



ASHA KIRAN

The Asha for Education Newsletter

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About ASHA

ASHA for education is a non profit voluntary organization dedicated to the support of basic education in India. ASHA strives to provide financial assistance to educate underprivileged children in India and to increase awareness within the local community about these issues. ASHA's actions are based on the firm belief that education is a critical and effective catalyst for social and economic change in India.

Contribute for FREE

Asha-AT&T Program

If AT&T is your long distance carrier, please call 1-800-426-0015, select 1 and enroll in this program. Choose "Asha" as your beneficiary association. AT&T donates a percentage of your bill to ASHA at no extra cost to you!

Breaking the Bonds:

Picture a pair of small, delicate hands toiling on a spinning machine in a dark, hot, humid factory; the heat, the grime, the pain, the despair. Now, imagine the same pair of hands holding a book in a clean, bright classroom. The contrast is stark, yet very real.

India has millions of children who toil under inhuman conditions. A study by UNICEF and the State Government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) found lack of education to be the primary cause of child labor. AP, one of the least literate states, has the largest number of child laborers in the country. In contrast, Kerala, the most literate state, has the smallest number of working children.

The primary causes of child labor are debt, poverty, attitude of parents and indifference.

Education mitigates these factors by increasing awareness of individuals and of society as a whole.

Educated parents will not use their children as collateral for their debts, they will send them to school instead. Unscrupulous employers force children to work at minimum wages. Education empowers children to escape from the vicious clutches of such employers.

ASHA believes that education is a means to stimulate children intellectually, inform them about problems, teach them to tackle these issues and thus make them better citizens. The concept of education as a tool to break the shackles of bonded labor promises rich rewards if implemented intelligently and passionately.

Sanjay Anand, ASHA Seattle

Berkeley, Nov 22nd , International House, Contact Bhaskar (510 644 1906)	Images of India, ASHA Berkeley's annual fund raiser is being held on Nov. 22 nd , from 6-9 PM. This year's event promises to be as entertaining as past years', with dances, songs and skits from all parts of India and a slide show about Asha.
Central New Jersey, Oct 3rd , 30 Christy Lane, Watchung, Contact Parag (732 695 9473)	The Central New Jersey chapter of ASHA presents a cultural evening of Indian dance and music. The event will start at 5 PM and last till 7:30 PM. Tickets are \$10 (which includes the price of dinner) and children under 5 can enter for free!
Chicago, October , Chicagoland. Contact Kushal (773 325 2925)	ASHA Chicago is in the midst of a pledge drive. Volunteers are taking turns calling about 1500 people in the greater Chicago area in order to raise funds.
Indiana, Oct 3rd , College Park Baptist Church. Contact Kumar (317 582 1306)	Taste of India! This year, ASHA Indiana is going to have a variety of Indian food, all sorts of entertainment, Indian games and Indian items for sale. Entrance is \$2, the event begins at 10 AM and ends at 4 PM.
Madison, Oct 25th , Main Theater, Memorial Union. Contact Subbu (608 250 9357)	The "Making of the Mahatma" will be screened at 6 PM at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. IDS-Chicago and the Indian Grad Students Association are cosponsors of this free screening.
Stanford, Oct 31st , Smithwick Theater, Los Altos. Contact Mouli (408 730 1861)	Halloween party! ASHA Stanford is hosting a party with live entertainment by Antara. Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door and orchestra seating is available for \$25. There are prizes for the best costume and for the best dancers.
St. Louis, Oct 16th - 18th , Queeny Park, W. County. Contact Garima (314 863 8286)	ASHA St. Louis will be operating a food stall at the International Folk Fest, an annual event open to non-profit organizations.
Washington DC, Oct 15th , IFC auditorium, Pennsylvania Av. Contact Sukumar (202 667 6299)	Sanjay Mishra, the internationally know jazz/fusion guitarist will be performing at a benefit concert for ASHA DC. Sanjay recently received an award for the soundtrack of <i>Port Djema</i> , a French film. He has also jammed with the likes of Jerry Garcia!

ASHA Web Info

Go to <http://www.ashanet.org/> and check out the various links! Want to contact your local chapter? [chapters.html](#) has links to the 30+ Asha chapters. Interested in Asha project activity? [projects.html](#) is the place to go. Want to read earlier editions of Asha Kiran? [newsletters.html](#) has the old newsletters archived. Got a burning issue to discuss? [Infoshare/board.html](#) lets you post and read articles.

New Projects:

Avvai Ashram, Tamil Nadu: Avvai Ashram, at Sivasailam, Tirunelveli district, maintains an orphanage for 50 poor children and bears their educational expenses. It also runs a residential school for deaf-and-dumb children, three nursery schools and provides training in cottage industry for local women. Funding for 1 year (\$1000) has been approved by ASHA-DC.

New Modern English Medium School, Karnataka: This school (KG to Standard IV) in village Nandgad, Belgaum district provides free education to 245 children of agricultural and landless laborers. ASHA-NYC/NJ has provided \$2500 to cover teacher's salaries, books and uniforms for the children.

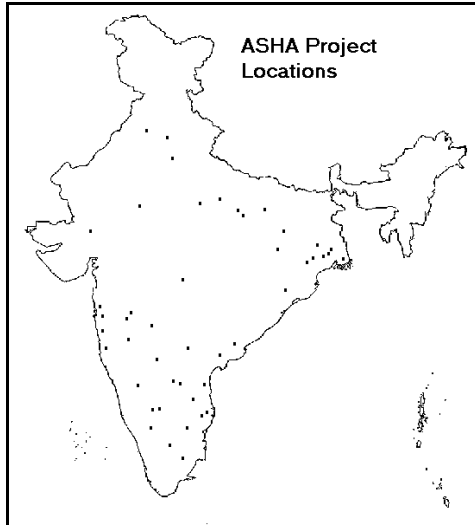
Maharogi Sewa Samiti, Maharashtra The Samiti, founded by Baba Amte, runs a school at Wardha. It provides formal education (up to Std. VII) to 500 blind, deaf-mute and handicapped children. ASHA-St. Louis is funding \$1500 for these students to be trained in vocations skills like carpentry, operating looms, welding, electrical technology and make them self-employed and self-reliant.

Project Updates:

Swanirvar, West Bengal (From the April '98 issue of Asha Kiran) ASHA-Madison is funding (\$1500) the existing schools, which were formerly supported by ASHA-MIT and ASHA-LA, for 1998-99.

SPOTLIGHT: MVF

The Mamidipudi Venkatarangaiya Foundation was established with an aim to eradicate child labor by putting children into school. Since 1991, its community programmes have helped over 80,000 children in about 500 villages of Ranga Reddy District near Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.



MVF works closely with parents, school teachers, women's groups, elected representatives, youth volunteers and the children themselves, to facilitate the education of children.

To implement its programmes, MVF employs an extensive network of para-teachers and supervisors who play the dual role of teachers and social activists. Drawn from the local community, these para-

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teachers help in formal education and also act as councilors addressing social issues such as girl child education and problems faced by the working child.

The success of MVF in developing and maintaining a sustained effort to tackle child labor and illiteracy has won it both national and international acclaim. Ms. Shantha Sinha, MVF's secretary, recently received the *Padma Shree*. MVF's programmes have been replicated in states of Rajasthan, Orissa and Karnataka.

MVF receives funding from various governmental and non-governmental agencies such as Govt. of India, UNDP, CRY, UNICEF and HIVOS towards implementing its elaborate educational programmes. Often, these funds are released very late creating difficulties in smooth functioning on a continuous basis. ASHA has pooled resources (\$7750) to assist MVF in creation of a corpus fund which would be used as a bridge grant for MVF's activities.

Through its work, the MVF has established that parents, irrespective of their economic status, have a great desire to educate their children, and that economic reasons are not the compelling factors which put a child to work.

If you would like to contribute to this project, please contact Devabhaktuni Srikrishna (617) 877 5944.

By the year 2000 every second illiterate person in the world will be an Indian.

We need you!

Join Asha	Give Asha	Partake Asha	Buy Asha
Be a part of a motivated group of people	You can make tax exempt donations to Asha	Participate in various Asha events and schemes	Buy Asha merchandise (calendars, mugs and cards)

Please contact your local ASHA chapter and find out how you can help. You can make checks payable to "Asha for Education" and mail them to: Asha-Stanford, PO Box 9485, Stanford, CA 94309. 100% of your contributions go towards supporting Asha projects in India. All administrative expenses are borne by ASHA volunteers. Asha for Education is a non profit organization.