



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 2016

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 2016, 153 children were provided with coaching, stationery and experiential learning in Chembur Children's Home, Bal Kalyan Nagari and David Sassoon Industrial School.

Information regarding 29 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.

**Sahaara Charitable Society, Kalika Prasad CHS, Sahayog Mandir Road, Ghantali,
Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602.
Tel. 91-22-65554571. 91-22-65202838
Email: sahaarasociety@gmail.com Website: www.sahaarasociety.org**



Coaching Story:

THE FIRST STEPS TO SUCCESS

When circumstances overtake us, sometimes all we can do is sit tight and hope for the best. When Upendra* was 9 years old, his parents both passed away. His father was involved in an accident and soon after, his mother contracted an illness that she was never cured of. Upendra and his elder brother and sister were sent to stay with their aunt in Kharghar, in the city of Mumbai.

His aunt admitted him and his siblings into the Additional Observation Home in Mankhurd as she was unwilling to take care of them. He stayed here for a while until he shifted to Bal Kalyan Nagari (BKN), a children's home, in 2012.

Sahaara has been working in BKN to help the children from the 1st to 5th standards by coaching them in the subjects they study at school. In 2012, when Upendra moved to BKN, he began to attend our coaching sessions.

When we first met Upendra, he was a very aggressive child. He used to beat the other children and found it very difficult to make friends with any of them. The other children were also wary of him and kept him at a distance for most of the time. He lied frequently and either argued with us or maintained a stubborn silence whenever we tried to interact with him. He was also having difficulties in class as he didn't know how to read or write and so struggled with the coaching classes.

As we realised what kind of situation Upendra was in, we began to give him more and more personal attention. We counselled and encouraged him, using interactive methods such as flash cards and group activities to get him more engaged with the idea of learning.

Over time, as we persisted with Upendra, we began to notice a change. He argued with us less and started to take part in activities in the class more. He made a few friends and then a few more. With time, he learnt English and Marathi, the language of the state, and he started to enjoy learning and taking part in the coaching classes we held.

We were delighted to see this change in Upendra and we marvel now at how far he has come in the past few years. Upendra has settled down and he enjoys his time learning and making new friends in class. We are sure these are just the first steps towards a successful life. It is our dream at Sahaara to see positive changes like these in the lives of all the children we work with!

*Names changed to protect identity



Tracking Story

FINDING SONU*

Systems and policies are in place for our protection, to keep us safe and to ensure that the best course of action is agreed and then embarked upon. But occasionally we all need a little help navigating these waters.

Sonu* is 15 years old. Her father passed away in 2005 when Sonu was 10 and her elder brother Manish* was 19 years of age. The following year, their mother re-married and Sonu and Manish were sent to a relative's house.

Eventually, in 2009, Manish decided to move to Mumbai from their hometown in the Giridih district of Jharkhand in order to find work. After he left, the relatives they were living with began to harass and mistreat Sonu. When Manish found out, he came back and brought his little sister back with him to Mumbai so she could live under his care and protection. Manish got married and his wife Sangita* brought her younger sister along to live under the same roof.

The four of them got along well and were living life in relative comfort when on 17th January 2016, Sonu went out to do some work. A stranger stopped her and insisted on dropping her to some location. Worried and anxious as she tried to resist, Sonu caught the wrong train and landed up in Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), one of the main stations in Mumbai city. Confused and lost, she was picked up by an NGO and taken to Umerkhandi Observation Home (UOH) for protection.

Ten days later, the staff at UOH referred her case to Sahaara.

We examined her case and asked Sonu a few questions about the areas that she remembered around her home. With time, we were able to trace her address, find her brother and bring him to UOH to meet Sonu. She was overjoyed! But unfortunately Manish had no paperwork to prove that he was Sonu's brother and as per the rules, a young girl cannot be released unless her parents arrive or if there is proof that she and the man are related.

Here, Sahaara stepped in to provide documentation and show how we were able to find Manish and visit his home officially. The following day, Sonu went home with Manish and Sangita!

They were very happy to have Sonu back safe and sound. They had been searching in despair and had almost lost their jobs and all hope when Sahaara knocked on the door. We counselled Manish and Sangita and they assured us that Sonu will no longer be sent out for work but for a Tailoring class that will provide her with vocational skills and ensure that her future is more secure than it was before.

We are so glad that we were able to help this family, especially with deciding what to do in the future. We hope to see Sonu get a Tailoring certificate very soon!

*Names changed to protect identity

**Sahaara Charitable Society, Kalika Prasad CHS, Sahayog Mandir Road, Ghantali,
Naupada, Thane (West) – 400 602.
Tel. 91-22-65554571. 91-22-65202838
Email: sahaarasociety@gmail.com Website: www.sahaarasociety.org**