

Freedom Foundation

Changing Lives... Making a Difference!

ANNUAL REPORT

2020-2021

Our Vision:

To pioneer affordable treatment and rehabilitation that make a difference in the lives of those affected by alcohol/drug addictions and those living with HIV/AIDS and also reduce stigma associated with these conditions.

Our Mission:

Freedom Foundation will enhance access to quality health care & treatment for people living with alcohol/drug abuse and/or HIV/AIDS through a commitment to increasing awareness, treatment, care, support, advocacy, expanded linkages & networking and create a platform for best practice and cross learning.

Our Ethos:

FREEDOM FOUNDATION – *‘Changing Lives Making a Difference!’*

We Are

A secular, non-for profit, Registered Charitable Trust

Objectives

- To provide comprehensive treatment and rehabilitation for persons living with alcoholism/drug addictions.
- To provide comprehensive care, support and treatment to men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS.
- To expand access to treatment with Highly Active Anti-Retro-Viral treatment including monitoring of CD4 counts.
- To provide residential care for those children who are orphaned and abandoned due to HIV/AIDS.
- To provide access to education, nutrition and medical care for children infected/affected living within the community.
- To conduct Educational, Awareness, Training and Sensitization Programs for Substance Abuse and HIV/AIDS.
- To work for the rights of persons affected by HIV.
- To build and strengthen the capacities of different stakeholders and enable them actively to participate in similar initiatives.
- To provide a platform of opportunity for cross learning for effective implementation

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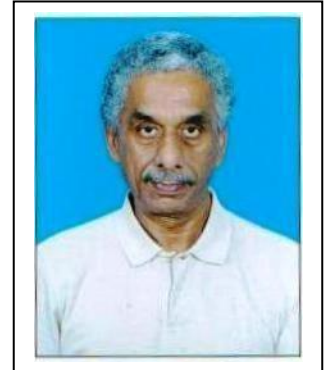
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FOREWORD

Dear well-wishers, supporters, donors, and friends; welcome to another eventful year of activities that have changed the lives of our beneficiaries. I do hope that you would spend a little time to go through this annual report and give us your valuable feedback on the various projects and activities. Please do mail me at ashokrau@hotmail.com



The year 2020/21 was another challenging year with further cut in resources. Our team at the foundation continued to provide all necessary support to enable communities to have a better quality of life and not be bogged down with the diseases of HIV/AIDS and addiction. The resilience, commitment and dedication shown by our community members in valuing whatever life has to offer has been truly inspiring

I take this opportunity to thank all our donors, well-wishers and supporters who have come forward to help us address the issues on hand. I further would like to thank all the staff and community workers for their exemplary passion and commitment in helping our children, women and men affected by HIV/AIDS and addiction in enhancing their wellbeing and helping them have a better quality of life.

*Thanking you,
Yours sincerely*

Dr. ASHOK K. RAU
Executive Trustee & CEO

CHILD CARE COMPONENT – BANGALORE

1. Residential care HIV Positive Orphans
2. Education & Nutrition Assistance for HIV infected / affected community children.
3. Creating and establishing an ecosystem of care givers who support the development of these orphan children.

Location: Bangalore

Partners Supported: There was no committed funding for this project this whole year.

FF has not been receiving the consistent support for the last two years from any funding agency. It has been purely running on donor support. [Freedom Foundation](#) was started in 1992 by (late) Karl Sequeira and Dr. Ashok Rau in the year 1992 and registered as a Charitable Trust (Indian Trust Act 1882) in 1993 to bring about an innovative and pioneering paradigm shift in the way issues related to substance abuse and the HIV/AIDS sector were being addressed in India. Freedom Foundation has been the pioneers of HIV/AIDS & Substance Abuse interventions in India, especially in the area of comprehensive care & support in; Freedom Foundation is credited to have set up the first comprehensive Community based comprehensive care and support center in India at Bangalore and is recognized as a model by NACO (Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India) and other national and international agencies. Freedom Foundation has worked with many organizations /partners who have supported the work over the years.

Currently, the foundation is focusing on its pioneering initiative of providing comprehensive care and support for orphan children living with HIV and AIDS and developing an ecosystem of care givers:

Freedom Foundation's work in the residential facilities for the children stems from the belief that "No child needs to sacrifice the quality of life to an illness." We strive to deliver and uphold the fundamental rights of the child within the family, community & institution. The Right to Life, Protection, and Health & Education form the four pillars of this intervention. This is achieved through 3 vertical components of:

Holistic residential care for HIV Positive Orphan children.

Education & Nutrition for HIV infected/affected children in the community.

Creating and establishing an ecosystem of care givers who support the development of these orphan children.

The residential care program aims to provide a protected residential environment, wholesome nutrition, healthcare, education & livelihood to HIV infected orphan children enhancing both the longevity & quality of life, starting an independent life and becoming productive citizens of the community. The community program focuses on supporting the care givers families in the community who then mitigate the risk of orphan hood for these residential children once they go out to face the world.

Problem Statement:

India has the third largest population infected by HIV in the world, with the maximum burden falling among key populations within India. Complex and pluralistic health systems such as India's, comprises of a mix of multiple systems of medicine, players (private and public), and models with tremendous heterogeneity in terms of capabilities, capacity, quality, and orientations. Overall, while several vertical programs for HIV/AIDS exist, the preventive, promotive and primary health care systems (horizontal foundation) are weak, fragmented, and not customer centric. The system is also inadequately adapted to meet the dual burden of diseases due to COVID pandemic.

HIV infected/affected children are highly vulnerable as they are more likely to be victims of abuse, exploitation & deprivation of fundamental rights thereby resulting in extreme and prolonged psychological distress. **Children and young people** who are immuno-compromised or have pre-existing medical conditions are at higher risk for severe illness from COVID 19. The **orphans with HIV** are one of the worst affected in this pandemic as they suffer from preexisting immuno-compromised

status (HIV), need additional care and protection including awareness, socio emotional support and disease management.

Role of Freedom

In Freedom, the children who are orphaned and HIV+ve are provided with all that is necessary to experience a relatively normal childhood. All children are provided with the fundamental concept of “a house and family atmosphere” all educational, nutrition, medicine, counseling, extra circular activities and other social needs etc. for the children and care givers (community families). The age group of the children are from 4 years to 19 years. As all of our children and care givers suffer from preexisting immune compromised status (HIV) they all are highly susceptible to covid 19, and are in need of additional protection and care.

Freedom Foundation started focusing on OVC (orphan and vulnerable children) in the context of HIV/AIDS way back in 1996. The foundation has approx. 700 children registered with the organization; the foundation reaches out to approx. 250 children annually. The Foundation has specialized facilities at Bangalore and Hyderabad that care for HIV positive abandoned orphans.

The consistent support of the donors for HIV infected/affected children in various aspects of shelter, health, education, nutrition, etc. has brought a great change in the life of each family or child giving them new hope and determination.

Through the past 15 years, the Foundation endeavors to ensure that the basic rights of all children accessing care through different programs are protected. This includes children infected and affected with HIV. The childcare component at FF comprises both institutional & community with the essential crosscutting components of Protection, Health, Education, Nutrition and Rights.

Currently, Freedom Foundation supporting the care and support centers for orphans living with HIV/AIDS at Bangalore and Hyderabad are facing a child centric humanitarian crisis as the existing funders (small companies, individuals) have either halted funding due to the financial slowdown or have redirected their funding to COVID related causes only. However, we started a Fundraiser page and a campaign in GiveIndia portal which has come out to be very fruitful. The campaign was also showcased and promoted as one of the best in Give India.

OWC (Overseas Women’s Club)

The grant through Overseas Women’s Club for support of education to children living with or affected by HIV was awarded to Freedom Foundation in 2011. Children living with HIV or affected by HIV and from poor socio- economic families fall under the category of “orphan & vulnerable children” (OVC). This support helps us to ensure access & support for completion of secondary education of these children. Apart from the consistent support for the community children, through OWC, FF has also received a very valuable support for the residential children since few years both in terms of funding and volunteers. The last year had been one of the lowest contribution year of OWC. They were also struggling for funds. However, this year also we received funds from OWC. They also helped us with the eye operation of one of the children who needed urgent surgery.

This Child Care Component looks into two main concepts of:

Protected Residential Environment, Education / extra-curricular activities, Medical Treatment and Nutritional support for Orphan HIV +ve children.

This is an orphan care program where FF plays the role of guardian providing a home and educational/medical support for HIV +ve children. This program does not receive any committed funding and is very much dependent on donors and volunteers as there is no other income through which this initiative can be run effectively.

The potential support for the center in Bangalore was deferred due to the covid 19 crises. This has put us in a very precarious situation financially. We are strapped for funds. There is no government aid for comprehensive support for orphan children living with HIV/AIDS. While till the end of the last financial year the foundation managed to ensure that all needs of the respective projects had been met, it also left the project funds exhausted. Subsequently as COVID 19 impacted our society, we were informed by most of our supporters that due to the financial impact on their own lives, it would be impossible to continue their support. The same was largely true of our support from small companies, a couple of whom had informed us that they were facing closure.

Education & Nutrition for HIV infected / affected children & their families in the community.

This focuses on supporting education for HIV infected / affected children from economically poor families of Bangalore rural and urban in order to sustain the fundamental right to education of children and is being run since 2004. Nutritional support is consistently provided through quarterly Support Group Meetings during which all families receive provisions of cereals, pulses, oil and sugar. But this program is also been partly lapsed due to lack to funds and supporters.

1. Residential care and services for HIV Positive Orphans

Started: Year 1995

During the year 2020-21 through the program 'Positive Kids', 20 HIV +ve orphan children were cared within the residential facility, which is partially supported for education, extra-curricular activities, transportation, clothing, rent, medicines, hospitalization, birthday celebration and personnel costs. Among these 20 kids, 12 are boys and 8 are girls.

Age group and Gender of Children at Positive Kids			
Age group in yrs	Total	Girls	Boys
0-8	2	0	2
9-12	3	1	2
13-16	6	2	4
>16	9	5	4

Activities for the year:

At the Child Care Centre:

For this year, there are 20 children under residential care. All other kids are regular with their food, medication, education, etc.

We plan to take in new children to the center to fill the gap of these kids and are looking for the same. Many local vendors and well-wishers donated food and vegetables to Freedom during the pandemic. Swasthi is one of them who provided us with vegetables and provisions last year.

UWBe also supported us with provisions for the community this year. The long term funding hopes that we had from AAPI has been deferred due to their focus shifting to Covid related causes only.

Throughout the year we were in and out of Corona lockdowns. We educated the kids about the importance of personal hygiene. How to wash hands and sanitise the house and tables. Educated the care givers also about the importance of hygiene.

Education & Career:

Education plays a paramount role in every child's life. FF ensures that all the children receives the best possible education and to be successful in life. All are regular to their schools & colleges and are maintaining their study hours. They are regular to their study hour. Tuition teacher is taking class everyday between 5pm to 7pm for children from LKG to 10th STD. Four of our children who are 18 and above, finished their education and have left the center to start their life outside in the world. 2 of the children finished B.Com and came out with Flying colors. Another child completed PUC but had a back paper. He couldn't clear his back paper. Another boy was taking T.B medications for the last one year. The course is complete and he is also ready to move out. Both of them were given training as care givers and are placed in Divine care homes. Another girl who finished B.Com wanted to pursue C.A. We have facilitated the same in of C.A office and she has joined there. Another boy who finished B.Com, got a job in a call center and is working from his house living with his sister.

Some children are interested in extracurricular activities like dance and many are talented artists and sportsmen. The Project coordinator of Child Care Unit visits the schools of all the children regularly for to know about their studies, academic performance in each exam, their discipline, cleanliness, etc. The residential children were counseled and motivated by the childcare staff to maintain themselves well in all aspects. Few children over the years have left from the residential care are working and started their independent lives. They are under close monitoring by FF and they occasionally visit the center, spend time with staff and children, discuss regarding their health, career, etc. The social worker is in close touch with them. The care giver community also support these children who have gone outside and the ecosystem works in favor of these children for support and care.

Few Success Stories:

Bhavana

Bhavana is an outstanding student who finished her B.Com from Reva college. She got 8.2 CGP for her final exams. She also qualified for PG CET. But she wanted to pursue C.A. So Freedom facilitated a job with our C.A and she is doing good.

She came here as a young child of 12 years. She spend more than 10 years in Freedom. She lost both her parents and her brother took her to our hostel. She has shown interst in both academics and extracurricular activities. She was involving with cultural activities and we joined her in dance class, drawing class. She studied kannada medium till 7th standard. After that we join her in English medium. She comes from village in Hubli. Freedom has given couloirs to her life and dreams

Pranay

He joined Freedom in 2010. He spent more than 10 years in Freedom. He lost both his parents and he had only grandmother. He is also from the village. He does not have any relatives. We joined him in kannada medium. He completed his 10th standard. After that, we joined him for ITI. After completing ITI, we took him for apprenticeship. He has eye problem due to ART and we did eye surgery in 2017. Since then, he has had multiple eye surgeries, which Freedom facilitated. When he was doing apprenticeship he got TB problem. We took care of him till he completed the course and he is placed in a reliable job through Freedom.

Recreation and Extra-Curricular Activities:

All the children are regularly & actively engaged with different refreshing activities. Every evening after having their snacks they play for half an hour and during the weekends they play many outdoor games like football, badminton, cricket, etc. Due to pandemic many of these activities has been cut short. Watching movies, washing clothes, cutting vegetables, cleaning their rooms/cup boards, etc. are scheduled on Sundays & holidays. Also, Asha Foundation conducts regular online camps, for awareness and support of HIV and regarding the pandemic. The children have a good time learning and connecting with each other.

This year,

In the last year, two main events took place

1. SHG meetings
2. Shopping from FBB and food from KFC

SHG meetings: SHG meetings were conducted in this year also. Due to the pandemic, the SHG meetings and community support with nutrition and education were delayed. Nutrition kits were distributed for each family at a different time due to the pandemic.

Shopping from FBB and food from KFC:

Shivani is a regular donor who has supported freedom from very long years. She sponsored clothes and food for children during Christmas. The children shopped from FBB in Elements mall on the 22nd December making their own choice. After that, they had food from KFC. All the office staff also accompanied them and all of them had a good time together.



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2020/12/24 22:05



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2020/12/22 15:11



Medical Support with HAART:

All the children who are on HAART (Highly Active Anti Retro Viral Treatment) continued availing their medicine from the respective government hospitals. Regular CD4 counts and viral load test are done once in every 6 months. One child is under continuous treatment and follow up for his chronic eye infection had to undergo surgery for both eyes. We facilitated for the same. He also was taking medicines for T.B for the last one year. We gave him extra nutrition, he improved and finished his medicines course and has been placed in a job.

To balance the overall situation of the pandemic and make the children understand the importance of hygiene practices, regular counseling and discussions with children were done. During the year, due to the pandemic, none of the children visited hospitals. The care takers collected the medicines for all the children once in 2 months.

One of the children is giving very much trouble to rest of the children .His behaviors are extremes and multiple complaints have come from both school and the center. He is not changing despite giving multiple warnings and counseling. The school was not able to continue with him and we considered special school options for him. But the efforts were discontinued as the cost would be too much for Freedom to bear. He was taken to St.John's hospital for consultation to Psychiatrist. He was referred to Nimhans to continue treatment. He was sent home to continue treatment.

Investigations, Treatment, Hospitalization & others:

Apart from HAART, the children were also taken to Dr.Nagraj as per need for different general health problems like cold, throat infection, fever, headache, nausea, stomach pain, warts treatment etc. All received timely treatment for their problems and were also regularly monitored.

One child is under continuous treatment and follow-up since Oct 2017 for his chronic eye infection reported as "Hyperplasia and moderate dysplasia". From Vitalla Eye hospital, he has been referred to Prabha Eye Clinic and is being regularly monitored & followed up. He underwent surgery in both the eyes and has improved since then. Special care was taken to keep up the good health conditions of the kids as we wanted to avoid any chance to expose them to Corona and further complications.

Psychological Support:

All the children are regularly counseled in group and need based individual counseling is also done in regard to all aspects of medicine, health, education, behavior, nutrition, hygiene, etc. There are general group discussion regarding maintaining the timings for study, food, sleep and work, proper food & water intake, studies, exams, etc. Individual discussions & counseling is done as per requirement on personal issues are also being regularly done after group meeting. During the pandemic, we also had restrictions in the visiting of the care takers of these children from the community. This created a great deal of distress in the children. They were counselled individually to face the reality of the pandemic and were assured of the prospect of meeting their family during the long vacation, which we facilitated eventually.

Meeting with children: -

Fortnight meetings are regularly conducted with all the children on alternate Saturdays in the afternoon. Conducted sensitization classes on how HIV affects our immune system how can an individual keep the virus under control and lead a healthy normal life – role of ART medicines and importance of balanced diet in this regard. Children are encouraged to eat well especially the vegetables and to drink sufficient water. There will be a general group discussion regarding maintaining the timings for study, food, sleep and work, proper food & water intake, studies, exams, etc. Individual discussions & counseling is done.

All the children who were writing their board exams & final years were individually counseled and discussed regarding their future education / career plan in accord to their line of interest & strengths / weaknesses. Special awareness was given with regards to Corona. Both the care takers and the children were given special coaching on washing and sanitizing hands properly and on wearing masks.

Volunteer Visits:

Both individual and group of volunteers used to visit the center, spend time with children, conduct some activities of drawing, dancing, singing, playing games, etc. During the year, due to the pandemic, no such activity was conducted. Many of the well-wishers sponsored food and birthday treats, which we prepared in the center. Due to Covid we had taken a policy as a center not to entertain any visitors. So that also cut down the number of visitors.

Volunteers from 'Helping Hands' regularly visit once in a month, to give in kind donations of rice, sweets, dry dates, dry coconuts, etc. OWC also gave toys and some clothes for the kids. We also received lots of toys from couple of volunteers which were useful in the pandemic to play indoors.



Birthdays & Other Occasions:

All children celebrated their birthdays with a new set of clothes and cutting cake. Every birthday celebration means a lot to our kids as it reminds them that they are a family meant to share their joy. The care takers prepare chicken or mutton as per the child's wish.

During the year, celebrations of different festivals / occasions like Ugadi, Independence Day, Ganesha festival, Rakshabandhan, Sankaranthi, Christmas, New Year, etc. were done by the kids along with staff with special food and snacks at the center.



Child Protection Policy (CPP):

The concept of 'Child Protection' was initiated with the training workshop from KNH in the previous years and was continued during last year and this year with different training sessions, discussions, etc. FF finalized a CPP document 2015 and was circulated to the donors, sponsors, funders, volunteers, etc. In regard to CPP, the regular meetings were conducted.

Education & Nutrition Assistance for HIV infected/affected community Children. Started: Year 2000

Supported by: Volunteers

For this year 2020-21, Freedom Foundation is providing partial support for nutrition to children & Families from community to withstand each child's right basic nutrition. During the whole year, the social worker kept in touch with the community of caregivers and followed up on the impact of Covid in their lives. We also supported them during the course of the year with nutrition

Activities for the year:

School Visits:

The social worker counseled & encouraged the community children along with their family to give proper guidance to the children to be in school, to maintain daily study timings, to improve their studies, etc.

House Visits:

House visits were cut short due to the pandemic. The list of care givers were also refined and revamped to give the support to the most eligible group of people. Also discussed with them about the restriction of funds in the coming years and so they should be able to plan & manage a major part of this for their children. Many parents acknowledged and expressed their gratitude for the support they receive through this project which lessened their burden of concern for their children's education.

Nutritional Support

Peer Support Group (PSG) meeting is a platform where the members gather together, to discuss their obstacles in terms of OI treatment, diagnosis, hospitalization, enrolling to HAART and other socio-psychological issues and also their peer support for the same. This support is of great help for them to manage their family because most of these women are widows and also undergo frequent health problems where they are not able to sustain any permanent job or stable earnings. This gathering means them a lot as this is a platform where they discuss regarding different issues that they face due to HIV which they cannot discuss elsewhere. However, the social worker is in constant touch with them, counseling them over phone.

For the year PSG meetings were not conducted due to the pandemic. But the nutrition pack with rice, dhal, sugar, oil and wheat flour were distributed two times during the course of the year.

Creating and establishing an ecosystem of care givers who support the development of these orphan children.

Started: Supported by:

This is a unique idea that was developed and practiced by Freedom Foundation over the years. The care givers who have

been with Freedom for the last 20+years and the residential children whom Freedom shelter form an eco-system in which they both fill in each other's need. The system of care givers have always provided as a resource back for selecting the residential children. These care givers who are in close touch with our residential children and community children act as a support system for these kids even after they grow up and leave the center, and thus mitigate the risk of orphan hood in these children.

The whole system works as one family under the broader umbrella of Freedom.

Problems/Difficulties faced, and challenges overcome:

Regular staff meetings are done .Appraisal for this year was also done by the end of the year and suggestion of improvements were given to each employee. But all staffs are advised to keep log of their daily activities. Mr. Subrahmani is keeping a written record of the daily activities in the center and the same is incorporated in the monthly report.

Children who are moving on to higher studies are not able to take a clear decision about their further education & career. It's a challenge to counsel, motivate and make them aware of their own strengths / capacity & then to select their line of study.

- Complete support for food component and managing sudden high medical expenses is a major challenge in this program and FF is trying the best to overcome this.
- Few kids who are facing continuous health problems are finding very difficult to manage their studies, health, medication, etc. and are pushed to mental stress. It is a challenge to motivate these kids by giving regular psychological support through counselor, caretakers & volunteers.
- Managing and counseling the adolescent children & sorting out various issues in regard to their adamant attitudes & behavior is a great challenge as these issues should not affect the other children around.
- Pandemic has brought about new challenges with regards to hygiene and discipline. How much ever we counsel the children, the chances of them overlooking the aspect is high, especially with younger kids. Containing all the children 24/7 inside the center is also very challenging. Regular motivation and counselling needed to keep their spirits high and to follow a healthy routine every day to make things easier.

Major Challenges and related responses:

As reported earlier, Foundation is facing the major challenge of funding constraint under all the projects.

To efficiently plan for the kids who are completing tenth & PU colleges and those who have completed 18yrs of age and find out a proper & safe place for their future.

To handle adolescent issues, counsel & motivate these children and make them understand their responsibilities in planning their life.

Due to lack of timely funding, the organization has continuous discussions with many funders to run the project. There is no committed funding for next financial year. This is a major challenge in the coming years.

Pandemic has brought about major ambiguity in the life of all people. The children are also affected by fear and confusion regarding their future.

Future Plans:

- Streamline childcare activities with dedicated interface.

- Scale up the number of children to 25.
- Maintenance of the children care center – Painting, Furniture, CCTV, Electrical/Plumbing/Carpentry works, etc. Water is also scarce as the bore well often goes for repair or is dry and we are depending on tankers for water supply.
- Discussion with various funders to receive the major funding for the ‘Children care project’ for the coming years.
- Focus on gender specific care at both Bangalore & Hyderabad centers.
- Plan and undertake fundraising activities by approaching various kinds of donors, corporate sectors & individuals to involve and engage them in specific funding, to strengthen and improve the support for nutrition, medication and education.
- Future and career plans for the kids who are completing their tenth and PU colleges & those who are completing 18yrs of age.



DIYA – THE LIVING LAMPS INITIATIVE (RESIDENTIAL) – SECUNDERABAD

Supported by: UWH (United Way of Hyderabad- Real page Grant, DST Grant)

1. Residential care and services for HIV Orphans

During this year 2020-21, there was 8 girl children that were cared within the residential facility, which has no formal support to support for Shelter, Education, Medication, Nutritious food, Extra-curricular activities, Transportation, clothing, Hospitalization, Birthday celebrations and other personnel costs. It has been functioning with the support of well wishers and individual donors who has helped in kind and in cash for specific needs and also with the generous support of the trustee, Mr. Ashok Rau.

Objective:

The overall objective of the program is to improve the HIV children’s health through continuum of care, hygiene, nutrition, education and contribute in the development of future of the child’s wellbeing through empowering them to demand their rights and link them to PLHIV networks for safer tomorrow.

Activities:

Health:

Health is the core aspect of the childcare center and is facilitated by regular ART adherence monitoring and treatment of Opportunistic Infections. Although children have a normal life, but they experience a range of symptoms/ OI’s that affect their day to day life for which they need care and assistance. This year 3 of the children started their ART.

Support with HAART:

All continued availing their medicine from the respective hospitals. All are under regular monitor and follow up for their CD4 tests. They receive their medicines from Nilufer Hospital and some purchased from outside.

Investigations, Treatment, Hospitalization & others:

All the kids were monitored with regular investigations & counseling and were treated accordingly. Apart from support for HAART, all the children are regularly monitored and taken to respective facilities for general check-ups, investigations, consultations, treatments for side-effects of HAART & OIs. Due to Corona, the visits to the hospitals were minimized and most of the issues were treated with home remedies.

Nutrition:

Good nutrition cannot cure AIDS or prevent HIV infection but can help maintain and improve the nutritional status of children with HIV/AIDS and delays the progression from HIV to AIDS-related diseases. A holistic diet plan with specific attention to each nutritional component such as proteins, carbohydrates, minerals, vitamins and fats is designed for daily intake. Every child at the DIYA Center gets meals which includes one or more foods from the three food groups – Carbohydrates, Proteins, Vitamins & Minerals.

A planned weekly diet menu is prepared so that children get adequate vital nutrition such as proteins, vitamins, carbohydrates and fats, accordingly weekly diet chart is prepared and food is served healthy and tasty food including of

fruits, eggs ,high protein non-veg food (chicken, mutton, fish) etc, once in a week.

There is regular consumption of vegetables & fruits received either through donations or being purchased. Eggs, milk and curd are being regularly purchased and used. The daily food menu will be periodically changed after discussion with the children as per their choice. Safe drinking water is consumed by the residential children & staff through the aqua guard filters fixed at the care center.

Education:

This year started with corona. Lockdown was prevalent most months of this year. There were hardly any classes for both college and school. Children completed their academic year and they got their results. Vennela passed 5th std promoted to 6th in Adarsh convent High school. Karuna passed 9th promoted to 10th in Good shepherd school. Vasumathi and Lavanya passed 10th promoted to Intermediate in Keyes Junior college. Asha and Ankitha passed Inter 1st year promoted to Inter 2nd year. Keerthi passed Inter 2nd year and applied for degree. All children were happy about their results. Online classes were conducted for the higher standards and college students. We purchased an additional phone to facilitate the further need of online education for all the children.

Psychosocial Support:

All children are being given regular counseling for various issues in times of need, they are further strengthened with Yoga & meditation classes and gain the required mental strength.

Celebrations, Recreations, Special Events and Volunteers Visit:

The birthday of every child at the residential care is celebrated with new dress, cake and chocolates. And for the year too, the birthdays of all the kids were celebrated with full of fun & joy at the center.

Apart from studies, the kids also involve themselves with other extracurricular activities of dance, music, drawing, etc. through which they are able to grow in their individual talents. During the year, many of the activities were hindered due to Covid and lockdowns.

During the year, not many volunteers visited the center. The usual visitors from different organizations like Joy of Sharing, Nice People Friends club, Deloitte, etc could also not contribute much or visit the kids due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Throughout the year, the children celebrated different festivals – Ganesha chaturti, Ugadi, Christmas, Holi, Diwali, Dasara, etc. with crackers, light decorations, stars, special sweets/snacks & food, etc. They enjoyed a lot of fun and togetherness along with the residential staff.

For Christmas, Shvani, a well-wisher sponsored clothes and food for the kids. All the kids went out for shopping and got new dresses and had food from outside in a hotel.





Challenges:

There was no formal funding for this project this year. In this regard, Freedom Foundation has approached other funders for support and is regularly in discussion and follow up for the same. Till the required support is received, it's a great challenge for the organization to run this program and this withdrawal of support will surely affect the program till a stabilized funding is established through another funder.

- Children who are moving on to higher studies are not able to take a clear decision about their further education & career. It's a challenge to counsel, motivate and make them aware of their own strengths / capacity & then to select their line of study.
- Complete support for food component and managing sudden high medical expenses is a major challenge in this program and FF is trying the best to overcome this.
- Few kids who are facing continuous health problems are finding very difficult to manage their studies, health, medication, etc. and are pushed to mental stress. It is a challenge to motivate these kids by giving regular psychological support through counselor, caretakers & volunteers.
- Managing and counseling the adolescent children & sorting out various issues in regard to their adamant attitudes & behavior is a great challenge as these issues should not affect the other children around.
- With Covid, this year have seen new challenges in the front of online education. Health and ambiguity of the medical situation in the state is also a thing of worry.

Future Plans:

- Discussions and follow ups with different funders to receive funding for the whole program due for lack of support.
- Approach government authorities to provide land / building as per the various schemes for Orphans Homes.
- Multiply and optimize on donor interactions in order to reap more funds in kind or cash to meet the market inflation.
- Planning additional awareness and fundraising activities to enhance acceptability and providing prosperous & thriving

future to our children.

- Enhancing the psychological aspect of the staff so that they could deliver additional emotional support to our children.
- Commence knowledge building sessions on Adolescent Behavior Changes, Puberty etc, and the various issues they could face in their adolescence.
- Co-ordination with institutions which provide care and support to special children in order to construct a positive and self-reliant belief in our special children.
- Liaison with government institutes which could impart skilled vocational training programs to our children consequently preparing them to cope up with ground realities of the world.

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