## **SOCH YOUTH SUMMER CAMP 2016**

SOCH Youth organised a two-day Summer camp for young people studying in Kathmandu Valley on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of September 2016. The camp was held in



Dhulikhel, at Dhulikhel Village Resort. There were 63 participants and 7 team leaders in the camp. The team leaders were from SOCH Youth and from different colleges. SOCH Youth Vice President and secretary, Mr Kiran Khatri and Miss Sanjina Rai facilitated the two-day program that included games, activities and presentations from various speakers.

The SOCH Youth team and all camp participants were welcomed to the Dhulikhel Village Resort with big smiles and breakfast. Following the breakfast the participant were provided with required materials like (schedule, pen etc). After the breakfast the participants were requested to wear SOCH Youth camp T-shirt and go to the hall for activities. Before the participant enter the hall each individual were given flower which they would drop in the mud tub. This was done to mark the representation of every individual in the youth camp.

Mr Khatri officially opened the SOCH Youth winter camp by welcoming all SOCH Youth members, SOCH Nepal members and participants of the camp. Mr Khatri discussed the importance of personal development, leadership and teamwork and highlighted the opportunities that the youth summer camp offered for participants to develop skills in these areas. As part of this initial session, participants were divided into random groups and these groups were the basis for all games and activities during the camp. The activity required each group to create a name on the basis of profession and slogan that would consistently identify them as a group during the camp and would be there group during games and activities. The groups were immediately excited to work together and showed incredible patience and understanding from this first activity. A number of participants expressed the highlight of the camp to be the unity of the group and teamwork involved on the camp as per the feedback form.

Many of the games on the first day involved teamwork and encouraged participants to continue developing skills in communication and understanding through kindness and respect. Team leaders observed all participants supporting each other and motivating people from all teams. Participants also expressed the games to be a highlight of the camp. One participant stated that,

"SOCH Youth summer camphas become a very grateful program. It has helped us in different ways. I suggest SOCH Youth should continue organizing this types of program / camp."

It was wonderful to see all participants demonstrate enthusiasm and enjoyment during all activities.

Executive Director of SOCH Nepal, Mr. Uttam Niraula gave a presentation on the absolute importance of recognising the strengths and uniqueness of every person rather than identifying individuals based on categories such as caste or religion. Mr Niraula encouraged participants to consider the diverse ideas in Nepali culture and western culture in regards to family, religion and worship of various God's. He focused his presentation on being open to different societies as key of personal development. He also discussed the structure of society and Nepali culture and how this influences our personal development. Many participants were taking notes and all

were listening intently as Mr. Niraula presented insightful information. He Explain every human beings are different and they all are equal so that we should not judgemental. He also discussed about the acceptance and individuality.

SOCH Youth vice-president Mr. Kiran Khatri showed short video which highlighted the concept and character to be a leader. The participants were also provided with

Executive Director of SOCH Nepal, Mr. Uttam Niraula led a session in regards to the

pressures that youth face in Nepalese society. This session allowed discussion to occur participants provided between and opportunity for them to express their feelings and thoughts on this topic. Many participants expressed concerns in regards to education opportunities, political structure, belief systems, multiple roles they are required to play in society and high expectations from elders. This session provoked healthy



discussion between participants. Some participants suggested that they were identified by their Nepalese culture and others were considering what makes up their identity and how Nepalese culture influences this. There was an activity associated with this session where participants were requested to present a drama that explored how Nepalese youth could overcome the daily pressures they identified. Some key ideas that were portrayed included developing effective communication, educating elders, embracing opportunities and supporting one another.

After the light snacks secretary of SOCH Youth Ms. Sanjina Rai led the session of expressive art which involved creativity development and public spoken. This session was carried out to boost up the confidence level of every individual who had participated in the camp. The individual were made to develop either story or poem from their art and present it in front all the participants.

Musical therapist Mrs. Maud Van De Worp led the session of self reflection. The participants were provide with A4 paper and requested to draw circle, square, triangle and question mark in the paper. Later the participants were allowed to draw as their wish. After the participants had finished Mrs. Maud explained every individual's personality.

In the evening SOCH team member, Mr Bipin Thapa delivered the final session for day 1. Mr Thapa presented an incredibly thought provoking presentation regarding the importance of respect and care shown towards parents. During this presentation he shared short video clips and poems with the audience that allowed him to create an emotional connection as well as inspiring everyone to reflect on their own experiences and relationships with family. Camp participants and team leaders demonstrated a range of contemplative emotions during this session. One participant stated that this presentation "really touched his heart". This session concluded with a reflective exercise where each participant wrote a letter to their parents expressing their thoughts and feelings.

Participants of the camp commented that they directly observed and learnt leadership skills from the SOCH Youth team particularly during the evening after dinner on day 1. They explained that the SOCH Youth team provided support and motivation in encouraging individuals to enjoy them selves by dancing and sharing positive experiences with each other around the campfire.

On the second day, the activities were focused predominately on developing skills in leadership, understanding and active listening. Groups were asked to present their

ideas on leadership and all groups delivered exceptional information. They presented ideas in a creative manner that clearly demonstrated critical thinking and a comprehensive understanding of leadership and how teamwork is also associated.

Right after the Yoga and refreshment SOCH Youth member Mr. Bipin Thapa and Ms. Sanjina Rai facilitated the session of community art. In this session each group were suggested to go outside and bring something that inspired them. Each group brought something and explained the reason for choosing that particular item. After this every individual were provided with clay. With the help of the clay the participant were allowed to make anything of their choice. After the participants had finished they were lead outside the hall and made to place their clay art on the table. Further they were requested to move around and place other clay art according to their choice. When the final decoration was done the participants were lead inside the hall. This session carried the message that every individual are different. We must appreciate and accept the people as they are in the community. Community is beautiful place to live in because of different kinds of people.

Mr Niraula presented a second session on the importance of motivation and how the historical and current political situation affects the motivation of Nepal's youth. He encouraged participants to consider what they could do about changing their thought process and encouraged them to share ideas on how they could make a difference to society. All participants were impressed with this presentation and were asking many questions that generated positive discussion amongst the youth. Some discussion points included; why Nepal's glorious history is not popular globally and is it possible to start a campaign to raise Nepali youth's morality by this kind of awareness? Many participants provided feedback that this session was the highlight of the camp.

It was evident that all participants learnt invaluable life skills as well as developed skills in critical thinking and creative thinking. This was evident through observation of participant's social interaction, final presentations to the rest of the group and feedback forms. In one of the final sessions they were asked to reflect on the camp and share their thoughts. During this time of sharing, they provided incredibly positive feedback and gave thanks to all SOCH Youth team members for providing them the opportunity to attend the camp.

The camp concluded with a certificate distribution session and a photo session, where all participants were creating memories with their new friends. Most feedback received in regards to the camp was positive and encouraging. In fact many participants stated that the camp was not long enough and they would like to be involved in a 3-4 days camp next time. Participants shared their feedback verbally, in an evaluation form and on the Face book page.

The SOCH Youth Summer Camp was incredibly successful with presentations, discussion and activities that inspired the youth of Nepal to be the positive change that they want to see in Nepal. One of the participants stated to;

"Teach the youth to do well enough for the country with management of leadership, teamwork and the purpose of helping".