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Shaishav is accredited by Credibility Alliance, and is a member of GiveIndia and GuideStar India.

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There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children
- Nelson Mandela



- •It is estimated that there are between 50 and 60 million child labourers in India, making up at least 12% of the child population
- More than 21 million children aged
 6-10 are out of school, and 34% leave
 before they reach the end of primary
 school
- •12% of girls never see the inside of a classroom
- •Even in comparatively developed states like Gujarat, the juvenile sex ratio is shockingly low. In 2011 there were 886 girls aged 0-6 for every 1000 boys, and just 852 in urban areas.



We are guilty of many errors and many faults but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot. Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made, and his senses are being developed. To him we cannot answer 'Tomorrow'. His name is 'Today'.

- Gabriela Mistral

Winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature

We believe that

a child is innocent and pure... a symbol of love, strength, and happiness... endless, deep, and free... a source of life.











Shaishay - An Introduction

Shaishav was established in 1992, as an organisation committed to realising the basic rights of children, particularly the underprivileged. We envision the creation of a society where each child achieves the potential she or he is born with, becomes independent, and contributes to the holistic and sustainable development of a world that is just, peaceful, and humane.

Shaishav believes that all children should enjoy basic rights and experience the joys of childhood equally; that all children should become productive, socially sensitive, and democratically skilled citizens.

Shaishay Strives To:

- •Ensure that all children achieve the basic right to free and compulsory education
- •Create a child centred environment and provide opportunities where children and youth can realise their basic rights
- •Develop learning resources for children and make them available to all those who can influence children's holistic development

Evolution

In 1995 Shaishav conducted a survey in Bhavnagar, a city in the state of Gujarat, India. Close to 13,000 child labourers were identified working in Bhavnagar, in 106 occupations. This was the largest study ever done by a grass-roots organisation in India, and was quoted in the Supreme Court's landmark judgement on child labour in 1996. Since then, Shaishav has conducted field programmes based among underprivileged communities, mostly in the slum areas of Bhavnagar. We work at the local level to empower communities to be protagonists for their own rights. In this capacity, Shaishav has conducted community-based programmes such as Balsena, Tarunsena and Balghars, in 24 communities and 36 government schools in the city.

Programmes:

Balsena and Tarunsena: Empowerment Through Collective Strength

Shaishav facilitates these two community-based organisations (CBOs) designed to provide collective strength to children and youth. Balsena, literally "children's force", is a collective of children and the first of its kind in Gujarat. Here, children learn to recognise their rights and campaign for

them. Balsena is run, managed and led by children with facilitative support from Shaishav. All decisions related to activities, programmes, and electing leaders are made by the children themselves. In 2011 it had approximately 2500 members aged 6-18, across 60 teams. Regular leadership training enables the children to identify issues that affect their lives and aspirations, and explore strategies to resolve them. Balsena members are involved in the following programmes:

- •Balsena Points were launched in response to the communal violence that occurred across Gujarat in 2002, with the theme "play together, stay together". They now function as teams in which Balsena children can get together to participate in activities. In 2011, 42 were operating in slum areas, and a further 18 in schools.
- •Savings Bank enables children to save money independently, and gives them skills in financial responsibility and decision-making. As of May 2011, 1134 children had saved 631,915 rupees (over US\$14,000).
- •Adolescent Programme provides more than 350 girls and boys with information, support, and advice about issues faced during their adolescent years.

- Book Bank was implemented in response to the lack of appropriate educational materials. It provides Balsena and Balghar members with access to textbooks and other learning materials in three different centres.
- •Events and training programmes such as Leadership Camp, Vacation Camp and children's fairs are run throughout the year

The Indian Government, in conjunction with local organisations, created the **CHILDLINE** service to provide emergency support to children across India. Shaishav have set up the service in Bhavnagar, and Balsena children have played an important role in spreading its message. The line provides a 24-hour, toll free service for children in crisis, and in need of care and protection.

Tarunsena is a youth collective established in 2008 to provide a platform for those who have graduated from Balsena. The collective has approximately 60 members, who are working together to tackle children's and community issues, as well as providing guidance and support for Balsena.



Community Action for Child Rights

Our **Balghars** are community based child resource centres, located in the most deprived areas of the city. Balghars provide educational and other developmental activities to enhance the potential of children's holistic development. For non-school going children and those engaged in labour, Balghar serves as a stop-gap arrangement to help them enter and remain in mainstream education. They provide spaces where children can express their creativity, learn life skills, and develop compassionate values.

Based on the understanding that change in the status of children can only be sustainable through community action and ownership, Shaishav implemented a number of forums in different communities. Lok Samarthan Manch, literally "people's support forum," is comprised of adults belonging to the same underprivileged communities that Shaishav works in. Baldost **Manch**, literally "forum of children's friends," is made up of enlightened citizens of Bhavnagar who wish to contribute to the local child rights movement. Women constitute an important part of both groups. These forums further enhance the collective strength of the child rights movement, and help provide a child friendly environment.

Local CBOs, including women's organisations, are beginning to play critical roles in the governance of Balghars. We are in the process of establishing **Area Committees**, where representatives of Balsena, Tarunsena, Lok Samarthan Manch and Baldost Manch form executive bodies to plan and direct local action in different communities.

In accordance with the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE), the government will be implementing **School Management Committees**. These will give parents the ability to help enforce the Act and monitor schools. Shaishav will provide training and guidance to assist parents in this role.

Area Resource Centres:

Currently these centres provide English Language training, computer courses in collaboration with the NASSCOM foundation, libraries for children, and Book Banks. In the future these centres will become places where children can go to get information and advice about vocational training opportunities available through local organisations. Furthermore, the centres will provide life skills training to encourage children to become more independent and entrepreneurial. Finally, they aim to provide local people with information on government schemes, benefits, and support options, including helping with widow's pensions, ration cards, and birth certificates.

Child Rights Training and Resource Centre

Shaishav has established the Child Rights Training and Resource Centre, which serves to support and strengthen the many educational and empowerment programmes that Shaishav and other similar organisations already have in place, and to develop and expand their collective capacities, through a number of interrelated activities:

- Developing teaching and learning materials for children's education
- •Developing training resources directed at both adults and children, for training in life skills, child rights, and education issues
- •Shaishav is the Indian hub for the US based organisation **Play for Peace**, which brings diverse youth together through cooperative play
- •Documenting the techniques used by Shaishav in developing and sustaining child-centred programmes, enabling the sharing of such lessons with other organisations

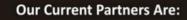
Impacts and achievements of Shaishav:

- •Due to our constant efforts in the community, approximately 10,000 out-of-school children admitted into mainstream schooling
- •Balsena children have participated in state, national, and international processes, and demonstrated their leadership, and are now providing training to other children
- Successful campaigning by Balsena children to build a new high school in Kumbharwada, Bhavnagar's largest slum
- A large variety of innovative materials and activities have been created, several of which have been accepted for larger application by the Education Department of the State Government, and other NGOs in Gujarat and beyond

Challenges:

- Children remain a low priority in many development projects
- •The current economic climate, particularly the global recession and the resulting rise in inflation, has put more pressure on children to work, in order to provide their families with supplementary income
- Restoring the faith of marginalised communities in formal education, particularly in government schools, continues to be difficult
- Out of school tuition classes are placing increasingly large demands on children's free time
- There are continuing difficulties mobilising sustainable finance, and in acquiring permanent space for activities

At Shaishav, we try to fulfil our responsibilities to deprived children by providing them with the opportunity to enrich their lives. There are many challenges, but the good wishes and active support of our friends and partner organisations constantly provide us with inspiration and encouragement. We have received support from many well-wishers, donors and institutes for our activities.

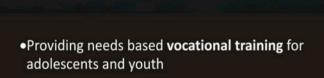


Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, Share and Care Foundation USA, Paul Hammlyn Foundation UK, Axis Bank Foundation, Global Fund for Children USA, Childreach International UK, Asha-Vija Foundation USA

Our Previous Partners Include:

Terre des Hommes, Oxfam India Trust, Child Rights and You (CRY), Indo-German Social Service Society, Action Aid, Sir Ratan Tata Trust, Save the Children, Sarlaben Adenwala Dave - Living Trust USA.

It is through the support of organisations like these that we are able to carry out our work. We are always in need of more financial assistance, and your support will help provide a meaningful life and opportunity to underprivileged children. We are currently seeking specific funding for land and buildings to host our expanding activities, and endowments to increase the financial security and sustainability of the organisation.



- •Conducting research on topics relevant to children and their rights
- Shaishav has two well-equipped buses that function as highly popular Mobile Resource Centres in schools and communities, providing support for activities and awareness programmes through games, talks and films
- Advocacy and networking with like-minded organisations at state, national, and international level, to attempt to influence policy and stimulate change

Though these activities are all operational, Shaishav is looking for a substantial physical space where they can be housed under a common roof.

- Shaishav developed one of the first educational programmes for the safety and protection of adolescent girls, resulting in girls gaining greater acceptance in their communities
- •Children are leading child rights initiatives in their communities and with local government
- •Shaishav led a nationwide effort to establish the National Forum for Child Participation, the first of its kind in India
- Shaishav has received various awards at local and state levels in recognition of their work, and its founders have been recognised as Ashoka, CRY, and Fulbright Hubert H. **Humphrey Fellows**





















