

EDUCATION TODAY

Sathya Sai Education in Human Values

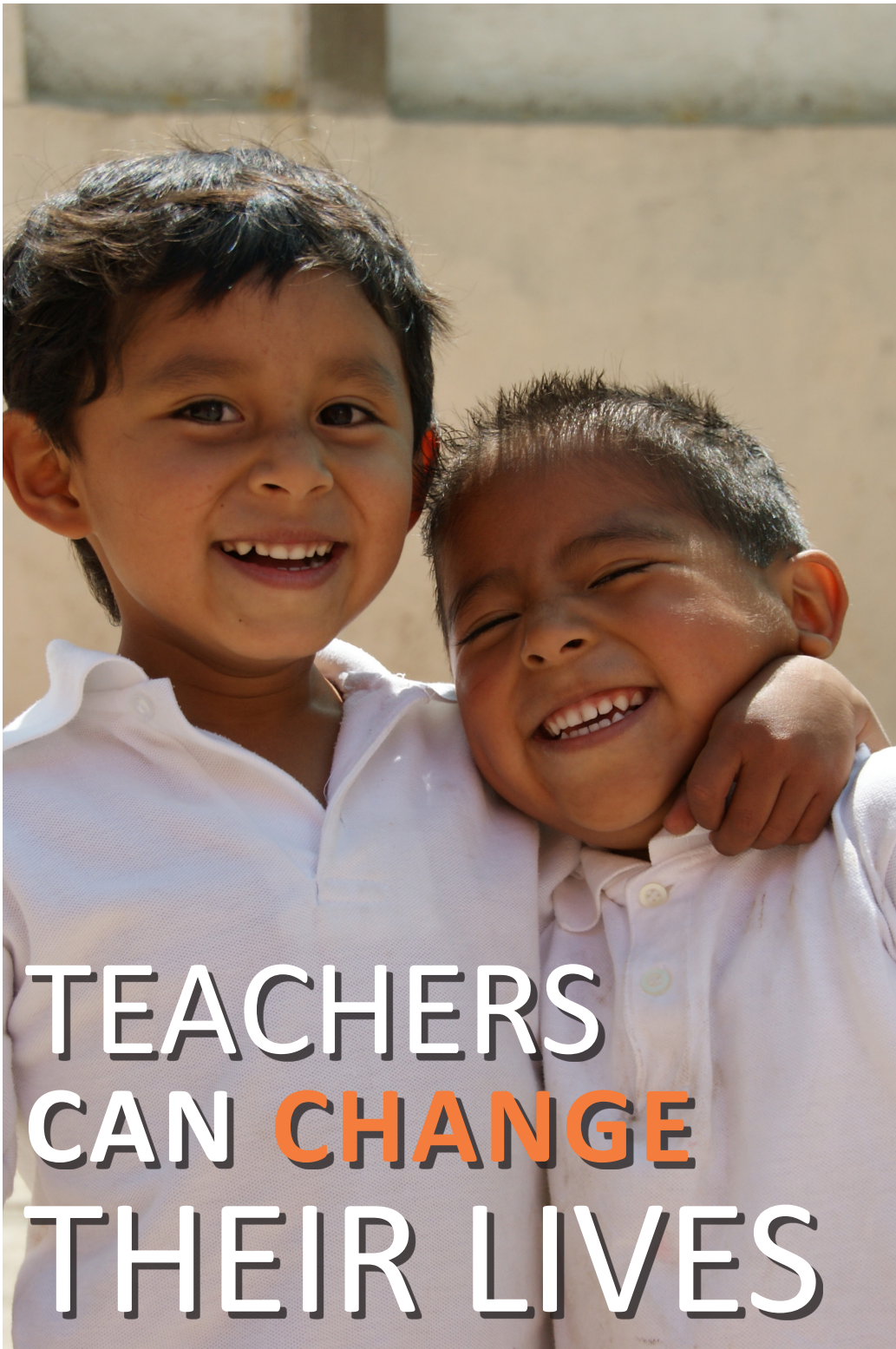
NEWSLETTER

5

January 2024

Teachers Reflecting on SSEHV Practices: "Keeping the Tank Filled"

HIGHLIGHTS



TEACHERS
CAN **CHANGE**
THEIR LIVES



Promoting Values
through the ARTS



STRENGTHENING
VALUES
EDUCATION
CONFERENCE

ISSE AUSTRALIA
CERTIFICATE
COURSES

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"The profession of a teacher is the most responsible one in every country. If the teacher strays from the path of truth, the entire society will suffer." Sathya Sai Baba

For more information: <https://issea.org.au/resources/ssehv-helps-teachers-too/teacher-survival-final/>

EDITORIAL

Teachers Reflecting on their SSEHV Practices: "Keeping the Tank Filled"



Most teachers want to make a difference and are committed to bringing out the best in their students, but we ask a lot of them these days – to be subject experts, nurturers, record keepers, administrators, social workers and role models. Many feel that, faced with so many pressures, they are struggling all the time to keep up, and this can lead to burnout. Those involved with SSEHV training have probably encountered instances when teachers have loved the idea of working with this programme and realised its importance, but feel they cannot manage to implement it when they have so many other things to fit into the school day.

As Sathya Sai Baba said in 1988: *"Only if there is water in the tank can you get water in the tap. If the tank is dry, how can you draw water from the tap?"*

We tell teachers how im-

portant it is for them to be role-models of the values – but they do not always realize that SSEHV is not only for the benefit of students. Understanding and eliciting their intrinsic values also equips themselves to cope better with the pressures they face, deal better with challenges, and find a way to fill "their own tanks", so they can then become the "ever-flowing taps". When teachers are asked to reflect on how SSEHV has affected them personally and professionally, they often report positive effects including renewed professional vigour. They begin to see themselves as better people, they feel more able to control stressful emotions such as anger, have better relationships with their students, colleagues and their own families, and the ability to tap into their own inner peace at stressful times and to see the beauty in their students. As well, they report improved physical health.

They see silent sitting as a particularly valuable tool, especially when they use it to set a peaceful, loving mindset at the beginning of the school day: *"Every day*

early in the morning I close my eyes, breathe deeply three times and fully concentrate on the day's work. Later I imagine my students sitting in the classroom and I put my focus on each student's face, imagining each of them as a beautiful flower or something else beautiful. Then I have a sense of love from my heart. I feel full of strength and energy all over. Then the day's work goes smoothly – everything is under control and I feel full of joy. Gradually I have conquered my panicky problem."

They also report positive benefits of learning to tap into their own inner source of Peace and Love:

"As a teacher, I sometimes had mood changes and lost my temper. But since participating in SSEHV, whenever I want to have a fit of temper, I can look for a place – either go outside the classroom,

breathe deeply, or imagine a golden-coloured cloud – and this makes my mood more stable."

Undoubtedly positive outcomes occur whenever teachers reflect consciously on the effects of SSEHV in their own lives. Their stories show the importance of encouraging them to recognise first how it can promote their own wellbeing. Supporting teachers to reach and sustain this wellbeing can motivate them intrinsically to engage further with SSEHV in their teaching, and help them to understand firsthand what it is to really live in Peace and Love. As a consequence, this naturally makes them better role models for their students. Hopefully it also prevents them from burning out or leaving the profession.

Margaret Taplin
EC Board Member

"As an average teacher, I think that the values education has changed me in many ways. The values education has changed my disposition when I encounter a difficulty. Instead of being irritable or having a fit of temper, it has helped me to learn to endure patiently and be tolerant. In the past teachers may just have taught children but not from heart to heart. My concept has changed. I use my heart."

A Timely Conference (Barbados, 12-14 October 2023)

The **Sai Institute of Education West Indies (SIEWI)** in partnership with the **Institutes of Sathya Sai Education (ISSE) in USA and Canada**, hosted the International Conference on Strengthening Values Education in Barbados, from 12th to 14th October 2023. The Conference was organized under the auspices of the Education Committee of the Sathya Sai International Organisation (SSSIO). Seventeen Caribbean countries, comprising fifteen of the Caribbean Community, as well as Curacao and St. Maarten were welcomed by SIEWI. The goal of the Conference was to increase awareness of the need for Human Values at all levels of society, and encourage the participants to support an education capable of fostering and strengthening these values in the home, at school, at the workplace and in the community-at-large. The Conference welcomed the participation of Ministers of Education, Permanent Secretaries, Principals and Teachers as well as stakeholders from civil society from both the private and public sector. During the three-day event, the Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) Programme was addressed through the ample experience of over 50 years of its implementation in a large number of countries worldwide. Based on the philosophy of Educare (i.e. to draw out that which is already within), geared for character development and designed to accentuate and nurture positive qualities and capabilities, the programme aroused interest in all participants. Its flexibility and ready adaptability to all cultures and conditions were highly appreciated and grasped through the personal insights and proficiency of the speakers who shared tangible examples of the overall benefits of the programme. Finally, emphasis was placed on how the SSEHV programme is in alignment with and in support of the United Nation's mandate for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for 2030 with respect to Education. Several newspapers reported on the successful SSEHV Conference. However, the inspiration of hundreds of participants, who attended the event in-person or online, is the true testament to its heartfelt impact.



Promoting Values Through The Arts

The Multipurpose Space Art & Values, situated in Ticino, the southernmost canton in Switzerland, hosted an inspiring exhibition from 10th May to 10th June 2023, dedicated to Human Values. Over 200 people visited the exhibition with extreme interest, each for almost 2 full hours, and returned to their homes after picking a value to take home with them. The exhibit was the outcome of a one-year school process which triggered group sharing, deep reflections and creative excellence among over 270 students, (mostly adolescents), and their teachers. This uplifting school project, entitled "**ViviValori, A Journey with Human Values**", and consequent community event, was coordinated by two public school teachers in cooperation with the said multipurpose space, among whose objectives is to sensitize on the need to promote Human Values at all levels of society. By nourishing its exhibition visitors with the Beauty of Art, which when "true comes from the Heart", the exhibitions arts all aim at gently "re-orientating" their attention towards the true nature of humanness, thus cultivating a deeper, more spiritual outlook. The exhibition project was encouraged and supported by the **Institute of Sathya Sai Education of South Europe (ISSE SE)**, in the person of its former Vice-Director, Suzanne Palermo Carenini, also co-founder of the Multipurpose Space Art & Values. The ques-



tion "What is the difference between material values and human values?" was the first step of this journey, which guided the youngsters to move inward to grasp the presence of values within themselves and realize their worth and importance in day-to-day living. Experiencing their universality is vital for each of us, young and old, as individuals and as a society, because they are the thread that unites us, that helps us live together, and give meaning to our humanity. The students' artwork emphasized individual value themes and class cooperation, and the exhibition was enriched by three interactive "value-stations": *the Value Watch-Compass*; *the Values Staircase*, *the Character Flower*, and by a unique video highlighting how "we bring human values to life by embodying them".

Further information and gallery at: <https://www.isse-se.org/en/en/seminars-and-events/highlights/1027>

EXCELLENCE IN LATIN AMERICA

The cooperation among the **Institutes of Sathya Sai Education in Latin America (LATAM ISSEs)**, exemplifies the acronym of the word T.E.A.M.: *Together Everyone Achieves More*. The 12 Institutes, which are present in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, México, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela, promote Human Values extensively in their region, and their capacity to collaborate with one another is a promise of accomplishment since 2009! During that year the first Latin American Diploma cycle was organized in Brazil. The purpose was to train a greater number of trainers from all Institutes, as well as teachers from the Sathya Sai Schools in the region. Other editions have taken place since then in Venezuela, Ecuador, Argentina, Mexico, Dominican Republic and Bolivia. In 2012, the Directors of the different Institutes agreed to reinforce their contact by maintaining it virtually on a regular basis. Every month, a working group meeting is held where materials, theoretical reflections and experiences are shared, creating positive interaction amongst all the Institutes. As a result of the good communication and close relations that have been generated among the Institutes, cooperation is frequent. Many joint-meetings have been held in Colombia, Ecuador and Peru to share experiences and deepen the lessons of the Programme. A synergistic relationship between directors and members of the Institutes of Colombia and Ecuador began in 2011. During the pandemic their combined efforts enabled them



to expand SSEHV through a virtual educational platform with 12 lessons in Human Values and 10 Master Classes of Meditation. This work was so successful that both Institutes started to make several virtual International conferences whose main purpose is to sensitise on the need for an Integral Education in Human Values. Until now, there have been seven regional conferences. Since the main interest of the Institutes of LATAM is to work together, Mexico was invited to participate in the conferences. Since the first conference, the Education Ministry of Ecuador and the National Board of Education in Values (Civil Society Organization of Ecuador) have supported every event and have invited the Ministries of Colombia and Mexico. The last conference, held from the 23rd to the 25th of October 2023, was noteworthy as both government authorities of Colombia and Ecuador participated. This virtual work has spread SSEHV to thousands of teachers, parents and the general community of the region.

ISSEA CERTIFICATE COURSES

On the 23rd of November of 2023, the **Institute of Sathya Sai Education Australia (ISSEA)**, was happy to celebrate the first cohort to complete the Introductory Certificate of its newly developed online course. This course is uniquely offered in a blended learning mode through the Moodle platform. The Introductory Certificate involved 48 hours of study that included video-recorded lectures, readings and reflective practice along with real-time group discussions via Zoom. The purpose of the course is to inform teachers and other members of the general public about the characteristic features of SSEHV so they can experience its benefits for themselves and be equipped to share Human Values in the schools, the home, the workplace, and the wider community. The memorable event reflected Sathya Sai Baba's practice of personally presenting diplomas to graduates and post-graduates on the eve of his birthday.



Front cover: Children from the Colegio Sathya Sai de Cuernavaca, Mexico



The Sri Sathya Sai International Organization (SSSIO) is a spiritual and humanitarian organization that has been active for over 50 years, currently in 114 countries. The SSSIO Education Committee supports and promotes Sathya Sai Education worldwide including 39 Sathya Sai Schools, 28 Institutes of Sathya Sai Education, and programmes of Sathya Sai Education in Human Values (SSEHV) and Sai Spiritual Education (SSE). For more information please contact: ec@sssio.org

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