoring as ‘friendship’ and not an added ‘responsibility’!
-

- *Boredom* evoked mixed responses: some felt that the ice breaker games needed to be changed, the younger group not sharing much led to monotony. While others felt that the warm up and cool down stuff was fun and not boring at all. All of them expressed that “sharing silly things, not sharing properly and equal participation by the younger students needed to happen”.
- Confidentiality required a lot of work. It did invoke fear initially, but with mutual trust and respect in the group, they were able to confide as well as keep things confidential. It required self- control and maturity and all of them claimed that they had acquired it. “I would feel awful if someone shared outside what I had said, so they would feel awful if I share”. They have learnt the principle of mutuality.
- 

## **II. Interviews of Select Peer Mentors from KHS (all studying currently in X std.)**

### Gist of Interview 1

She was interested in Psychology and thought that the GenDerations program was based on Psychology and becoming a Psychologist is her aspiration and hence she liked this role. She felt that people were able to slowly share their negative thoughts and experiences in the Circle. The sessions on anger and bullying provided an outlet to everyone including her. Topics such as love and attraction did come up and it felt good to share. She has recommended the program to others in school. She felt that her academic grades have gone up all thanks to the program which has helped her to become focused. Since her listening skills have improved, she has learnt not to give advice, her interpersonal relationships with parents, teachers and peers have improved.

Analysis: This peer mentor identified with the goals and process. She could easily relate to the benefits for self as well as the group. She could assess the strengths and the challenges involved in mentoring.

### Gist of Interview 2

He felt that in other programs or activities, the elders speak and all that the students have to do is listening. Here they get a chance to speak out. He was so involved with the program that he felt (characteristic brashness of the young!) that “I know more about this program than Stefan too”! (What a brand ambassador for the program!) People did share negative experiences and special care was taken when such sharing was required. Sharing on anger and bullying has been disturbing to do and listen to, but it has helped people to feel light. Love and attraction have come up but infrequently. He has recommended the program to other students and it has helped him in improving his writing skills and interpersonal skills. Secrecy and spontaneity in talking about what people were feeling has to continue since that is what distinguishes GenDerations program from other activities in school.

Analysis: This peer mentor has internalised the goals and the process so much that he could easily be the mascot of the programme. The program has helped him in developing his writing skills further and he likes all the aspects of the program.

### Gist of Interview 3

She felt that this program could not be compared to others, since “there were no activities for opening up”! The things that were shared were 70% negative stuff, since students do not have other outlets to share it. When a senior shared about his experience of being bullied the others offered him support. Love and attraction did not come up too often, family and friends did. She had recommended the program to several students and they had also gone to Vikhe Patil School to share their experience and encourage students to join.



Though she has benefitted academically through this participation, she believes in compartmentalising the two. Her interpersonal relationships have improved considerably thanks to the program. Earlier she found it difficult to share with her parents and strangers, now she could.

Analysis: She could see the overall impact of the process and its end results quite clearly and also articulate them very well. She was able to pin point the changes in her personality and behaviour (positive) as a direct result of the program.

### **III. Interviews of Select Peer Mentors from VPMS (both studying currently in IX STD.)**

#### Gist of Interview 1

She felt that this program was different from other activities because it did not require any preparation, they had a choice whether to open up or not, adult mentors were very supportive and there was no fear in their minds. Negative emotions were the most frequently shared ones. According to her confidentiality was instantaneous! The juniors did share about bullying and it was disturbing. The process of selection of Peer mentors was that they volunteered and the teachers approved. This program is different from counselling where the counsellors give advice, but here they learn problem solving by themselves and also find validation. Love and attraction are discussed sometimes, but people are secretive and it does not come up often. She has recommended the program to others. The program has helped her in her academics since she does not brood about her problems now and uses that time to study. She can talk to parents, siblings and cousins more freely now and her relationships are more balanced now.

Analysis: She could differentiate between counselling and this program and also assess the benefits she had derived from the program. She was able to highlight how the open ended system of this program offered numerous possibilities to the students for growth.

## Gist of Interview 2

He felt that this program was special since it helped them to express on various topics. Students could share their stories and feel good. There was a session on lost, loved ones which all of them to connect deeply. Students share about bullying and also about anger issues while checking in. Love and attraction are not talked about too much since people feel uncomfortable. He has recommended the program to others as it helps in personality development, public speaking and builds confidence. It has helped him academically, since he has become more organized, is able to do anger management and is able to voice his opinions. Earlier, he had a short temper, now he is able to control it. This has helped him to calm down and his interpersonal relationships have improved. The confidentiality ritual helps them to maintain it. He feels that “the skills that I have learnt, I will use them forever and I will become an Adult Mentor later”. This program has helped him in his academic and co-curricular activities.

Analysis: This peer mentor was able to identify and name the long term uses of this program. He was able to identify and name the emotional, academic and skill benefits that he derived from the program.



Graduation after VPMS Peer Mentor Training with families of students. Parents, siblings and grandparents get the community feel.



Peer Mentor Certification at KHS with counselors and adult mentors. GenDerations offers internationally relevant account of community service hours.

## **IV Interviews of Mentees**

### Gist of Interview 1 (Mentee from KHS)

He found the experience fantastic. He got to share, put himself “in other people’s shoes” and guidance too. He found it awkward at first, but since everyone was so welcoming, he soon felt comfortable. Since he was new in the school this program really helped him to adjust. Maintaining confidentiality was possible since others had put their trust in him. His experience with the adult mentors was good and he could get along very well with the peer mentors since he could relate to what they were sharing.

Analysis: The mentee was quite articulate and could emphasize his exact learning and gains. As a new student, the program seems to have been especially beneficial to him to adjust with the school and the students.

### Gist of Interview 2 (Mentee from VPMS)

She liked the fact that “what was said in the circle did not leave the circle”. In the beginning she listened, was hesitant and finally she too could share. She liked having a large number of mentors who were not adults! She felt these peer mentors could relate to their problems better than adults. She learnt the code of confidentiality. Her relationship with her parents was good; the circles helped her to open up more in school. In a break out circle they could speak one on one with an adult mentor and a peer mentor. The group was as large as 20-25 persons but she was comfortable with that. She has recommended the program to others. She was able to get help from her friends of the classes that she had missed. There was no boredom.

Analysis: The mentee was able to merge with the group at her pace. Since she already has an open relationship with her parents, for her the benefit was more in terms of expression in school. She could adjust with the large group and did not find it intimidating.

## V Interviews of Counsellors

The major themes that emerged were the following:

- This program does have some similarities with the principles of counselling but the fact that students speak up makes it different from a counselling scenario. Both avoid rescuing and in this program advice giving is avoided. In both, reflection is involved. In this program the entire group gives support. This activity is quite different in approach and goals from counselling
- While other activities such as Personality development, Life Skills etc. are directional, this program is about experiential learning for the students. In other activities *lessons* are given, “In this program values are demonstrated, which is very special” One of the counsellors was able to vent out her feelings about ‘sadness’ and it was a great help.
- “From the founder to the students. Everyone is treated as an equal and with respect, unlike schools where only teachers are respected, not students! “
- Behavioural changes in the students: they have become considerate, help others to express, behaviour with parents has improved, and they have found a safe space. *The emotional development is tremendous and they can name those emotions.* Insight has increased and jealousy and competitiveness has reduced. Trust and problem solving has increased. Significant changes such as accepting self and others have happened. Some students have learnt to open up while others have learnt to support those who are opening up. Their self -image has improved and communication with parents and peers has improved. “ A boy used to get bullied has now gained confidence and an introverted student has learnt to express himself”



High energy and self-expression at the a VPMS Peer Mentor

- Parents' feedback that they have found emotional stability. Their language and communication skills, public speaking skills have improved. Parents have found the program very useful but some are concerned about the classes that are missed, there isn't always support to cope with that.
- Maturity and an early introduction to the concept of confidentiality seem to have helped the students. The seniors help the juniors to keep a check on the rules of confidentiality. It is maintained since no information has been leaked.
- Boredom: listening for so long is a challenge and while some sharing is very interesting and meaningful, some of it is prolonged. Limited time should be given for check in and check out. Activities help in keeping away boredom. When the sharing gets repetitive, boredom does set in and the activities and break out circles are a great help. "After a deep discussion there should be a break and some of the activities should be changed" this can help in avoiding boredom.
- There have been no problems in adjusting with the G team. She has learnt from the circles about the adolescent age group in general which is a great help in individual counselling. Since the mentors sit after the circles and have a discussion it helps in getting a perspective. One counsellor felt that suppressing emotions runs contrary to the principles of GenDerations and was indignant about this. One counsellor has not been able to attend many of the trainings but does not face any issues in adjusting with the GenDerations team.

The Counsellors were able to differentiate between their job and the program without thinking of it as a turf war! In fact making them the key anchors of the program that bridge the GenDerations team and the students is a very good step. Their observations about benefits to the students are very important.



## VI Interviews of Parents

The major themes that emerged were the following:

- Their daughter was an introvert; they looked forward to an activity which would help her to open up. It was their daughter's choice to attend the program. They found the fees reasonable and believe they have got good returns in 2 years. They have no worries about the 90 minutes of academics missed per week, "marks are not everything, becoming a good person is also important" Their daughter has developed leadership skills, learnt to get along with others which is very useful for her future life, learnt to take initiative and attended the OWL weekend as well. They have recommended the program to others.
- This parent had attended the Orientation and her daughter chose this program over other activities. She found the fees reasonable and felt that the 90 minutes that "were missed could be made up if the student was interested in the activity". She has calmed down after attending this program, learnt to tackle trust issues, learnt to solve her own problems and help her cousins and peers to solve theirs. They look up to her. She has recommended the program to others.
- This parent felt such a program is the 'need of the hour'. She attended the orientation program and found the fees affordable. But if this program has to reach all kinds of students and schools then some changes have to be made. Her son has become more open, expresses and shares more and feels free after attending the program. She too has recommended the program to others.
- This parent liked the idea of emotional management and mentoring and felt it was a good program for his daughter. He found the fees reasonable and the workshop that he attended later acquainted him with the framework, which he liked a lot. He thinks "learning about EQ is very important , whether these students join corporates, NGOs or become home makers" His daughter can cope with the 90 minutes that she misses but if the circles took place in 'non -

core periods' it would be good. The program has taught her about listening skills and understanding the perspective of others. He too has recommended the program to others.

- This parent shared that her daughter had undergone bullying and so participating in this program was a must. The benefits are intangible and she is sure that her daughter is being helped. She finds the fees reasonable. She feels that students can cope with missed classes. Her daughter understands the principle of mutuality and she is happy with that. It is too early to comment on any other long term benefits. She too has recommended the program to others.

Parents have understood the intangible plus points of the program from a long term perspective and are not grudging the loss of 90 minutes of academics each week. They feel the gains far outweigh missing the periods and are confident that their wards are able to get help and make up.

## **VII Interviews of Principals**

### Mrs Pallavi Naik (Gist of the Interview)

The program was recommended by Mrs Malati Kalmadi. They could not involve XI and IX standard students as planned and

hence opted for VIII standard students who surprised them, “all thanks to Stefan and his team’s training”. Students were selected on the basis of their qualities such as compassion. She thought that the parents might find the program costly but the students got their parents to agree. She has seen many changes in the students: openness, becoming non-judgemental, they are mentoring even in their families and also teachers! There was no arrogance in the act. She travelled with the Peer mentors to Panchgani where they



KHS Principal Pallavi Ma'am has witnessed the transformational changes in her students.

conducted TTCs for Special Educators with a lot of confidence which really impressed her a lot. This program is distinct from others due to its emphasis on interpersonal relationships, confidentiality and openness, are life skills which will stay with the students. She too has done the Adult Mentoring program. A memory that has stayed with her is “of a student who lost his grandfather the previous day, was up till 2 at night grieving, but came to school the next day for the interaction of the peer mentors via Skype with students in Karachi, since he had given a commitment!” Missing 90 minutes of classes per week is a challenge but the teachers have come around since most of the participants are academically advanced learners and can make up, some parents had to be convinced by their wards.

As a Principal with a lot of experience, she understands both the tangible and intangible benefits of such a program. She is also appreciative of the efforts taken by GenDerations team led by Stefan and justifiably proud of her students!



VPMS principal Mrunalini Ma'am with Nandini Charles, GenD volunteer and therapist Adithy and Stefan.

#### Mrs Mrunalini Bhosale (Gist of the Interview)

Nandini Charles had initiated the program. She has only taken it ahead. She was able to spell out the following strengths of the program for the students: improving communication, expressing their feelings, understanding the feelings of others, becoming sensitive and getting along with others. She felt that bullying was a major concern and if this program was able to aid in stopping that she would be really happy. She expressed her misgivings about the students missing 90 minutes of classes every week.

She felt that teachers and parents had to be answered to on this account. Allotting a separate class, sparing the counsellor during the circles (they are not able to attend to their duties) are some nitty -gritty issues that needed to be tackled. She also felt that some visible signs such as T shirts, badges were needed to distinguish GenDerations participants.

Since the program has to consolidate in this school, these may be some of the teething troubles which the Principal voiced. If they are addressed by both parties, they can be resolved.

### **VIII Interviews of Adult Mentors**

Mrunalini Umarani (Gist of the Interview):

She is able to manage the allotted timings and schedules since she is really committed to this work. As a Certified Adult Mentor she takes care to see that the rules and tools are all followed in the circles. She also has to deal with breakdown circles where she holds space and does not FRAP. These are deep circles where she provides a listening ear. There are challenges faced while dealing with the other adult mentors but they have a mechanism of dealing with it (during check- ins before the circle so that they are on the same page and can deal with the students in a positive manner). She has attended the OWL week end and it helped her to understand several processes about her own children. There are peer mentors who drop out and the counsellors and adult mentors talk to them and their parents and some are convinced while some cannot be convinced to continue in the program. She has benefitted personally to do self -work, improve her communication and relationship with her teen age children. She says “this program should be spread to every school so that youngsters get a safe environment to express”.

Pushkar Dharap (Gist of the Interview)

He has identified some logistical problems such as not enough enrolment, students coming late to the circles and then they don't have the required 90 minutes. He elaborated on some of the challenges that he faced as an Adult Mentor: he overdoes the holding space and has to stop being a conventional adult. He is used to listening but stepping up and speaking is a problem for him. For the others he thinks avoiding advice giving takes getting used to, since it is culturally ingrained in most people. His role is organising, taking care of logistics and being facilitator in Stefan's absence. The capacity building and remuneration for 2 adult mentors has happened organically. Peer mentors dropping out, is disheartening, and in KHS 12 out of 20 dropped out, but the circles went on. Paid positions like TFI, sharing profits with the schools could help in enrolment and better sustainability. For the self -care of adult mentors they have mechanisms such as: Open Circles, Shadow to Gold and Court of Support. They have these support systems for handling challenging situations.



**Recent Adult Mentor Training in Pune with participants from Delhi, Mumbai, and Bangalore, parents of VPMS students plus three 10th standard peer mentors from KHS.**



**GenDeration Faclitator Training**



## IX Stefan Hermann



**Stefan Hermann founded GenDerations and has taken the program global. Recently he was commissioned by the Mexico City Waldorf School to facilitate a year long certification training on youth mentoring. He was featured on the Oprah Winfrey Show and has a TedxTalk in his name.**

The highlights of this long interview: Stefan explained how the program started in both the schools: infrastructure and keenness of the leadership of schools were key factors in choosing the schools. The curriculum or topics are a result of their long standing work in USA, Germany, Switzerland and some African countries, additions are made depending on what pops up in the circles. Their program is more generic and they are not really addressing the diversities that exist in the classrooms. The students follow all the group agreements and confidentiality code so thoroughly that it is amazing. Rudeness or behavioural problems among students and adults are dealt with creatively and subtly. Sexuality does not come up very often in the circles but anger does. Hierarchies just melt down in the circles ( this is borne out by all the stake holders) He admit that the process of selecting peer mentors needs to be changed and more thought needs to be given to it. The students participate in the program whole heartedly and not in a way of deriving 'money's worth' since their parents have paid fees for this program. They do not send a student for counseling but wait for him to ask for support. The outcomes he expects are: awareness of emotions, expression, asking for support when they need it and problem solving. He admits that he has been stubborn in getting schools to agree to conduct the program within school hours! He is happy with the Adult Mentors and the school authorities.

## Conclusions and Findings

### 1. Perceived Impact on students

#### Peer Mentors

- They have imbibed their roles and responsibilities seamlessly and do not look at them as responsibilities per se.
- Learning listening skills, opening up required time
- Confidentiality was a tall order, required a lot of work, but eventually they have evolved it
- Use LAMB, avoid FRAP took getting used to
- Boredom in the 90 minutes time frame (since attention spans of adolescents are really small) evoked mixed responses
- 3 detailed interviews (KHS) indicated that the peer mentors had all benefitted academically, though all in different ways, they saw positive changes in their personality, behaviour, skill sets such as interpersonal skills, writing skills, confidence etc.
- 2 Detailed interviews from VPMS showed that these peer mentors too benefitted academically, in social skills, long term life skills

## Mentees

- These two mentees got help in adjusting to the school environment through the program
- They felt more accepted
- They were able to express and open up before both peer mentors and adult mentors

The program has succeeded reasonably in helping the students to work on their self, interpersonal relationships, conflicts, articulate them, do problem solving on their own, achieve some amount of academic gains and a sense of a collective, largely missing in schools and personal spaces, these days. Both mentors and mentees had recommended the program to others and KHS students advocated for it in VPMS

Also, almost all the peer mentors had a good academic background and were able to balance and compartmentalise academics and the program.

## 2. Perceptions of Counsellors

- All of them were able to experience and clearly spell out the commonalities and departures between counselling and the program and learn from the program
- They observed the positive changes in behaviour of the students such as expression, confidence, emotional stability and balance and being considerate to others
- They had valuable suggestions to offer on keeping boredom out: such as, limit time of check ins and check outs, break after a deep session, more meaningful sharing etc.



- Since some of them also participate in GenDerations activities outside their school too, they had views on emotional dynamics within the group etc.

### 3. Perceptions of Parents

- The parents interviewed did not mind the academic loss of 90 minutes, found both tangible and intangible gains from the program valuable and found the fees reasonable
- They could see positive outcomes in personality development, interpersonal adjustment and overall confidence of their children
- They found Emotional management as the key element of the program (from whatever their sworn to secrecy children shared with them) and felt that it was as important, if not more important than academic achievement

### 4. Perceptions of Principals

Since the program has gone on for 2 years in KHS and the impact has been experienced, Mrs Pallavi Naik was able to comment in length about the behavioural, social, group, short term and long term benefits of the program. Since she also had a broad spectrum view ( she has trained for the Adult Mentoring program , watched her students – Peer mentors conduct TTCs with special educators in Panchgani and pull off an interaction with students in Karachi with élan) she is all for the program. She has been able to get teachers, parents on the same page via the students!

The program has gone on for just one academic year (six months actually) in VPMS, the intangible and tangible benefits (demonstrable like KHS) are yet to emerge and hence Mrs Mrunalini Bhosale who likes the program voiced some of the justifiable concerns, teething troubles and challenges. If these are addressed creatively, it will be smooth sailing. She would also like some tokens to be associated with the program: badges, T shirts, etc.

#### 5. Perceptions of Adult Mentors

While both felt that rules and tools were in place, they agreed that enrolment has to be tackled seriously. They were disturbed by the number of peer mentors who dropped out. Monetising the tasks, profit sharing with schools, mechanisms of self-care for adult mentors were highlighted

#### 6. Stefan's Perspective

- Selection of Peer mentors needs a different format
- Strength of the program is that the students do not participate as if it is a service that they paid for ( in most other activities this is so- Dr Natu) but in an organic and enthusiastic manner
- He has been stubborn in getting schools to agree to incorporate the 90 minutes in the school program (quite a feat!)

## **Overall Conclusion:**

Finally, the work that GenDerations has been doing in Pune schools since the last two years is praise worthy, relevant and the need of the hour. The education system is in dire need of a well thought out and impact making program for ‘emotional management of school going adolescents’. GenDerations delivers! The program is innovative, inclusive and democratic. It has far reaching impact on the participants, gives them a safe harbour in the school environment and invaluable life skills with long-lasting effects. Clearly all the stakeholders (students, teachers, parents, school administration and counsellors) alike benefit from the experiential learning provided by GenDerations. All interviewed parents recommend the program, all students improved their academic performance. GenDerations definitely needs to expand to more schools, more kinds of schools, more students, all kinds of students and bring a wholesome mix of adult mentors under its umbrella.

## **Recommendations**

These recommendations are based on thick analysis of all the interviews processed, findings, and conclusions of the study, as well as my own experience as an Educationist with 30 years of experience in the field.

### **1. Way Forward ( Content, Methodology, Enrolment, Volunteers , Finance)**

The Content or Curriculum is a mix of stated objectives and what pops up in the circles. Which is really good, but while the program is named GenDerations – gender discrimination, inequality, or at least its basic existence does not get emphasized. Right now, gendered experiences are shared when the participants are in same gender circles. Suggestion: Many of the emotions, including anger (which the program deals with) school students do experience and express in gendered ways (boys and girls differently). It starts in families and slowly snowballs through all the

agents of socialization – schools and education included .There are many readings, primers, exercises available on this which would add value to the program and also connect it more deeply to social reality. This element can be enhanced if the organization finds it important.

Methodology is a TOT at 2 levels (peer mentors, adult mentors) done by Stefan and then practised in the circles.

Suggestion: more and more consistent and well trained Adult mentors (echoed by students and counsellors) have to be nurtured who can deliver, so that delegation is done and some decentralisation comes in. Right now, all the pressure seems to be on Stefan (of course it's only six months and 2 years, but it has to begin). Just like students seem to have taken ownership of the program, more adult mentors need to do so.

Enrolment Two valuable suggestions have come in: one in terms of bringing in more students into the fold of the program and the other has to do with the school and GenDerations financial relationship.

- Do away with the levels of Mentor and Mentee, all the students are mentors and mentees in turn, since the circles are a group activity, with almost no one on one mentoring as such (this can be looked into). This takes care of trained peer mentors dropping off. May be each group participates for a year.
- Engage in profit sharing with the schools so that they also have an economic as well as social stake in the program
- More work needs to be done on the demographic, academic and psychological profile of the peer mentors as well as mentees, while selecting them (as equals/ beneficiaries??) A model with a rationale from this experience of 2 years needs to be developed.

## Finance

There is an arrangement for the students who cannot afford the fees and may actually be in the need of mentoring for participating in the program with subsidised fees. Some arrangement can be made to subsidise the fees for more number of deserving students through CSR funds.

Paid Volunteers like the Teach for India can be adopted in the future (how that will be financially viable will have to be factored in!)

## Volunteer Adult Mentors

The backbone of the program, are the volunteer adult mentors. They can be found from many sources: an appeal to parents (as you are doing already), retired teachers, College Graduates, Corporates on Saturdays, part time counsellors, etc. Creating an Interactive website, Facebook and Instagram page would really help to reach out to interested persons.

Having a good mix of various ages would help in maintaining a balance. Their self-care and dynamics is also a cause of concern and importance.

## 2. Networking , Scaling up and Volume

It would depend on how much GenDerations wants to scale up.

- Networking With PTAs and Principals across the board : state board schools, CBSE, ICSE and IB schools ( proportionately)
- Taking the help of the two current Principals to talk to other Principals( just like students and parents are being used as brand ambassadors/ advocates) with whom they have good dynamics
- Having some bilingual facility so that both the students and adult mentors can talk and listen to all kinds of students (suggestion has come in from the stakeholders, which is really valid)

### 3. CSR and other sources of Funding

- Identifying companies who are funding School initiatives as a part of CSR for funds
- Peer mentors can mentor low income group school children which gets CSR funding
- In every school, there are students from low income group who are studying (under the Right to Education Act) and they can be beneficiaries, which can be funded by CSR.

There are many such ways that funds can be generated besides fees.

### 4. Research, Documentation and Further Evaluations

While some documentation is being maintained, more precise record keeping and documentation is essential for which training the adult mentors will be required.

Further evaluations can be planned after revisiting and reviewing the Model of Mentoring (Senior- Junior student and its rationale and relevance versus horizontal mentoring and mentee status and its rationale) In the current paradigm the Peer mentors have benefitted more than the mentees (whether that was intentional or a by- product, not known) and whether the organization wants to continue with the same model

5. Miscellaneous

- Both bullying and child sexual abuse are rampant among school children and same gender circles (one off) might help for these concerns to pop up in the circles and also get addressed.
- Setting up a Board of Advisors would help in networking, training and other needs

GenDerations definitely needs to expand to more schools, more kinds of schools, more students, all kinds of students and bring a wholesome mix of adult mentors under its umbrella and help school children to see a clearer, cloud free, blue sky!

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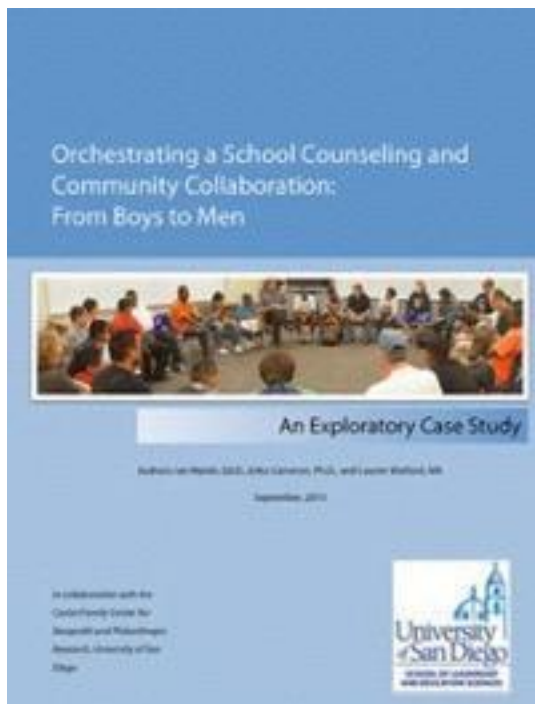
## Past Evaluations

### University of San Diego

#### Case Study of BoysToMen (BTM)/ GenDerations (GenD)

Because at-risk youth are more likely to experience failure in school or drop out, schools continue to look for effective interventions for school-related problems affecting at-risk youth. Proponents of mentoring programs hypothesize that mentoring programs could be part of the answer to these problems; however, little research has been conducted evaluating the effectiveness of mentoring programs collaborating with schools.

The BTM/GenD and middle school collaboration offers a great opportunity to investigate the relationship between mentoring and school counseling



## **Significance and Rationale**

The children in the program are particularly at risk of missing school, low school achievement, being held back, acting out behaviorally, dropping out of school; and adversely affected by poverty, violence and substance abuse.

## **Impact on Participants**

**BoysToMen/GenDerations positively influences student behavior** – There are less high level infractions at school, kids are happier, have a more positive outlook on life, have improved self-esteem, and engage in less risk-taking behavior. BTM/GenD participants show improved grades, increased attendance, and higher school engagement.

## **Conclusion**

The case study findings indicated that program participants were able to improve academic performance, behavior, and relationships with adults. **These results**, taken into context with the challenges associated with this population, **should spark a sense of hope and urgency** in implementing similar programming in other high-need schools.

**Based upon these findings and factors, we highly recommend investing in the further development, research and evaluation of the Gen-Derations organization.**

## **Study Results**

### **Students**

- 96% of students said BTM/GenD has helped them care about peoples' feelings.
- 78% of students said that BTM/GenD has helped them go to school more often.
- 90% of students said BTM/GenD helped them to do better in school.
- 95% of students said BTM/GenD makes them feel better about themselves
- 91% of students said BTM/GenD has positively changed how they view the future

### **Parents**

- 100% of parents strongly agree BTM/GenD is a good thing for their child.
- 91% of parents agree their child is happier since participation in BTM/GenD.
- 90% of parents agree their child seems more mature since BTM/GenD.
- 81% of parents agree their child cares more for others since BTM/GenD.
- 90% of parents agree their child's self-esteem improved since BTM/GenD.

**University of Zurich**



### **Evaluation of BoysToMen Berne “Open Program”**

This is a one-year, third-party, independent study by the Institute of Educational Science, sponsored by the National Board for Integration of the Country of Switzerland, costing \$42,000. The report was 42 pages in length.

#### **Summary of Conclusions**

The attached research study shows that BoysToMen/GenDerations is a unique program not otherwise available in Switzerland. Our current re-search confirms the basic, underlying assumptions of this project: that our youth do not generally find adequate adult mentorship, with whom they can discuss matters specific to their needs and issues that arise in their social environments.

The mentor participants generally have shown tremendous excitement and enthusiasm for the BoysToMen/GenDerations programs. Their positive evaluations are based on a number of factors. One factor is the personal growth resulting from the challenge of liberating oneself from the ingrained socialization and role stereotypes associated with gender.

BoysToMen/GenDerations offers a platform from which mentors can support their process of self-development by confronting the crisis points in their personal biographies. BoysToMen/GenDerations offers its volunteer mentors opportunities to find meaning in their lives, and to make progress in the definition of their own identities.

The large majority of the youth involved report fondly on their experiences. They especially value the openness and dedication of the mentors. Most youth are highly impressed by the willingness of successful adult mentors to show themselves in a very personal fashion. The evaluation of the adventure weekend results in very positive statements. The very tangible display of archetypes provide them an opportunity explore their inner aggression, to surface long lost emotions, and to find themselves authentically.

We would, therefore, highly recommend the continued funding of this project as nowhere in Switzerland is such a program otherwise found, where youth are provided with the opportunity to engage in meaningful relationships with adults, who dedicate themselves to this task of supporting and encouraging their growth.

**Gender Equality Office, Kanton Zurich**

To whom it may concern,

On the 2nd of February, 2013 I had the pleasure and opportunity to attend a GenDerations workshop on the topic of gender equality at Glarisegg Castle, near Lake Constance facilitated by Stefan Hermann and Doris Mumenthaler. I was very impressed by the sensitivity, equanimity and consciousness of the men and women that will be fa-cilitators of the GenDerations program.

Their ability to recognize and reflect upon their own behavior pat-terns, their own gender-related reactions, and the respectful way in which they dealt with each other and people in general left a very positive impression on me.

I definitely would encourage support of this project. Remember, I was rather skeptical from the onset.

I would be happy to offer more in-depth feedback upon request.

Best wishes,

Helena Trachsel, Managing Director

Office for Gender Equality of the Kanton Zurich

Neumuhlequai 10, Postfach, 8090 Zurich

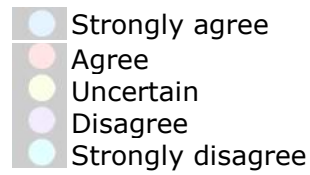
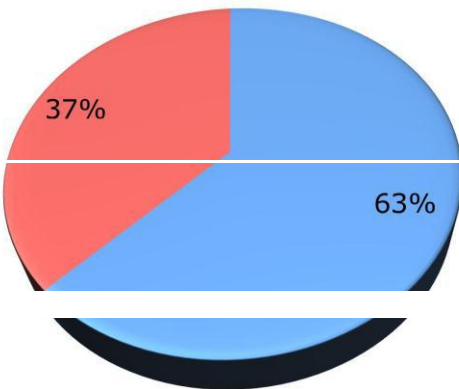
## Quotes from the students and adult volunteers

- "A new way of looking at life." student, Kalmadi High School Ganeshna-gar Pune.
- "The GenDerations Peer Mentor Training has helped me become a better person. I learned how to better deal with my problems, and how to contribute to others dealing with their problems." Shreyas Kishore, student, DPS RK Puram.
- "Made me realize I am an emotional person." student, Kalmadi High School Aundh Pune.
- "Best 4 days of my life." student, Kalmadi High School Aundh Pune.
- "Increased my confidence." Student Kalmadi High School Aundh Pune.
- "GenDerations has changed my mindset a lot: I learned about a part of myself, which was hidden to me. A real breakthrough in my life." Kautiya Kamal Burahohain, student DPS RK Puram.
- "Stefan's work has taken a burden off of me. No one ever asked me about my problems in childhood. I feel lighter and have more power." De-vesh Kumar, 21 years old, Staff DPS RK Puram.
- "The Mentoring program has changed my perspective towards life and has left an indelible impact on my soul. Through such minute and interactive activities, very important issues were dealt with the utmost care, patience and love. Thank you Stefan for this amazing experience." Vishesh Singh 19 years old, Staff DPS RK Puram.
- "I would grade this mentoring program at an A+ in all respects. I am not aware that anything like this program exists in India." Raju Dhar, Adult Staff DPS RK Puram.

# Student's feedback from GenD pilot program in KHS

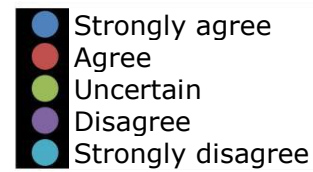
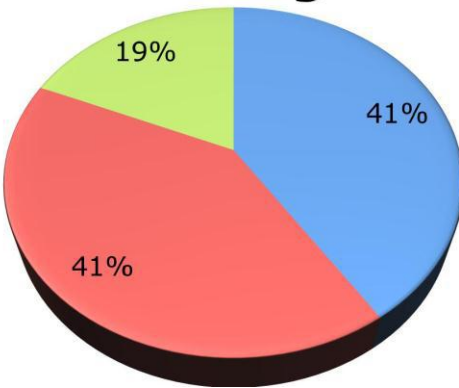
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## GenD helpful to me



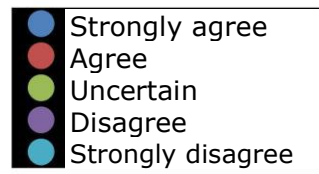
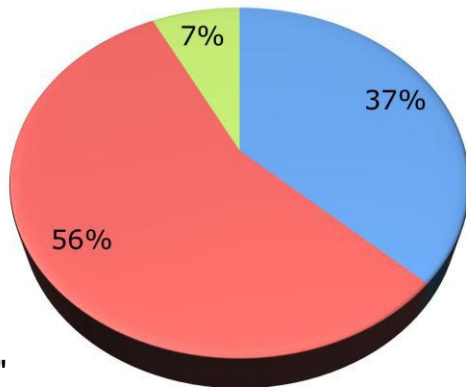
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## Less angry and ability to deal with anger



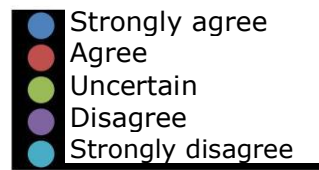
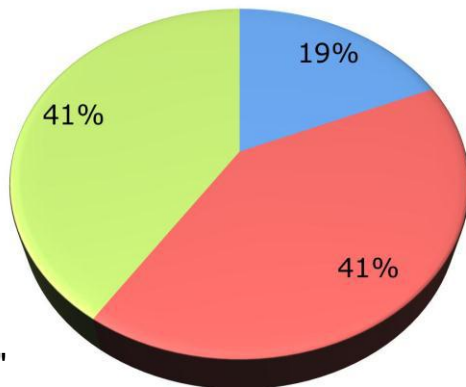
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## Aware of how others feel



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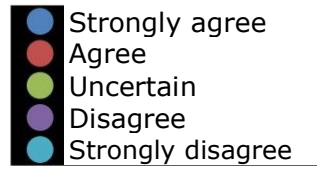
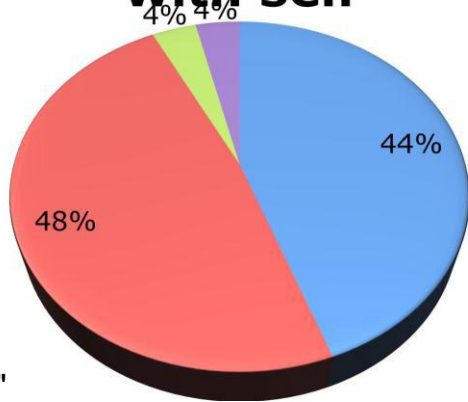
## Less stressed



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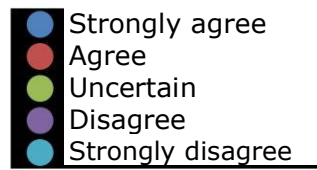
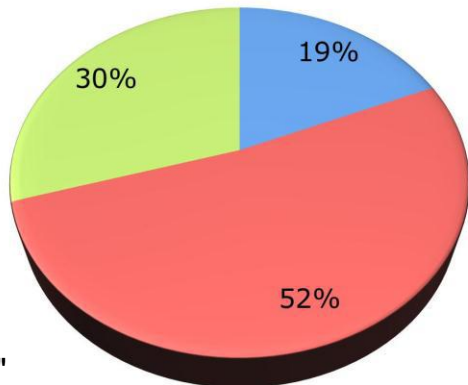


### More honest with self



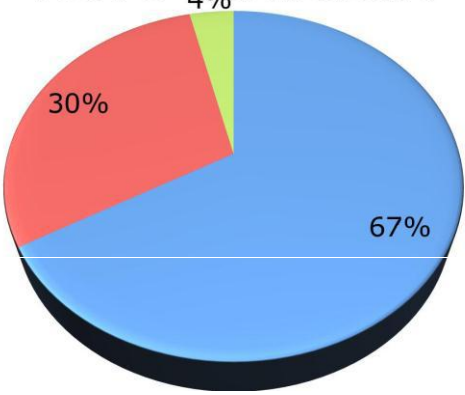
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### More honest with others



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# More confident

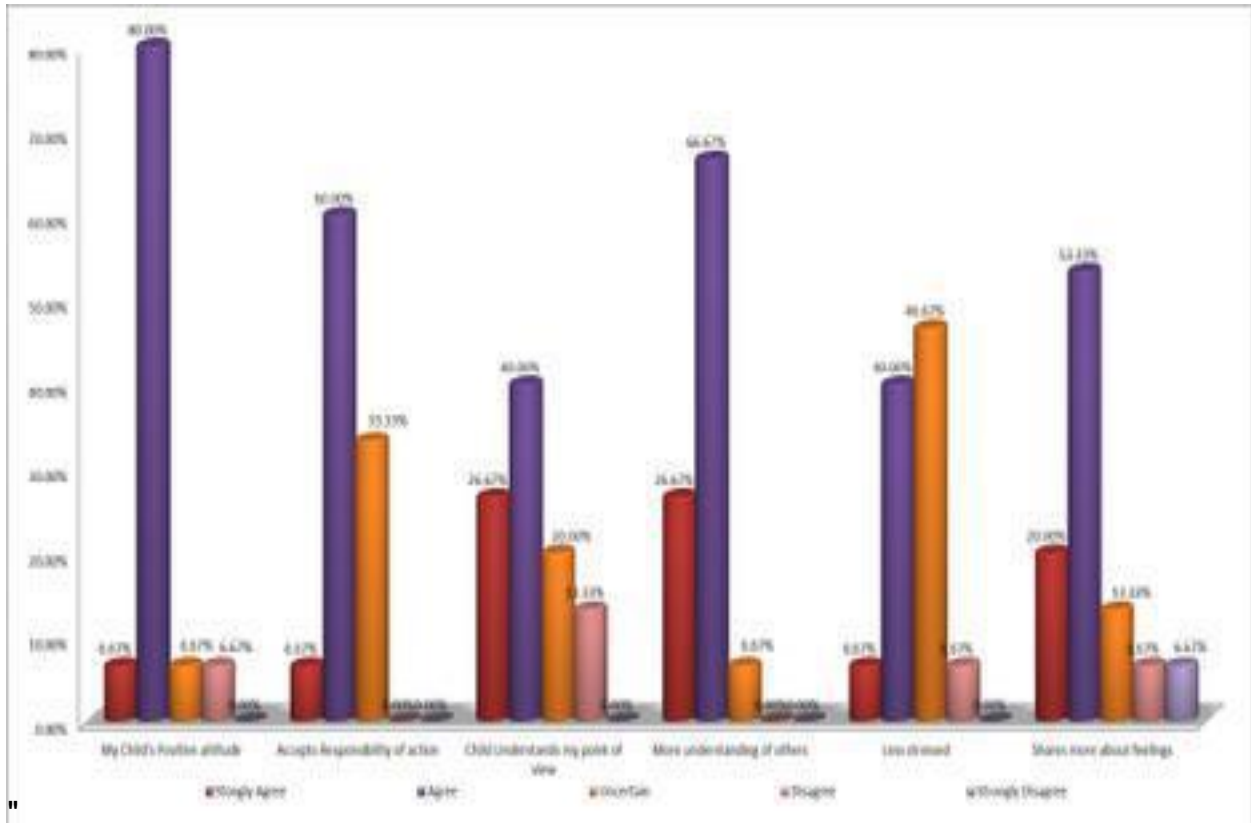


- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Uncertain
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

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# Parent's feedback from GenD pilot program in KHS

Ganeshnagar Date - January- March, 2017





## **Executive Summary**

The study of GenDerations Mentoring was performed in June/July 2018 by Dr. Sadhana Natu, Ass. Professor and Head of the Psychology Department at Modern College, Ganeshkhind, Savitribai Phule Pune University and her team. She is a M.A., B.Ed, NET-JRF and PhD with 27 years of experience in scientific research. The GenDerations program had been conducted with 121 students in KHS Kalmadi School, Ganeshnagar in two academic years and 76 students in Vikhe Patil Memorial School in Pune in one academic year. The following are direct quotes:

“A comprehensive mission for schools is to educate students to be knowledgeable, responsible, socially skilled, healthy, caring, and contributing citizens. The GenDerations program has successfully incorporated most of the principles of Emotional Intelligence without making it the only criterion of the program, ... (it has been) **filling in these gaps in the psycho social needs of adolescents.**”

**Students:** Practically ALL “students interviewed recommended the program to others in their school. Their **academic grades have gone up all thanks to the program.** While listening skills have improved, (students) learnt not to give advice and their interpersonal relationships with parents, teachers and peers have improved “considerably”. “The skills that I have learnt, I will use them forever.”

**Parents:** ALL “parents interviewed recommended the program to other parents. **They thought the fees are reasonable. Parents have understood the intangible plus points** of the program from a long term perspective and are not grudging the loss of 90 minutes of academics each week. They feel the gains far outweigh missing the periods and are confident that their wards are able to get help and make up.”

**“The program has succeeded ...** in helping the students to work on their self, interpersonal relationships, conflicts, articulate them, do problem solving on their own, achieve some amount of academic gains and a sense of a collective, largely missing in schools and personal spaces, these days. Both mentors and mentees recommended the program to others.”

**Counsellors:** “The Counsellors at both schools were able to differentiate between their job and the program without thinking of it as a turf war! In fact making them the key anchors of the program that bridge the GenDerations team and the students is a very good step. Behavioural changes in the students: they have become considerate, help others to express, behaviour with parents has improved, and they have found a safe space. **The emotional development is tremendous and they can name those emotions.** Insight has increased and jealousy and competitiveness has reduced. Trust and problem solving has increased. **Significant changes such as accepting self and others have happened.** Some students have learnt to open up while others have learnt to support those who are opening up.”

“Programs that aim at adolescents acquiring emotional management skills are few and far between. Through the relationships (fostered), adolescents develop a stronger sense of belonging to their schools and society. (Hamm and Faircloth, 2005) All these studies highlight the ‘need for structure’ in the lives of adolescents, which is **taken on board by the GenDerations program in an organic manner.**

The high prevalence of drug abuse, delinquency, youth violence, and other youth problems creates a need to identify and disseminate effective prevention strategies in the form of school based programs. **GenDerations delivers! Peer mentors and mentees were the cornerstone of the study and their responses were exhilarating and enlightening!”**

Experiential learning is a part of the Peer Mentor Training programs as well as the Truth Telling Circles. It **includes innovative and useful techniques** such as ‘working on the rope, conveyor belt and car wash’. These exercises help the participants to learn about team building, self-growth and many other aspects of personality and emotional development.

**The program also emphasizes data collection and evidence based practices such as: attendance records of TTCs, pre post matrices in both the schools, pre post questionnaires for parents and students and testimonials.**

Finally, the work that GenDerations has been doing in Pune schools since the last two years is **praise worthy, relevant and the need of the hour**. The education system is in dire need for a well thought out and impact making program for ‘emotional management of school going adolescents’. **GenDerations delivers!** The program is innovative, inclusive and democratic. It has far reaching impact on the participants, gives them a safe harbour in the school environs and **invaluable life skills with long-lasting effects**. Clearly **all the stakeholders** (students, teachers, parents, school administration and counsellors) benefit from the experiential learning provided by GenDerations.

GenDerations definitely needs to expand to more schools, more kinds of schools, more students, all kinds of students and bring a wholesome mix of adult mentors under its umbrella.

## **Generations: Needs Assessment and Suggestions for Changes Report**

### **Dr Sadhana Natu**

**Introduction:** This a Report based on the interviews of all the Stakeholders on what changes do they want in the existing program of Generations and we can look at them as current needs, moving forward.

These suggestions have come in from Principals, Parents, Adult Mentors, Peer Mentors, Mentees and Counsellors. They were asked to comment on what changes they would like to see in all the aspects of the program with full objectivity.

There was a focus on what changes would they like to see in the existing program and why. The aspects explored were: logistics, the process involved in the program, the activities and games conducted, whether certain topics needed to be introduced, the selection process of mentors and mentees, the importance of training and other suggestions if any. While all their suggestions are being discussed below the names are not being paired with the suggestions (except Stefan) since that makes the material more objective and value neutral.

### **Suggestions for changes:**

#### 1. Logistics

Timing should be increased and the activity could take place twice a week. In the morning the children feel sleepy and if the time could be changed to later, the participation would be better.

A common place where everyone could meet and parents, teachers could join in the circles would really be helpful. The program schedule should be arranged in advance and it is difficult for the school to fit in sessions without planning.

Running the program on Saturday instead of school days or after school hours was widely discussed but since that would mean arranging for transport by parents and getting support staff to wait for more time or come in on extra days, it was found impractical and discarded.

During exams the sessions should be reduced and a period in the time table could be allotted to Generations. Activities should be organized during vacations.

I think communication needs to improved, with schools and within the mentors. Improving communication is constant work that needs to be done. Also at the level of the school, communication with the counselors who are a bridge between the school and us has to be improved. We face difficulties communicating with the school directly and I feel if the Principals are more involved in this program it will be nice.

## 2. Selection, Participation in activity

“The structure of the selection of peer mentors, should hit the sweet spot. A lot of the success of the program does come from there, if we have a lot of good peer mentors, who are attractive to the 6<sup>th</sup> graders and they say I want to spend time with them, then that becomes the magnet, the driver of the program, so I think we can do better there. The change I want to see is that there is a certain demographic that really doesn't participate at their highest and they are participating, saying they are happy to be in the circle but they are not fully participating.” (Stefan Hermann)

We are struggling with enrolment, particularly in our school. I feel there should not be any age restriction to peer mentors. If we truly believe that anyone can be a mentor then why only give the opportunity to 8<sup>th</sup> graders, why not 6<sup>th</sup> graders as well? Why have structured circles? Why not have mixed circles where everybody just shares? It can be a safe container where everyone is on the same level and everybody just shares. This will help enrollment too.

If we could have more of paid positions like Teach for India, it will be a big boost and we will have a bigger outreach. As far as enrolments are concerned there are 2 aspects of it, firstly sharing what profits we get with the school. I think it's a very practical approach and then increasing enrolments.

It would be nice to have this activity running for a larger group. Another suggestion I have is if the kids could have say a T shirt or badge saying 'Peer Mentor' that would help them stand out and be identifiable. It would also be a good marketing strategy. Some more tangibles such as hand books, kits, CDs could be given because these would be lasting impressions about the program.

A proper process needs to be made to choose children for Generation as well, right now we are relying on teachers to nominate, hence, and only those who are doing well academically are getting selected. I feel we cater right from 5<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> Std. We can identify children with specific needs and integrate them within the circle. The number that the program caters to is very small. More kids should get an opportunity. Kids now a day's don't have many people to talk to. We parents also can't help much because we have never faced similar situations.

One more question I would like to have answered is how to have teachers and parents involved and have circles for them too! (Stefan) Widening the outreach is an important aspect.

## 3. Process, Activities and Content used in the sessions:

The game Sound Ball should be modified a bit. Also the games and activities need a revamp. No new topics should be added, because the circle is about what we feel. Topics just pop up and we talk about it. So there should not be any specific topics as that would force people to talk about



that topic and not what they are actually feeling at a particular moment. While this was one view, some others felt that certain topics needed to be addressed. Bullying and attraction should be added. Maybe more games should be added. Some one on one mentoring sessions, some practice sessions for mentoring as well could be included.

More of individual sessions with Peer mentor and mentee so we could know more about what they want. Anger management should be spoken about.

The practice for Peer Mentors can be increased. They should have more practice. Adult mentors need to be more consistent as the children get attached to them and if they skip circles, it affects the children. They should be more committed. Circles should also be conducted for 10<sup>th</sup> graders too. Another suggestion is to be more language inclusive and have circles in Marathi as well.

Students are aware of identification and awareness of emotions but something about management of these emotions needs to be discussed.

Time limits for Check In and Check Out need to be set. Conflicts with teachers should be added as a topic for discussion and this will help all the students. Conflicts with parents should be added too. They talk more about conflict with their peers but conflicts with parents and teachers should be tried and addressed.

Relationships with the opposite sex, balancing academics and relationships are issues that need to be addressed, because when the students are in an intimate relationship they tend to ignore their academics.

I feel FEAR should be addressed too. I am afraid of exams. Relationships as in romantic relationships should be addressed. I just want Generations to go on and on.

Sexuality does come up, but if we get children to talk about this it would be nice. There are certain topics that they need to be modelled or guided too. Relationships are an important part of the kid's lives and we can encourage them to talk about it.

What I feel is that children don't come up with certain things; I feel that if we give them a particular topic they might be able to come up with more on that topic. When we do it with Peer Mentors that is, give them specific emotions, the children open up but in the general circle we just ask them how you feel and they will not come up with anything. But if you channel a topic they will speak about it.

I have liked the program. But I question the beneficial outcome of this program. During the TTC, venting and listening happens but it is limited to just that. I feel somewhere as a part of human tendency, we want someone to guide us and give us direction. But here this is discouraged and I feel that this leaves the process incomplete. There is a feel good effect after sharing but nothing is done beyond this, may be if we use some techniques or some therapeutic techniques taught to

handle similar situations occurring again, it would prove to be beneficial. Besides listening there are more techniques that can be followed. This is what I feel. If this question was arose for me it must have arisen for the kids too.

The parents felt: The thing is that our daughter doesn't talk much about Generations at home; she keeps saying everything is a secret. Thus we are not in a position to suggest changes. Emotional part of their behavior can be addressed. I feel since many children now are single children, they sometimes find it difficult to take into consideration another person's point of view. They may become emotional if someone disagrees with them. This can be discussed in the circles.

I feel that they should be able to share certain things with their parents. Right now they aren't sharing anything whatsoever. We are clueless as to what happens. We should be at least aware as to what is happening.

Kids don't share what happens in Generations so I can't comment on what changes should be made. Maybe parents should attend at least one circle to get a better idea of what happens.

They are in their teens now, so sexual education can be a topic. How to handle exposure to media is an important topic. What are the pros and cons from too much exposure to media?

What I am looking for from this program is making her a better person. Social skills, empathy, peer interaction are the things I am looking at. Considering that 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> are academically more important and that she will be a mentor, stress management is a topic I think that can be looked into.

Career Guidance strictly won't come under this but understanding your aptitude, interests what you would like to do are topics that need to be looked at. If students are guided to think about it, it will be nice.

Most of it is confidential thus it will be presumptuous of me to comment. I think there should be an integrative approach. They are very discreet. There is this 'Life Skills with Cinema' which many schools run. I would say there is a 70% overlap with what Generations does and what this does. It is a value- based program where we show them a film and we discuss what values can be learned from the film. I feel that there are new things coming up but they have no connections with the previous activities. We don't really need to re-invent the wheel all the time. Everything is already being done we just need to market and advertise it in a better way.

Respect needs to be high on the agenda of discussion. Mutual respect, general communication with each other, seniors, parents and teachers and respect for all. Children have become very casual with teachers and staff. Discipline becomes a challenge with children as teachers have

very few means of punishing them. They feel the teachers can't do anything to us so why listen to them.

Some fixed curriculum should be there and some documentation should be there.

#### 4. Need for Training:

“The huge overarching question of everything has to do with our mission statement and how to scale this thing up; this involves training of facilitators which is very important” (Stefan Hermann)

I want to add that what happens with the students is that they enjoy the circles a lot more when Stefan facilitates them, when Stefan is not there, they do come for the circles but I can see it on their face that they aren't enjoying it so much. I would suggest that one more person as good as Stefan should be there to conduct the TTC. I had only one session with Stefan. So as such he is very good at communicating

Stefan is the best but all adult mentors are nice and sweet and more than friends to us. Stefan is better because he's been doing this for so long, but the others too, provide a safe space to talk. But sometimes it does happen that they get confused but that does not affect the circle. We miss Stefan because we have a bond with him but the newer people may not find any difference. There is an energy missing when Stefan is not there. He encourages us to share and that boosts our confidence. **He has an Indian Spirit which everyone identifies with.**

#### 5. Other suggestions:

I have one idea. We will use the skills these kids have got to mentor students who have discipline issues. Usually those children are handled by teachers, staff or discipline in charge. What I'm thinking is that once a week children who have come late or vandalized school equipment, or are physically challenged engage in a session with the Peer Mentors. This will help the students as well as the school.

#### **Analysis and Recommendations:**

What emerges from the analysis of these suggestions is that certain salient features of the program need to be **reviewed** since they have been identified as felt needs as well as essential changes that need to be made, while taking the programme ahead. They are as follows:

- The timings for the program (early morning or later), reducing sessions during exam time.
- The coordination system between the entire group( Adult mentors, counselors, peer mentors and mentees)

- How can vacations be utilized?
- The selection procedure for peer mentors as well as mentees (nomination by the teachers, students who volunteer on their own, those who are identified as students with special emotional needs by parents, teachers, counselors etc.)
- Enrolment in general (catering to more students, having more groups, conducting more sessions)
- Paid positions for Adult Mentors, fee sharing with schools , revising the fees, adding more students( these aspects need discussion and decision making)
- Take home tangibles (badges, T shirts, hand books, publications with case studies etc.)
- Changing, rotating games, activities (having a resource pool of ice breakers, vignettes etc.)
- Trying to strike a balance between having a structured module (there are many suggestions on content and topics from Principals, parents, counselors, adult mentors as well as peer mentors) and taking on spontaneous points, issues that the children bring to the circle.
- Process in terms of whether listening, venting out is enough or whether there is a need for more directive, supportive steps, methods, techniques( some have suggested that mere venting out does not give closure or solutions)
- Process also in terms of more channeling and facilitation towards topics, specific emotions, aspects, angles etc. (suggestions have come in that if the discussion is more focused it is more enriching)
- Training for Adult mentors and peer mentors needs to be revisited. While the praise for Stefan is well deserved, there is a need for well- constructed TOTs so that all the Adult Mentors are equally effective. The peer mentors need to be put through the paces more and there is a need to review the suggestion about some one on one interaction between mentors and mentees so that the younger children are helped to open up and share more.
- The training will have to aim for consistency and commitment from the Adult mentors(suggestions have underscored this point)
- TTC for the teachers and the parents needs to be reviewed.

- The parents have to be involved more since they feel that the confidentiality element (which they called secrecy) makes them feel left out! An orientation as well as circles for them will help to bridge this gap. (Some admitted that they could not attend the orientation when it had been scheduled. So more such orientations perhaps)
- Whether and how the life skills that the students can be used for the benefit of other students and for the school at large
- Parent, Counselor feedback on the visible and subliminal changes which can be attributed to the participation in Generations program needs to be taken and documented.
- Overall documentation systems need to be in place ( this will be detailed out more in the larger evaluation report)
- Overall training for the G team in thorough documentation needs to be in place.
- School wise practices, though generic, some thought has to be given to the fact that while KHS program is 2 years old, the one in VPPS is just 6 months old.
- Considering whether and how to connect the Generations program with existing programs in the schools such as Life Skills, Life Skills with Cinema, Personality Development etc.

The last part of this Report is an **Interview Schedule** for further Needs Assessment in new schools. This Interview schedule can be used to conduct semi structured interviews of stake holders in Pre and Post format. I can conduct a brief Training on how to conduct these interviews.

**Areas: PRE**

1. Need for Emotional Support for children
2. Existing avenues for emotional support
3. Limitations of existing avenues
4. Need for mentoring and sharing
5. Emotional problems faced by the students
6. Where and how can teachers, parents, Principal, Counselors help the children and where they are unable to help
7. Reaching out in many ways

8. Need for an outfit and activity like Generations

**Areas: POST**

1. How has Generations program succeeded in giving emotional support
2. Other psychological gains (self- esteem, self- confidence, communication skills, leadership etc.)
3. Academic gains if any ( the evaluation report will highlight this)
4. Benefits of mentoring and sharing
5. Engaging and resolving emotional issues (evidences)
6. Different from teachers, parents, Principal, Counselors ( the impact)
7. The difference between other existing programs and Generations (the evaluation report will highlight this too, since I had asked specific questions)  
(The USP of Generations!)
8. Stakeholders direct feedback about Generations program.

This Report is thus a Needs assessment in a rigorously holistic manner with many parameters that have been listed in the introduction and elucidated after that. It will help Generations to take a review and plan what changes to make in the said dimensions.

In the new schools, this needs assessment can serve as a back drop against which you can view the entire program. Before starting the work the pre and post areas and probes will help you to map out and document the efficacy of the program.

The Evaluation Report will give all the details of all the aspects of the program as well as recommendations on current program as well detail out ideas for expansion, scaling up, fund raising as well engaging volunteers, networking etc.



## About GenDerations

The Generations program is loosely designed after the Boys to Men Mentoring founded in San Diego, USA in 1997. It is politically independent, non- sectarian, culturally inclusive, and financially independent. After working in USA, Germany, Switzerland and Southern Africa, successful pilot programs have been conducted in New Delhi and Pune (GenD India School Program, 2017). The programs are designed to guide young boys and girls in their transition from adolescence to adulthood. Generations uses well trained volunteer mentors to guide young people in acquiring a secure sense of identity, a mature orientation towards their lives and an ability to recognize and articulate their feelings in resolving their own personal and interpersonal conflicts.

The stated goals of the program revolve around working on self; inter personal, academic as well larger social goals of the students. The programs include: Parent Orientation, Adult and Peer Mentor training, Group Mentoring (Truth Telling Circles), Owl weekend and Rites of Passage Adventure. Some of the Core Elements of the program are: safety, integrity, speaking truth, respect, community, service etc. A General structure and curriculum of the program has been evolved and some group agreements are agreed upon.



**Peer Mentor Training at Kalmadi High School**



**Peer Mentor Training at Vikhe Patil Memorial School**



**Peer Mentor Training Graduation Ceremony with Parents**



## Peer Mentor Training at Kalmadi High School



## Recent Adult Mentor Training





