



Dhwani

THE VATSALYA FOUNDATION'S Newsletter

2013-14



The voice within...

MESSAGE

Greetings from The Vatsalya Foundation!

We are glad to present to you our 2013-14 newsletter. As it comes with more colour and vibrance, we would like to thank you specially for being the colour and vibrance in the life of our children.

We are glad today to see our children growing intellectually and be responsible youngsters of our society. This year's academic results brings all the more cheer as we have a school topper from among the children :)

Thank you for being a wonderful support as we journeyed this year to bring happiness in the lives of many young children.

Enjoy Reading!

ACADEMICS

Children progress to the next class

All of us were gratified to see the fruits of our labour for the academic year 2012-13 when almost all the children from std. I to under graduation passed in their respective exams. A total of 29 children passed std. X, 7 passed std. XI and 4 passed std. XII.

Students (16) pursuing higher studies in various disciplines with the financial support of Aptar group progressed to the next level.

In keeping with our objective, 'to enrol each and every child to school', our team members completed the admission process for existing children as well as new children, in the month of June, 2013. This year too, some of our children appeared for std. X and XII exams which began in the month of March 2014.

The staff of the Open Shelter Home and the Day Care Centres regularly visit the schools to check the progress and behaviour of the children. A rapport with the teachers is maintained to make sure that our children are treated without any discrimination by the teachers and the other school children. Behavioural issues are sorted out through counselling. Regular visits to the homes of the children were also made to ensure that children from the Reach Out Programme and the Day Care Centres attend school regularly and that the parents provide the necessary support.



Anil Gonel, a student of std. IX at Aryan High School (Marathi medium) is highly enthusiastic about his studies. He aims to become a banker and is among the toppers of his school. This year he topped the rank and was gifted a Laptop by his school for his academic excellence.

Educational Tours



For our children, summer vacations are a time to explore the world and have fun. One day and multiple day educational trips for various age groups was organised for our children.

A visit to Sanjay Gandhi National Park, Borivali turned out to be an attraction for most of the children who saw a forest and many different animals for the first time. The caves at Kanheri also held attraction for the children. A total of 50 girls from Bandra and 30 boys and girls from South Mumbai got the opportunity to visit the National Park.

In the month of May, our Rural Project team coordinated a tour to the villages of Shahapur for the boys of Mahim and Bandra Day Care Centres as well as for the children from the Open Shelter Home. The purpose of this visit was to give them an understanding of the rural life, its beauty and its problems.

Educational Case study

Name – Shruti Atmaram Ghadigaonkar Age - 19 Std – S.Y.B.Com.

College name – Kirti M. Doongursee College.

Shruti lives at M.N. Koli slum with her parents and one younger brother. Her father is jobless and also an alcoholic. Her mother works as a sweeper to feed her family.

Shruti is clever girl and she always got top rank in school and college. She wants to become a C.A in the future which is not possible without coaching classes. Therefore TVF helps her financially to give her quality education. She has joined C.A. classes and has received help for college fees and stationary.

Shruti is now a happy girl and studies really hard to achieve her goal.

Name – Laxmi Jagdamba Prasad Jaiswal Age- 09 Std – III

Medium- Hindi

Laxmi is living in Nayanagar, Mahim with her father, two elder brothers and an elder sister. Her father works as a driver and both her brothers work as delivery boys in Bharat Gas Agency while her sister studies in std. VIII.

Laxmi is coming to our Day Care Centre since Nov. 2013. She was very poor in her studies as she did not know even the alphabets, be it in Hindi, English or even Marathi. Teachers at the Day Care Centre have taken great effort to teach her the basics and also to progress to the level she is in now. She can now read and write the alphabets in three languages and also has progressed to std. III.



Chetan Medhekar, a student of std XII. in Ambedkar College, Wadala, is an enthusiastic member of NCC at his college. He has participated in many camps and events as part of NCC activities. He stood first in drill competition from 400 NCC cadets in Combined Annual Training Camp held at Virar.

Health

A medical camp was organised on 15th December by an organization called 'Khushiyan'. A total of 55 children participated in this camp where an Paediatrician and an Ophthalmologist conducted a basic check-up of the children.

PERFORMING ARTS



Contemporary Dance Training

Two boys from the Open Shelter Home learnt Contemporary Dance in a workshop organized from 6 to 13 May 2013 at Ravindra Natya Mandir. It was organized by Meena Naik, a renowned actor and director of children's plays. Choreographers Phulwa Khamkar, Chetan and Dhanesh taught children contemporary dance, cart-wheel along with techniques to maintain a flexible body. The children said, "We enjoyed the workshop very much. We got good opportunity to learn contemporary dance and we are now more confident. We also like the certificate we got."

Summer Blast 2013

The Shailesh Ranjak Group of the Star Dance Academy has trained our children for two months for a perfor-



mance on 19 May, 2013 at Ravindra Natya Mandir. Instructors Jaffer and Vijay selected 26 boys from the Shelter Home for the performance. The boys practiced diligently and performed excellently on the day before the audience. Swathi Mukherjee, Executive Director of Vatsalya, was felicitated for her exemplary work for the children.

30 children from TVF were invited by NCPA to witness the dance performance on wheels by **Ability Unlimited Foundation**, New Delhi on 7 June, 2013. The artists of the group are physically handicapped, and hearing impaired but their performance left the audience spellbound.

Raell Padamsee and her company invited 10 of our boys to the **show** by the internationally acclaimed mentalist and entertainer **Lior Succhard** at Tata Theatre, NCPA on 11 May 2013. The show consisting of telepathy, mind reading, drama and comedy completely bowled over the boys. They were amazed and inspired to see the power of the mind which on training can perform wonderful actions.

A group of seven children of the Open Shelter Home were part of the **musical-play 'Grease'** produced by Raell Padamsee's ACE Productions. The boys performed a dance in the play along with the children of a few other NGOs of Mumbai at the prestigious NCPA Theatre on 24 and 25 Aug. 2013. They had put in months of practice before the performance with the other members of the play.

The children participated in the **Star Nite programme** on 27 Dec. 2013, organised by Star Dance Academy at Nehru Centre. The children performed two dances and got appreciation from the guests and audience.

Sports - "Batizado" Capoeira

As many as 20 boys from the Open Shelter Home participated in the annual graduation function of the Capoeira, (a Brazilian Martial Art) on 19, 20 and 22 Nov. 2013. They passed initial, first and second levels and got yellow, Yellow-Green and Green belt respectively from the maestros.

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Vocational skill training provided to the children in the age group 12-18 years builds confidence in them and paves way for their financial independence. As many as 10 girls from the Mahim Centre were enrolled in Mehendi and Computer classes. At the Bandra Day Care Centre, 12 girls were enrolled in Sewing classes while 4 boys and girls have begun their Computer classes.

INTERACTION WITH CORPORATES



Clariant Chemicals supports Vatsalya's efforts

The employees of Clariant Chemicals spent more than four hours interacting with the kids of the Open Shelter Home on 15 May, 2013. The guests liked the confidence of our kids and were impressed with the aspirations of the children. The team gave a donation to The Vatsalya Foundation along with educational kits to each child. Dr. Deepak Parikh, Managing Director - Programme said, "It was an amazing experience and the excellent performances by all the children was commendable".

SHL (India) Pvt. Ltd The CEB Talent Measurement Solution celebrated Global Service Event with the children on 17 May, 2013 by playing, singing, dancing and eating with them. The volunteers showed a presentation on personal hygiene and gave school bags to the children. However, it was the treasure hunt set up by the group that made the day fulfilled and memorable for the 50 children of the Open Shelter Home.

A visit of **four professors from various universities of the US** was coordinated by the **Travel Corporation of India (TCI)** for an orientation and interaction with the children on 13 May, 2013.

Bank of America- Associate Sodexo Facilities Management Group visited the Shelter Home on 18 May, 2013 to donate food grains. They also interacted with the children and were impressed with their inquisitiveness and talents.

On 14 June, 2013 the children interacted with the employees of **Liberty Videocon Insurance Company** who organised sessions on First Aid, Safety and Per-

sonal Hygiene particularly in the season of monsoon. It was interspersed with music and dance. They also donated a water purifier and medical kit for the children of the Vatsalya foundation.

"It has been an amazing experience being here and knowing so many beautiful lives"; "We came here for their entertainment but we were entertained um-meed se zyada (beyond our expectations)" are some of the reactions of the employees of the company.

Around 50 employees of **CITIGROUP** visited Vatsalya on 22 June, 2013 to interact with the children of the Open Shelter Home. They cut pictures from old newspapers and magazines and made collage posters on civic responsibilities. The themes included global warming, food for good health etc. The visit was coordinated by iVolunteer towards community service.

Team members of **LRN Company** visited the Shelter Home on 3 Dec. 2013 to interact with the children. The team members enjoyed serving a special lunch to the children while the children amazed them with their dance.

Clariant Company, Thane on the occasion of their Annual Day on 11 Oct. 2013 invited Vatsalya's children to perform a dance number for their employees.



Apart from school studies, the children of Vatsalya are exposed to various other means of gaining knowledge and developing personality. One such event was a quiz co-ordinated by **Concern India Foundation** and **Sanofi Company** held on 9 Dec, 2013 at Andheri. Arif, Avinash and Bablu from the Open Shelter Home won the second prize in the general knowledge quiz for which three teams had participated. The children also got the opportunity to visit the marketing, finance and admin departments in the Sanofi Company's office premises.

INTERACTION WITH STUDENTS AND ORGANIZATIONS

Members of **Saichha Group** led by Hitesh Deshmukh visited Vatsalya on 1 May 2013. The drawing competition on the theme of environment, fun games like throwing the ball into bucket, blowing away plastic bottles, dance competition and a sumptuous lunch were part of the activities. Being the 'Maharashtra Day' a musical show of Marathi songs was presented by the group which the kids enjoyed by dancing on the numbers.



The students of **B. D. Somani School** visited Vatsalya on 13 May 2013. They formed six groups and taught different kinds of craft to the children like origami and wax-painting. Students from **VJTI** visited on 17 May, 2013.

The **Guides of the 71st East Bombay Group** interacted with 40 children of Vatsalya on 29 May, 2013. as part of their Social Service Activity. The Guides taught them to make quilt card, chocolate balls and sevpuri. They also played few games with the children.

ASCEND is a group of students who volunteer to support the grassroot NGOs. Ayushi, Nikita, Ayesha, Ishaana and Anushray spent five days from 15 to 19 July, 2013 at the Shelter Home to teach the children art, acting, dance, public speaking and gardening. Each day they taught one topic and were enriched in return by the warmth and love of our children. They were surprised to know the talents and skills of our children.



Mumbai Darshan

The children of the Open Shelter Home were taken for Mumbai Darshan by a charitable trust 'Khushiyan' on the occasion of Eid wherein they saw the Gateway of India, Worli Seaface and the Hanging Garden. The children danced and had lunch of chhole-puri along with sweets. Besides learning the historical and cultural aspects of Mumbai, the children wearing their new t-shirts enjoyed the bus ride all over Mumbai.

To be able to address an audience of 200 with confidence and clarity is not a small feat for the children of 12-14 years. On 9 Nov. 2013, Anil Gonel and Rohit Sahu from our Shelter Home gave The Vatsalya Foundation's introduction to 200 students of the **St. Stanislaus High School, Bandra**. Impressed by the description of Vatsalya's work and the confidence of the boys, the students later visited the Open Shelter Home and spent time with the boys.

IAS Officers Wives Association (IASOWA) visited the Open Shelter Home on 18 Nov. 2013 and donated library cupboard and games. Mrs. Manju Bhatiya, wife of the Chief Secretary, Maharashtra Government and her colleagues commented, "Vatsalya's children are very good, they are very happy and creative children".

Lioness Club of Breach Candy also sponsored a special lunch for the children and interacted with them on 18 Nov. 2013.



Members of the **Revenue Offices for Women Association (ROWA)** visited the Shelter Home on 19 Dec. 2013 and distributed food items to the children.

Volunteers from the **Tinkle Magazine** for children visited Vatsalya and conducted an activity in drawing. They distributed story books and the children performed for them.

“The enthusiasm, joy and talent of the boys’ is amazing. I know they will be successful” said Mary Krager, a member of **Aptar Group** after their visit to the Open Shelter Home on 22 Jan. 2014. They interacted with the children of the Shelter Home and saw projects like computer education, gardening and more. The children performed Capoeira and dance for them. The children also prepared and gave greeting cards to the group. Aptar group CEO also visited North Mahim Centre. They interacted with few children and the families they have sponsored.

ENERGIZING SPORTS



“It was different. I liked the place and the sports”, said Vikas Medhekar, 16 years, a boy from our Shelter Home. He played all the sports and won a prize too in the Summer Olympics, a sports event organized by The Rotract Club of Jai Hind College on 14 May, 2013 at Priyadarshini Park, Napean Sea Road, Mumbai. Close to 100 girls and boys from Mahim and Bandra Contact Centres and the Shelter Home spent the whole day playing different sports organized by the Jai Hind students.

FESTIVITIES AND CELEBRATIONS

Festivals are a means to celebrate life. At Vatsalya, festivals of all religions as well as national celebrations is a medium to inculcate in children the values of love towards one and all and respect for diversity. They are also a platform to bring out leadership qualities of children and to express their joy in the form of cultural programmes.



Rakshabandhan - the bond of love is one of the most awaited festivals at Vatsalya. 20 Aug. 2013 was marked by dances, delicious food and togetherness at the Shelter Home. Children belonging to different religions from all the centres celebrated the festival of love and respect towards each other by tying 'rakhis'. The staff of Vatsalya also joined the children in tying rakhis. Parents, donors and older children were present too to enjoy the festival. Children of each centre had prepared dances which they performed for the audience. After the cultural programme and rakhi ceremony the children were served a sumptuous lunch. Around 200 children participated in the event, many of whom for the first time. They learnt the value of togetherness as well as love and respect for everyone.

Ganapati Festival is a ten-day affair at the Open Shelter Home every year. The boys started the preparation few days before the festival by buying an eco-friendly Ganapati idol and cleaning the premises. The children were involved in all the activities from bringing the idol of Ganapati till its immersion. They along with the staff performed the *arati* twice every day from 9 - 18 Sep. 2013. The donors and well wishers of Vatsalya were invited for Ganapati darshan and to participate in the *arati*. The *maha-arati* was organized twice during the festival period in which the children from the centres were invited and lunch was served to all. The children learnt to organize an event by taking up responsibilities like performing the *arati* on time, distributing the prasada, hosting the guests, decorating the place.

The children of each centre were taken to visit various Ganesh Pandals in their nearby area. They were invited to Heera Panna Society by a donor for a dance performance.

Durga Puja and Dussera were celebrated by the children of Vatsalya by participating in the events of Puja at Bengal Club, Dadar. They participated in pottery-making, fabric painting and drawing workshops and



competitions. Diwali was celebrated by sharing sweets and lighting up diyas. The diyas were painted by the children of all the centres and sold in various exhibitions.

Eid too is an important and popular festival celebrated at Vatsalya. Each centre celebrated eid in its own way. The Mahim centre organized an Iftar party on 9 Sep. 2013 at the centre in which all the children of the centre participated. The group of Muslim children brought sweets for everyone and celebrated with songs and dance.

South Mumbai centre also celebrated Eid by distributing sweets among children and playing games. The staff conducted a session on Eid at all the centres to explain about the festival.

Independence Day was celebrated on 15 Aug. 2013 at the schools of the children as well as at the Open Shelter Home. The children participated in the flag hoisting ceremony and group sessions were conducted at each of the centres by the staff on the importance and relevance of the Independence Day.

Every year Christmas brings smile and happiness to the children of Vatsalya as many donors, friends and well-wishers come to celebrate the festival with them. Children too are eager to decorate the crib for baby Jesus and light candles.

A group of employees of Juris Corp Company visited the Open Shelter Home on 21st December to



celebrate Christmas with the children. The group conducted a Collage Competition for the children and gave away three prizes. The children enjoyed preparing collage on different themes giving expression to their ideas and views.

Another Christmas party was organised for the children at CCI club, Churchgate on 22 Dec. 2013. The party in the stadium was filled with fun and frolic as they enjoyed the games played. They got the opportunity to meet and interact with children of Municipal Schools and Private Schools who were also present at the party.

Rotary Club of HR College also celebrated Christmas on 23rd Dec 2013 at the Open Shelter home which was a surprise for the children. The significance of celebrating festival is to inculcate values of togetherness, power of the truth and victory of good over evil. Our children celebrated Republic Day, Holi and Easter with full enthusiasm.



Besides the festivals the children got an opportunity to watch the movie 'Chennai Express' on 11 Aug. 2013, a sponsored recreational activity which children enjoyed thoroughly. More than 200 children from the Open Shelter Home and Day Care Centres of South Mumbai, Mahim and Bandra enjoyed the movie as well as the snacks provided by the donor at a multiplex in Dadar. They also watched 'Bhag Milkha Bhag' and were inspired to pursue their goal with determination.

Outings - Children's Day on November 14th brought cheers to the children of Vatsalya when they were taken for an outing to Hajali where they saw the mosque and took dip in the waters of the sea. 40 boys from the Open Shelter home and 20 girls from the Mahim Centre got the opportunity to enjoy games, dance, and ice-skating on 29th December at the Essel world sponsored by Mittal-Shah Group.



'Sneh Milan' provided more than 300 kids from all the centres of Vatsalya a platform to perform on the stage. From Koli song to Bollywood hits, they performed many dances and expressed their joy. The audience comprised donors and supporters of Vatsalya.



Birthday Party

The common birthday party of all the children of Vatsalya was celebrated on 14 Feb. 2014, at the Open Shelter Home, Mahalaxmi. About 350 children from the centers, outreach and Shelter Home along with more than 100 guests were present on the occasion. The performance of the children enthralled the guests and children. The event began with the dance performance titled 'Soch Do pal ki'- based on Equality. In addition to being a fun and entertainment time for the children and guests, it served as a platform for children to build their confidence as they perform on stage. The dances and items were choreographed by The young Boys and Girls of The Vatsalya Foundation.



Entertainment programme

Superstar Salman Khan visited children and interacted on 24 Jan. 2014, at Star City during the screening of the movie Jai Ho. Salman conveyed the simple message of the movie to the audience. He shared a simple philosophy to enjoy the Joy of Giving. Instead of The word 'Thanks' if someone has helped you, you go out and help three more people and make a chain of helping each other and make it a better place to live and support each other.

CREATIVITY



The children at Vatsalya are encouraged to participate in various sessions and workshops on art and craft in order that their energies are channelized in creative directions. A session on making *akash kandil* (hanging decorative lamp for Diwali) and greeting cards was organised on 25 Oct. 2014. Another session on fabric painting was conducted on 27 Oct. 2014. At Bandra centre the children learnt to paint on glass and fabric., making masks and greeting cards over a number of sessions.



On 13 and 14 Jan. 2014, Ms. Surabha & Ms. Deepti organized the Bal kalakar event. A total of 100 children participated in this event from Mahim, South Mumbai and Mahalaxmi. In the programme children were divided into two groups and coordinated by a person.

On 13th January they organized dance and candle designing with children and on 14th January drama and ceramic painting. Children were happy, dancing and sharing ideas and cooperated with the coordinator. Through Balalaika Programme children learnt new skills and gained knowledge about dance and candle design.

CELEBRITY VISITS



The boys of the Open Shelter Home were pleasantly surprised to receive film actor Shahid Kapoor on 5 Sep. 2013. Shahid Kapoor spoke to the boys at length and answered all their questions. Sumit Jadhav, our 10 year old boy, asked him how much hard work was required to be a hero in a film and impressed him a lot. Shahid appreciated the fact that the boys from Vatsalya have become instructors at Shaiamk Davar's Institute from where he has also learnt dance. He liked the thank you card made by the boys. TV channel Zoom brought Shahid to Vatsalya as part of the promotional tour for his film.

TOGETHER FOR A CAUSE



Children of Mahim Centre want to stop child labour
The 'Anti Child Labour Day' was celebrated on 30 April 2013 by the kids of Mahim Day Case Centre. The kids participated in a rally organized by our team members from the centre to St. Michael church. The kids prepared posters for the rally in advance and displayed them. They shouted slogans like "band karo band karo bal majdooori band karo", "Bal majdooori hatana hai, bachchon ko bachana hai". The Executive Director of Vatsalya joined the kids and team members of Mahim centre for the rally. The rally was supported by the Police, parents and other NGOs of the area.

Saath Hain Hum Uttarakhand

Vatsalya was part of the campaign of the TV channel Star Plus 'Saath Hain Hum Uttarakhand' to raise funds for relief and rehabilitation of the people of Uttarakhand who were struck by floods, storm and landslides. Film actor Vivek Oberoi visited Vatsalya and interacted with the kids on helping the people of Uttarakhand. The children presented him a sapling, a symbol of peace and prosperity, along with their belongings such as tooth brushes, soaps, as donation to the people of Uttarakhand. The interaction was aired on the channel on 15 Aug. 2013 in a seven hour-long programme.

We Run for the Cause of Children's Rights!

The Vatsalya Foundation team participated in the Standard Chartered Mumbai Marathon 2014 on 19 Jan. with full zeal and enthusiasm. The energy around was very motivating and positive. Swathi Mukherjee, Executive Director participated as The Dream Maker – raised funds and also to create awareness.



Rural Projects Yearly Report

The Vatsalya Foundation's Rural Extension Project at Shahapur – Murbad- Kasara in the state of Maharashtra has catered to a total of 348 children both girls and boys at the Anganwadi centres. Various vocational courses like typing, tailoring, basics in computer, beauty care and training in teaching (L.P.D.P) are being taught to the people in these villages. There are 16 Self Help Groups (SHGs) which cater to the need the women and 216 women are benefitting from this project. A community centre is being erected at Zaadghar and a bore-well and solar project at Kolipada (tribal community).

Good to see all your activities.
Keep up the good work!
Clariant Chemicals

What a wonderful fun time we had!
Thanks for your beautiful drawings, diyas and cards. Keep it up!
Tinkle Team, Amamr Chitra Katha

It was beyond excellent experience. My only regret is not having done this before and I aim to keep visiting and making a contribution.
Prachi Shirole, AIESSC

Amazing programme.
Very talented and gifted kids.
Nilsa Romero

Really appreciated the time and opportunity given to us. Impressive and very inspiring. My best wishes to continue this very important work.
Lionel Laurens and Ruth Rennie

We thank all our donors and well-wishers for encouraging The Vatsalya Foundation Team. You have motivated and helped us reach out to many children and youngsters, providing them with education, skill training, health and nutrition, shelter, clothing and many other things required to empower and mainstream them into society.

As we continue our journey with the children to build dreams and beautiful memories, we invite more people to be a part this mission. Come journey with us through your ideas, time and contribution and make an impact on the lives of these children. Share with them your joy because it truly is wonderful to be a helping hand to those in need.

You may visit our website www.thevatsalyafoundation.org or e-mail us at info@thevatsalyafoundation.org to let us know how you would like to be of help.



THE VATSALYA FOUNDATION
King George V Memorial (Near Famous Studio)
Dr. E Moses Road,
Mahalaxmi (W), Mumbai - 400011
Telephone: +91-22-24962119
Telefax: +91-22-24912352
Email: info@thevatsalyafoundation.org
Website: www.thevatsalyafoundation.org