



Progress Report

Name of the Project: Prevent school drop out of children in and discharged from Children's and Observation homes

Project Period: Ongoing

Reporting Period: 1st April to 30th June 2017

Project Goal: Project Objectives:

- Information gathering
- Remedial Education
- Home Visits
- Relationship Building
- Counseling
- Mainstreaming with/without financial assistance
- Follow up to ensure children continue in school

Activities & Achievements: Children in observation homes are one of the most marginalized populations in Mumbai.

The children who live in these Homes come from different states of India and are educated in a Marathi medium school run by the Home. The language difference makes it difficult for them to learn. Remedial education helps in coaching the children in the Marathi language as well as their school subjects thereby helping them understand what they are learning and maintaining their interest to continue education once discharged from the Home.

Sahaara staff procures addresses of discharged children from the home authorities. The social workers then traverse through labyrinthine gullies of Mumbai slums searching for the children's residences. Through such home visits, networking with local schools, facilitating assistance in books and materials, the child is facilitated entry into formal education paving the way to a bright future.

During the period April to June 2017, 161 children were provided with coaching, stationery and experiential learning in Chembur Children's Home, Bal Kalyan Nagari and David Sassoon Industrial School.

Information regarding 19 discharged children was gathered from the Home authorities. These children have been visited through personal home visits. Through family and individual counseling, these children have been provided with the opportunity of continuing education.

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Coaching Story:

Hoping For The Future

One of the most unfortunate things that could happen to children is when they are taken away from the family they grew up with.

This is the story of one such boy named Atul*.

While in the ninth grade of high school, Atul was witness to a violent fight between his parents. On this unfortunate day, his mother found out that his father had a second wife and she was extremely upset. Soon enough, the argument turned violent and a police complaint was lodged against Atul's parents.

The entire family was taken to court and while these sessions continued to happen, it was decided that Atul and his two siblings would be put into a government home for the duration of the case, for their own safety and care.

Atul was therefore admitted to Umerkhadi Observation Home (UOH) in March 2016 while his siblings were sent to another home.

A few months later in December 2016, Atul was shifted to David Sassoon Industrial School (DSIS) in Matunga.

Sahaara conducts both coaching and computer classes in DSIS for the children who live here. We met Atul soon after he joined the home and was enrolled in both our coaching and computer classes.

Within the first few weeks of meeting him, we noticed that Atul faced difficulty while reading and writing. He also struggled with Math. In order to help him, we began to spend more time with him, counselling and building a relationship with him in order to help him with day to day activities.

The little extra attention soon began to pay off! Atul is now able to read through picture books and books at a primary level. He is also practicing his writing and we assist him regularly with Math so that he can grow to understand and comprehend the subject.

Towards the end of the school year, this March 2016, we could see a considerable change in Atul. He started to take more interest in his studies and shared with us one day that he hoped to own an automobile showroom in the future. He also started taking his education more seriously and we began to see that he understood the importance of learning well.

A little extra attention has gone a long way in touching lives such as Atul's. We hope that many young boys like him will dream of bigger and brighter futures beyond the walls of the homes that they live in!

*Names changed to protect identity

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Tracking Story

A Chance For Varsha*

The city of Mumbai houses lakhs of people at every corner; so many of these people aren't employed and they cannot care for children either.

Varsha* is a six-year-old who used to live with her young brother and their visually challenged parents. Though both her parents are visually challenged, Varsha and her brother are not. For the last two years, her parents didn't have a job and would make ends meet by begging at the Kurla railway station while leaving their children at a day care centre in Ambernath, a suburb of Mumbai.

Sahaara staff also work with the visually challenged and during one of our field trips under this program, we met Varsha's parents at Kurla railway station. Her parents shared their situation with us and requested help to admit Varsha and her brother to a home as they were finding it difficult to care for their children due to their economic status.

Under our program Pragati, we have been ensuring that children who are discharged from homes get the chance to have a brighter future through tracking their families and counselling them to admit their children to school. Sahaara also has experience in interacting with the Child Welfare Committee (CWC) and working together with them for the good of the child.

On the 24th of March 2017, we presented Varsha's case to the CWC. At that time, she was just under six years of age, and so they asked us to wait until she turned six to present her case again. During this time, we continued to visit their home and talk to the family on a regular basis, discussing education and future opportunities for the children.

On the 16th of June, we presented Varsha's case to the CWC again. Following this, we were able to admit Varsha to a hostel in Badlapur. This home offers education up until the 10th Standard in an English medium school! This enables Varsha to have a brighter future, pursuing better educational opportunities while still being close to her family.

Varsha's parents are grateful for all the help they received and hope that this will give their daughter a better chance at a good and successful future.

Much like with Varsha, we hope to join children with their families and help those who are not able to, give their children the chance to access better education and a brighter future!

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