

# Organize a School Neighbourhood Cleanup

## **Background:**

"Cleanliness is next to godliness. We can no more gain God's blessing with an unclean body than with an unclean mind. A clean body cannot reside in an unclean city."

*(Father of Nation Mahatma Gandhi wrote in Young India, 19-11-'25)*

On October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014 we all took a pledge to volunteer ourselves for a clean India and to continue that effort we may begin our journey by devoting ourselves to clean our neighbourhood. "Clean Jhansi- Green Jhansi" is the project that has been planned to begin the sanitation drive involving all our schools, colleges, and other institutions. The awareness and motivational role of youth taking the lead it is to spread in every corner with every citizen.

## **1. Developing a Plan:**

Every educational institution has been asked to be part of this project. There are broadly three kind of students and educational institutions and each one is suppose to be part of the "Clean Jhansi- Green Jhansi" campaign. The District Administration has organised several rounds of meetings with the Principals and Head of the educational institutions to explain them the broad expected role that is to be played in this campaign. It has been decided that the "school neighbourhood clean" project activities would be carried on every Saturday in all schools and colleges.

### **Activity for small children (Class I to V):**

On the project day of the week (Saturday), young children (from class I to V) would be taught about the hygiene and sanitation practises that are suppose to be part of daily life. The example could be lessons related to "washing hands" before eating or throwing the garbage in a dustbin. The children may also be asked to draw posters, write stories and essays or prepare slogans and best practices lines for daily routine of hygiene and sanitation.

### **Activity for junior children (Class VI to VIII):**

These children may be asked to prepare leaflets, charts, posters, related to

cleanness and sanitation and while the senior groups (Class ix and above) of students may actually devote themselves for doing the cleanness drive, the junior section kids(Class VI to VIII) may do an awareness generation campaign by simply showing the posters or asking the people in project area to make their neighbourhood clean. For example these junior section children may simply ask the shop keeper or street vendors to keep a dustbin or not to use polythene. This can be done under the supervision of the teachers, however, it must be kept in mind that the young children should not be asked to do any physical labour but only making or awareness drive by doing a sort of rally or distribution of leaflets related to sanitation awareness.

**Activity for Senior Section(Class IX and above classes):**

The students belonging to the senior section would be engaged in volunteering themselves with doing physical work of cleaning the identified neighbourhood project area.

## **Steps to Prepare the Project Plan**

### **A. Planning Committee:**

Form a planning committee to manage the cleanup project for your institution. Beginning must be made from within the premise of the institution. Let all the four primary stakeholders (1-Management Committee of the Institution, 2- Teachers, 3- Students and 4- the Parents) know about the school's mission and resolution towards working on this project of being part of "Clean Jhansi-Green Jhansi".

### **B. Awareness and briefing all stakeholders:**

The campaign must begin first within the campus activities. Evaluate the sanitation environment within the campus. Is your campus clean? Are the dustbins put in place? Are the toilets for the staff and students clean and properly working? Is the source of drinking water pure? What are the major challenges within the campus has to be identified and listed for undertaking the activities. Whether the institution needs any fund raising to help itself to undertake these primary infrastructure be proper inside the campus. If funds are needed you may develop a strategy to let everyone know that you're organizing a neighbourhood cleanup project. You may want to think about adding a fundraising element to this project where you "turn trash into cash" for a good cause. Similar to a walk -a-thon you can recruit individuals to organize teams and get friends, family, co-workers to sponsor them to pick up trash for a certain number of minutes or hours and help raise money for a specific cause or organization locally. In the PTA

the parents may be asked to help the school to undertake its drive.

### C. Identifying the Neighbourhood Project Area:

Depending upon the number of students participating in the weekly identified activity it is required that the location or the project area is specified and defined properly. The institution must look around its neighbourhood and can adopt an area to cleanup. This could be one road, a series of roads, a park, school, hospital, monuments, or a building etc. The land mark of the project site must be identified and finalised with identifiable co-ordinates. So if the school is going to do cleaning drive on a particular street or road than the stretch on which this drive will be done must be properly chalked out. The location points (for examples the name of shops) and GPS location of the beginning and ending point may be taken from a mobile phone. The identified project area must be safe and if any traffic diversion is required to undertake the activities than it must be identified and informed.

### D. Building Teams and Group Leaders

**The Institution must count how many number of students are studying in class IX and above classes. It is required that the students are divided into group of twenty five each with one of them working as Group leader to coordinate the various activities undertaken during the project drive. So if the number of students studying in Class IX, and above classes are 200 than it is presumed that all these students would be divided into 8 groups/teams. The teachers must act as the mentor of the groups. The group leaders along-with their mentor(teacher in-charge for the group) must subdivide the activity area(the project area) under this campaign. Thus, on the activity day, the teachers and the group leaders should take their teams to their pre identified designated area for doing the cleanness drive.**

### E- Preparing the project activity map

Once the location of activity is identified and project teams are formed in groups the project preparedness and activities to be undertaken may be done in following three stage:

**FIRST : Do a transact walk of the selected project activity location to identify the source of waste/garbage or filth and dirt in the area. There can be various source of it related to following issues:**

- Waste originating from the street itself (dust, soil, mud etc.), produced by weather conditions and traffic.

- Seasonal waste (leaves, twigs and so on) produced by weather conditions or consequent human intervention, which is limited to certain periods of the year .
- Recurring waste (general litter – paper and tin cans) mostly originating from lack of respect for the environment by users, in general shop owners and street vendors etc. who clean their property and dispose of their rubbish in public areas. This kind of waste usually accumulates at certain times of day and almost always in the same places.
- Casual waste (empty cigarette packets, cigarette ends, matches, tickets, receipts, sweet papers, animal waste, oil leaks from vehicles, unwanted leaflets etc.) caused by normal pedestrian traffic and vehicles, and which varies with their frequency.
- Exceptional waste, usually bulky waste which people occasionally throw out on the streets.
- Lack of proper drainage Infrastructure, this happens usually due to lack or damage of sewerage/drainage or water pipe lines leading to the collection of dirty water creating a muddy and filthy waste on the street.

**There can be more sources of waste, however, it is required that the group leaders must identify the project area and source of the waste and filth that is causing the neighbourhood dirty. The photography of this must be done. Once that is identified than following activities may be undertaken:**

**SECOND: An awareness campaign to be done with all shopkeepers and street vendors within the activity zone to adopt the sanitation practises by putting up a sufficient size dustbins. The awareness drive must continue on every week activity day to motivate the shopkeepers and vendors for adopting the sanitation module. A drive related to making them aware about recyclable waste and not recyclable waste must be undertaken. They must be asked to stop use of polythene and plastic that is prohibited. The awareness drive may include rally, street play, slogan and poster or leaflet distribution in the activity area.**

**THIRD- Identify the resources(tools and equipment) that is required to the cleanness drive. This is very important. Doing actual physical work related to sweeping the neighbourhood requires to identify the number of brooms, type of brooms and other tools required to be used on the street. The Institution must plan for it and should procure it if possible from its own resource or it must inform with the requirement to the District Administration to make it available the tools.**

## **Keep your Goal in Mind**

Make sure all your stakeholders, teams and team members are well informed and are empowered and well motivated towards this goal of making our city clean and green. Everyone must feel proud for taking this pledge. It may be possible that a few students or parents or some other people doubt your intention and project activity but it is required that we all remind them and ourselves about value of sanitation and environment in our day to day life. It is essential to remember that cleaning on street is not an activity that is low or uncalled for student but it an activity that is leading our students to become responsible citizens and they are actually learning to repay the society by beautifying their neighbourhood.

Develop a pledge for students and teachers. You can even prepare a script that you can use when soliciting pledges. Here is a sample:

**“ I am an Indian and I am proud of my country and its great civilisation. I am participating in the \_\_\_\_\_neighbourhood cleanup project on this day. I will never use polythene to buy and carry any item. In my house and on street I will never litter and use dustbins always. In the school neighbourhood project I will be picking up litter and cleaning the street to be part of the great mission of making my city Jhansi clean and green. By doing this activity I feel proud to be part of “Swachh Bharat”.**

### **Review Last minute Details and Communicate with teams.**

- Make sure your group members know where and when to meet.
- Coordinate the distribution of your team's materials (trash bags, brooms, etc.). Assign person to pick up materials.
- Encourage students to bring water to stay hydrated.
- Encourage at least one person on the team to have a cell phone.
- Instruct group members to call district administration if there is an urgent emergency.
- Bring a few band aids along. Cuts and scrapes are the most likely mishaps

### **Recognize Your Activity and Reward:**

Everyone likes to be recognized for his or her hard work and achievements, especially students. Show your students how much you appreciate them and they are more likely to fully participate and learn the value of doing this activity. The following are some suggestions on how you can recognize your students.

- Verbally recognize your student' efforts in school assembly.

- Plan to recognize your students activity at your next special event(annual day function/ PTA meetings).
- Provide your team with a camera to take before and after pictures. Post the pictures in a visible, public area/school web site.
- Recognise school's efforts through the media. Submit a press release and photo or write a letter to the local newspaper.
- Have a celebration recognizing the accomplishments of the school.
- Take the feedback you get from your students seriously.

### **Reflect and Learn**

- While working on this journey of doing effort to make our city “Clean and Green”, it is important to reflect on the experience and think about the impact of the project on the community as well as what you learned about yourself and others. Here are some suggested activities:
  - How has the activity changed the behaviour of students and parents? A feedback form may be collected from the students as well as from parents about various sanitation and hygiene practises.
  - The students may be encouraged to Blog, draw a picture, write a poem, submit a letter to the editor regarding their experience.
- The street vendors/shop keepers may be evaluated for their behavioural change after few months. The objective is to encourage every citizen to be part of the campaign so an evaluation can be done after three months on the change behaviour pattern and what has worked and what has not worked.
- The students may be asked to give feed back on points like -
  - What did you learn about social responsibility and environmental concerns?
  - What is the one thing that you will remember most about this project activity?
  - How can you continue to make a difference in our community?

