

Teach India partners with Read India

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Ever since the Teach India campaign was launched in July this year, the flame of learning has grown steadier and brighter. With more than one lakh people from across the country volunteering their time and talent, the movement to teach those without teachers has grown letter by letter and sentence by sentence.

Along the way, several new partnerships have been soldered—nothing, after all, can be achieved without the enormous strength of team work—with NGOs, schools, corporates and well-wishers of every type coming forward to lend their expertise and resources. Children in slums, mobile school vans and poorly run schools have benefited from a personalised interaction with this army of

volunteers—didis, uncles, aunties and bhaiyyas who have spent two hours a week teaching them to say a sentence correctly, do their sums and learn the names of different countries on a map.

On the occasion of Children's Day, we would like to present a partner who has added a new dimension to Teach India—the reputed educational NGO Pratham with its very own program called Read India, which aims to improve reading and arithmetic skills of children through the nation. It was launched in March 2007 and will run right up to the end of 2009.

Read India has a charter of focused goals: to increase learning levels of children from 50% to 70% with a focus on reading ability and arithmetic; to change attitudes towards children who are assumed not to be able to learn;

to inspire the establishment through the almost 'overnight' change on a massive scale; and most important of all, to reduce dropouts by enabling children to learn better.

Like Teach India, Read India is a grassroots initiative that draws on the support of a large-scale volunteer base, but it also looks towards government partnership wherever possible. Volunteering opportunities to Teach India applicants are now available in the reading component called I Can Read English. Those who wish to sign up will have to teach English for two hours on the weekend.

A child who can speak and read basic English feels more confident to face the global world of jobs and opportunity. We invite Teach India applicants who are yet to begin their assignments and are keen to join this program to visit www.teach.timesofindia.com or www.readindia.org for details on how to enroll.

