**Project Title: Reducing Road Accidents Caused by Underage Driving**

Subtitie: Essay Writing Competition and Outreach

Project Location: Vellore District, Tamil Nadu, India

Estimated Start Date: July 1, 2018

Estimated End Date: November 14, 2018

Executing Agency: Childline Partner of Vellore District (The HOPE House India)

Sector: Road Transport & Highways

Sub-Sector: Education, Public Awareness

**Description of the Issue:**

India explicitly prohibits anyone below the age of 18 from driving (except any vehicle that is 50 CC capacity and below which are not available in the market). In 2016 alone, road injuries were one of the top four causes of both morbidity and mortality in India with 150,785 deaths attributed to road accidents and 494,624 people injured. Use of mobile phones, overloaded vehicles, use of controlled substances, and (in the case of 2 wheelers) not wearing helmets are all major risks of traffic accidents. Severity of road accidents has also increased. Deaths per 100 accidents have increased from 29.1 to 31.4 deaths. **Nationally, in 2016, drivers less than 18 years of age caused close to 11,000 deaths.** We believe that through awareness, education, and active participation of law enforcement, we can prevent these needless deaths.

**Nature of the Project:**

The HOPE House is a registered charitable trust in Vellore, Tamil Nadu, India, working with and among vulnerable children. Our mission is to provide care and protection to needy children by giving them access to education, enabling participation, and empowering them with information about their rights and responsibilities. Currently, we have several projects including the Integrated Children’s Home for Girls and Childline Vellore, a sub-center partner of Childline India Foundation of Ministry of Women and Child Development of Government of India. In line with our mission to provide comprehensive protection to children while enabling participation and empowerment of personal responsibility, we are proposing a new project to target the high mortality rate of vehicle accidents caused by underage driving, defined as persons under the age of 18 years old. We aim to pilot this project first in Vellore where in 2016, **underage driving caused close to 900 road accidents in our state**. Our hope is that this program will make a difference in decreasing the number of underage drivers in India, and therefore the total number of road accidents and deaths.

**Program Goals:**

The goals of this pilot program are three-fold. Our first aim is to create awareness and increase engagement surrounding the dangers of underage driving. Next, we aim to empower youths to make informed and safe decisions about risky behavior in relation to driving. Finally, we ultimately aim to reduce road accident morbidity and mortality caused by youth. We believe the proposed program will meet these goals. We, The HOPE House, intend to fund this program through local stakeholders.

**Program Timeline and Components:**

**Phase I:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **July 1, 2018 – July 31st, 2018** | **August 15, 2018** |
| 1. **Advertisement of Program** 2. **Essay Contest** | **C. Announcement of Essay Contest Winners** |

1. Advertisement of Program

The Essay Contest will be advertised on various advertisement platforms including newspapers and social media.

1. Essay Contest

The Essay Contest will begin on July 1st, 2018 and submissions will be taken until the midnight of July 31st, 2018. To be eligible for the Essay Contest, participants must be under the age of 17 years old (as on 15th of August, 2018), Vellore district resident and should be regularly attending school in Vellore district. The essay submission must be a 500 word maximum (in Tamil or English) on a topic **“My role in addressing underage driving in Vellore”**. Essay can be submitted by post, email, or using the web form.

1. Announcement of Essay Contest Winners

The Essay Contest winners will be announced on August 15th, 2018. Each of the 20 blocks of the Vellore district will have 3 winners, amounting to 60 total essay winners. These winners will continue on to Phase II of the competition.

**Phase II:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **August 16, 2018 – October 31st, 2018** | **November 14th, 2018** |
| 1. Conducting Outreach and Raising Awareness | 1. Announcements of Final Winners |

1. Conducting Outreach and Raising Awareness

The 60 Essay Contest winners from Phase I will become representatives in their respective blocks tasked with conducting outreach and raising awareness of underage driving. Participants will be trained by HOPE House staff prior to working in the districts. All 60 participants will be required to hand in **5 deliverables** in order to be eligible for the final prizes.

1. Announcement of Final Winners

The final winner, first runner-up, and second runner-up will be announced at an event on National Children’s Day, November 14th, 2018. This event will be a community event where students, stakeholders, and district officials will all be present and participating. All 3 winners will receive a cash prize, and each winner’s school will receive the same value in books, supplies, or other school resources. The below are the details of the prizes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Winners** | **Schools** |
| 1st Prize | Rs.10,000 | Rs.10,000 |
| 2nd Prize | Rs.5,000 | Rs.5,000 |
| 3rd Prize | Rs.3,000 | Rs.3,000 |

All the sixty participants and their school head masters along with their mentors (whoever supported them during phase II) will receive certificates.

**Conclusion**

We at The HOPE House truly believe that through raising awareness and empowering youths to make safer driving decisions our state of Tamil Nadu can see a reduction in morbidity and mortality surrounding youth involved traffic accidents. The first phase of our program will begin on June 1st, 2018 and phase II will end November 14th, 2018. The estimated cost of these two phases is 133,200 rupees of which will be covered by donations and local stakeholders. In conclusion, we are asking for your support in our efforts towards decreasing the number of underage drivers in India, and subsequently the number of road accidents and deaths.

**Enclosure:**

Statistics of underage driving from the “Road Accidents Report – 2016” of Ministry of Road Transportation & Highways.