



An action based workshop by people with disabilities



PRESENTS

DAY OF ACTION 2018

THURSDAY, 21ST JUNE 2018

On the occasion of Day of Action 2018, United Way Chennai collaborated with a number of NGO and Corporate partners and put together an awareness and action based workshop called “Know my Ability”. The key goal here was to change the dominant narrative around disability. We wanted to raise awareness about the various skills and talents that people with disabilities have and are often overlooked in daily life and discourse. It was with this in mind that we organized workshops for corporate employees by students and artists having multiple disabilities from various NGOs.

Striking a Strong Partnership:

Our corporate partners for this event were Cholamandalam Investment and Finance (2 locations), Cognizant Technology Solutions (4 locations), Ingersoll Rand, and RR Donnelley. A total of 8 sessions were held with our various NGO partners- Om Muruga Special School, Swabodhini School for Special Children, V-EXCEL Educational Trust, Vasantham-School and Home for People with Special Needs, HeART beat Foundation, Rajammal Trust, and Madras Dyslexia Association. Overall, our event engaged with 350 workshop participants and 40 volunteers with multiple disabilities spread over 8 sessions involving 4 corporate partners and 7 NGOs working towards the upliftment of people with disabilities in a number of ways.

The Win-Win:

This activity had tangible (building awareness about the organization, providing opportunities of employment for the people with disabilities, increasing volunteer base) and intangible (confidence building activity for the students and artists, gave them the opportunity to interact with people from different backgrounds, and started off a conversation with great enthusiasm and helped build awareness) benefits for the Non Governmental organizations working towards the cause. The event also saw the enthusiastic participation of our corporate partners as it gave them the opportunity to do something different on an otherwise regular weekday. It was also a stress buster for many and positively impacted their emotional quotient and ability to empathize while also teaching them a new skill and contributing to the CSR activities of their company.

'Day of Action 2018' on Social Media:

In an attempt to engage with a wider audience, we ran an awareness campaign on our Facebook page. We used the hashtags #KnowMyAbility and #DoYouSeeMe and kept up with daily posts starting the 7th of June. This included a photo series on people with disabilities, countdown posts, and a Vox Pop video ending with a call for action addressed to the people of Chennai. This was done in order to make people aware of the misconceptions and prejudices they have about people with disabilities as well as give voice to a few people with disabilities ranging from a lift operator to a sports person. We also did a Facebook live video on the day of the event from a Yoga session taken by children of a special school for corporate employees. This saw a high level of engagement as 21st June was also International Yoga Day.

Media Coverage:

The Know My Ability campaign was given ample coverage in the Times of India, The Hindu Downtown and Deccan Chronicle's Chennai Chronicle.

Big Impact:

Following the event, we received positive feedback from all our partners. The Special Schools we were engaged with especially spoke about the confidence boost that the event was for the children involved in the activity and greatly improved their communication skills and enthusiasm to learn and teach others.

As United Way Chennai expands its focus towards various interventions for persons with disabilities such as improving accessibility, employability, setting up parasports facilities and early detection and interventions for children with special needs, Day of Action 2018 reinforced our commitment towards the cause and succeeded in creating the much-needed awareness on disability.