St. Francis College for Women
Begumpet, Hyderabad-500016
(Autonomous & Affiliated to Osmania University)

Best Practice 1:

Title: **Comprehensive Support System (CSS) - Fostering Well-being and Success**

Objectives:

1. Provide emotional, financial, and academic support to students, teaching, and non-teaching staff.
2. Foster a supportive institutional environment in demanding times.
3. Enhance overall well-being, retention, and success rates.

The Context:

Target Group:the target group consists of Students (from dysfunctional families, economically backward backgrounds, those affected by suicidal incidents and any one in need), Teaching Staff and Non-Teaching Staff.

The Underlying Principles of this practice is Inclusive and equitable support, Holistic well-being and Institutional social responsibility which is the dire need in times of the demanding current scenario such as Increasing diversity and socio-economic challenges, Rising mental health concerns and suicidal tendencies

The Practice:

The institution's management true to its logo wisdom and peace through love takes up the below mentioned activities so as to handle the challenge of the current times.

For Students: the management members undertake personal Counseling service over and above the college counselor's services, Fee exemptions and financial aid for economically deprived

students who approach voluntarily or who are identified by the mentors or sister students, Special academic support and mentoring to students who are dropping out due to dysfunctional families, Regular follow-ups and progress monitoring.

For Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff: Emotional support, personal house visits and counseling during personal crises (loss, sickness); Economic assistance (loans, advances) in case of accidents, surgery or personal loss; Flexible work arrangements and leave policies in case of personal or family emergencies like terminal illness treatment; Professional development opportunities and Recognition and rewards for outstanding performance.

The Uniqueness of the program is because of its integrated support system addressing academic, emotional, and financial needs; Proactive identification and intervention and for its Inclusive approach covering students, teaching, and non-teaching staff.

Evidence of Success:

Increase in student retention rates among those who would have given up the program due to financial constraints, higher satisfaction rate among supported students and staff creating a sense of belonging among the stakeholders.

Effective support system leading to improved academic outcomes, increased satisfaction, and reduced dropout rates.

Problems Encountered:

The following are the problems encountered: Resource allocation and funding, Stigma and reluctance to seek help, Balancing institutional and individual needs.

Impact:

1. Enhanced overall well-being and success
2. Improved institutional culture and social responsibility
3. Increased staff morale, retention, and productivity

By implementing the Comprehensive Support System (CSS), our institution demonstrates its commitment to fostering a supportive environment for all members of the academic community.

Best Practice 2:

Title: Elevate: Upskilling School Teachers an SFC Initiative

Objective:

Empower school teachers to become catalysts for healthy living and scientific literacy among high school students.

Specific Objectives:

1. Educate teachers on the significance of balanced diets and nutritional assessment to promote healthy lifestyle choices.
2. Enhance teachers' ability to guide students in making informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.
3. Equip teachers with practical skills to design, conduct, and analyze basic biological experiments.
4. Foster scientific aptitude and experimental learning among high school students through trained educators.

Context

The Department of Biochemistry and Nutrition organized a one-day hands-on training program for school science teachers. Around 14 faculty members from different schools participated in this initiative. The program aimed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application in understanding biomolecules and nutrition, which is crucial for fostering a healthy lifestyle and ensuring students receive accurate nutritional education.

The Department of Zoology organized a one-day training program for school teachers focusing on biological experiments. Approximately 15 teachers participated, with the resource persons being faculty members from the Department of Zoology, SFC. This initiative was designed to bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application of biological science concepts, empowering teachers to become effective facilitators in the classroom.

Practice

The training program covered:

Department of Biochemistry and Nutrition

- **Qualitative Analysis of Biomolecules**: Exploring the reactions and behavior of carbohydrates, amino acids, and lipids.

- **Bio-separation Techniques**: Demonstrations of chromatography and electrophoresis to separate and study biomolecules.
- **Nutritional Assessment**: Methods to evaluate health status and the role of balanced diets in maintaining well-being. Teachers gained hands-on experience through practical sessions, enhancing their capability to integrate these techniques into classroom teaching.

Department of Zoology

- Demonstrations and hands-on practice of basic biological experiments.
- Detailed explanations of methods to analyze and comprehend experimental results.
- Discussions on the role of scientific temperament in fostering curiosity and interest in biological sciences among students. The workshop provided an interactive platform where teachers could gain confidence in conducting experiments and integrating them into their teaching methodologies.

Evidence of Success

The program resulted in:

- Enhanced understanding among participants of biochemical principles and nutritional assessment methods.
- Teachers acquiring practical skills they can implement in classrooms to improve science education.
- Increased awareness of the significance of a balanced diet and lifestyle, which teachers can impart to students, fostering a ripple effect on community health.
- Teachers reported a significant improvement in their ability to conduct and explain biological experiments.
- Positive feedback highlighted the value of practical training in enhancing their teaching effectiveness.
- Several participants expressed their readiness to implement the learned techniques in their schools, aiming to spark interest in biological sciences among students.

Problems Encountered

- Limited duration of the program, which restricted in-depth exploration of advanced topics.
- Variability in participants' prior knowledge, requiring extra effort to ensure all attendees gained a uniform understanding.