

## **Why and how we take the underprivileged girls on an education tour?**

At the Hope House, annual educational tour is an event awaited by the girls with lot of excitement and anticipation. Months of participation of girls goes into planning this trip. Whole objective of these trips is to build their confidence and resilience. But how we go about doing that is what this report is all about.

As soon as we determine the budget we have, we announce the possible locations for the girls to choose. The older girls browse through the net of these locations and discuss with the younger girls and they make a choice of their location.

Once the location is determined, we look for novelty to incorporate to help the girls to experience newer kinds of experiences. For example, we have taken the girls to seashores and cold hill stations apart from places of historical importance (for example Mahatma Gandhi's tomb in New Delhi) which they may have studied in school. We try to travel by the nights so that the night stay expenditure for a day or two is saved apart from helping the girls to experience sleeping on the moving trains. We try and take them out of state to help them to see the differences of culture so that they become tolerant of diversity. So far, we have taken the girls to Hyderabad, New Delhi, Bangalore, Mysore, Ooty, and Trivandrum etc.

On these trips, there is nothing more important for us than the girls safety. We ensure that adequate number of staff accompany the girls, safe place to stay, hygienic food to eat and preparing the girls on the contingency plans in case of getting lost or accidents etc. Every child and the staff is given a name tag with the administrative officers phone numbers stated behind them to call in case of an emergency of any kind.

When they come back, they go and share their experiences with their classmates and teachers. There were times when teachers expressed surprise to the effect to imply that they have never been to such places but Hope House girls did. That boosts their confidence to know that they are special and unique. That confidence enables them to start thinking independently.

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