

# Asha for Education

2011 Fox Glen Dr, Allen, TX 75013, USA  
Website: [www.ashanet.org/dallas](http://www.ashanet.org/dallas) Email: [dallas@ashanet.org](mailto:dallas@ashanet.org)



## Welcome to Asha for Education-Dallas!

### First Time Volunteer Introduction

This brief document contains 'all you wanted to know about Asha-Dallas but didn't know whom to ask...!'

If you would like to volunteer some of your free time for Asha, join us as an active member, wish to contribute monetarily or are just curious, read on....!

#### Asha for Education - Background & Philosophy

##### Q. What is Asha?

Asha is a non-profit organization with the primary goal of providing basic education to children in India. Asha was started in the summer of 1991, when a few students at Berkeley got together to do their part in bringing hope and opportunity to poor and underprivileged children.

##### Q. How does Asha achieve its goals?

We at Asha believe that an educated population is both a critical requisite and an effective catalyst for socio-economic changes in India. We work through non-governmental organizations working in rural areas of the country. We raise funds for these groups, conduct site visits and monitor their progress. We also try to raise awareness in our local community about child illiteracy issues in India.

##### Q. How does Asha select projects?

1. We usually hear about projects through mail or word-of-mouth. Asha works with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that have no political or religious affiliations. We screen the projects rigorously through correspondence and site visits.
2. We approve projects for the funds that we have on hand, in other words, we don't promise what we don't have and cannot deliver.
3. To receive fund the receiving agency needs to have an FCRA clearance (Foreign Contributions Regulatory Act 1996). We provide documents needed to secure this clearance once we have evaluated and approved this project. After sending the funds, we regularly monitor the progress through periodic written reports and annual site visits.

##### Q. Is Asha an acronym?

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No Asha is not an acronym. Asha stands for Hope in several Indian languages. Hope of good education for the children of India and Hope for the future of the country. Hope to change the lives of children in India for the better.

Q. How big is Asha?

Since its inception, people from different parts of the US have joined this endeavor. At present, there are over 65 full-fledged Asha chapters in various cities and universities. In 1992 Asha was also registered as a Trust at New Delhi by the founder of Asha, Dr. Sandeep Pandey, who went back to India after completing a PhD from Berkeley and is now involved in social work full-time. Chapters of Asha now exist in Lucknow, Mumbai, Chennai, Bangalore and other cities in India and also in Europe, Australia, Singapore.

Q. What are our costs?

Asha for Education is run entirely by volunteers. Thus, we do not deduct any administrative expenses from general donations, and 100% of the money donated to Asha goes for funding projects in India. We do have events and publicity related cost, supported through sponsorships and advertisements from the local community.

Q. Who does Asha – Dallas consist of?

We are a group of students and professionals from the DFW area, and our chapter was started in 1997. We have volunteers in Dallas, Irving, Richardson, Plano, Allen, Arlington from all walks of life.

Q. How does Asha – Dallas as a chapter, operate within the larger framework of the nationwide organization?

Though chapters of Asha are part of the nationwide organization they function as independent entities. Thus, Asha – Dallas carries out its own activities locally and funds projects selected by its own members. We do work closely with other chapters and sometimes jointly fund projects. We do participate in Asha-wide campaign and leverage good practices, know-how, on a daily basis.

Q. What is the goal or mission for the Dallas chapter?

The goal of the Dallas chapter is same as that of Asha for Education at national level, "To catalyze socio-economic change in India through education of underprivileged children". We will work with all projects that show a valid need within the Projects guidelines and criteria developed by Asha for Education and also accepted by the current Dallas chapter volunteers. To achieve our goal we need volunteers to mobilize the local DFW community.

Q. What are some of the activities of Asha – Dallas?

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There are three main focus groups where you can participate for variety of activities:

**Projects:** The objective of the volunteers here, is to find worthy education projects in India, review project proposals, disburse funds, conduct site visits and follow up on project success, feedback.

**Fundraising:** Organizes cultural events like dance performances, flute concerts, music programs, thereby raising awareness about Asha among the local Indian community. Funds are raised through sale of tickets and advertisement sponsorships. We hosts concerts for example, Amjad Ali Khan(Sarod concert), Alarmel Valli(Bharatnatyam recital), hosts sport events like TT/Carrom and Cricket Tournaments.

**Publicity:** At many events, especially Indian events, we set up an information booth on Asha and its projects in India, with the intention of raising awareness among the local populace. We also sell merchandise like calenders, T-shirts, mugs, greeting cards - often made by school children who are benefiting from our projects in India. To get visibility in the local media, members participate in talk shows on the radio and press releases are sent out before our events. Presentations are also made to corporations to encourage corporate giving.

Q. How do I join Asha?

Asha is an open group, with no bureaucracy or hierarchy. We encourage members to take initiative and volunteer for what they enjoy doing. You can 'join' Asha simply by attending our meetings!

Q. Is there a membership fee?

There is no membership fee required for joining Asha. However, members do contribute, on a purely voluntary basis, funds for administrative expenses. For large scale events, the initial expense for printing, hall reservations and specific supplies is contributed by volunteers, which is then re-imbursed at the end of the event. Administrative expenses like mailing thank you notes, are borne by volunteers.

Q. Where are the meetings held?

Asha meetings are open to all. There are two meetings every months, generally on every other Sunday 2:00-4:00pm in Richardson, TX at UT-Dallas. Meeting announcements are sent to the mailing list a week ahead.

Q. Can I participate even if I don't have much free time?

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Yes. Depending on the amount of time commitment you can make, you can volunteer for one-time or periodic activities. Minimum time requested of a volunteer is 4hrs a week. This is required at the least to read emails on the mailing list and keep updated. Long- term commitment as long as 3-6 mths (12 mtgs) is always appreciated as this helps establish stable functioning of the chapters.

Q. How can I help raise funds?

1. Make a donation to fund projects supported by Asha.
2. Help us publicize Asha at local events or by making a presentation in your company.
3. Buy Asha merchandise or raise funds online! Visit <http://www.ashanet.org/index.php?topic=dbase&page=inv-buy>
4. Join the Asha-Stars program where 5 contributors adopt a project: they research it, evaluate it, support it and monitor it.

Q. How do I make a donation to Asha?

All contributions to Asha are tax-deductible. Make your check payable to "Asha For Education", and mail to: "Asha For Education", 2011 Fox Glen Dr, Allen, TX 75013. USA

You can also make online donations at <http://www.ashanet.org/donate>.

Q. Where do I find more information about the Dallas chapter?

- www: <http://www.ashanet.org/dallas>
- email: [dallas@ashanet.org](mailto:dallas@ashanet.org)
- yahoogroups: [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/asha\\_dallas](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/asha_dallas)
- Contact any of the following Asha members
- Ravi Kandikonda (214) 223-9975 [ravionweb@yahoo.com](mailto:ravionweb@yahoo.com)
- Farida Rajkotwala (972) 697 8464 [faridar@yahoo.com](mailto:faridar@yahoo.com)

When you attend a meeting, we will assign a mentor who can help you through initial months to increase your understanding of how we work. Feel free to ask questions and post on the mailing list. This yahoogroup is used extensively for all our activities. The files section has documents of our past events, projects and finances. The database section has contact numbers of other volunteers, please add your too! (if you wish to learn about yahoogroups, please ask!)

Thank you for your time and patience,

Co-ordinator

Asha for Education

Dallas Chapter