

# Door Step School – Annual Report to Asha for Education, Silicon Valley

## Annexure – 1 - Special stories and Photographs

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**1. Chaturshrungi (Pulachiwadi):** The “Phulachiwadi” and “Shivajinagar” Centres are two separate locations run for children of pavement dwellers. The children are habituated to doing odd jobs, begging and rag picking to support their families. These children take time to get into the habit of sitting in one place to listen and learn.

When we brought the children of both the locations together at Shivaji Nagar School they were not ready to sit together in one group and many times ended up fighting with each other. Gradually they have started to accept each other and now sit in a group while learning.



**Children at the Class in School No 14, Shivajinagar**

The children of Chaturshrungi center stay below the bridge and beg in the nearby area. So we decided to start a class for them, but conducting class in open area is a great challenge. Hence we decided to conduct the class in our mobile classroom, “SCHOOL ON WHEELS’. Gradually we took them to the nearby school i.e. Shivaji Nagar and continued their education in a room. We would like to share an incident at the class, “Once the teacher was not able to concentrate on teaching due to distraction from outside of the room. Therefore she closed the door of classroom and suddenly the children started shouting and crying as they got frightened. It is difficult for them to stay in closed place since they are used to staying in the open. In the beginning they used to go out of class or move in class.”

Like other students of the class Sonali and Gatu also beg at road side to earn money. Out of this earning they keep a little for titbits and all the remaining they give to their parents. These two children of std 1<sup>st</sup> saved the money and bought a double ruled book for writing. It is a great achievement for us as it shows that now these children understand the importance of education.

## 2. D'Block

The situation at D Block is different from typical Doorstep classes. It is a community of squatters who work at various construction sites. The place lacks basic amenities like water and electricity.

Since we had no support from a builder or anybody else, we enrolled the children here in school and set out to conduct half-day literacy classes for them. The enrolled children became irregular because the walk to the school was through a heavy traffic zone. So we looked for a place nearby. We finally managed to find a room allocated to senior citizens' activities and got permission to run classes here for just half the day. And so classes at D Block began.

We tried to encourage the children to make sure they attend school. Half of them did and the other half dropped out due to various reasons, the typical one being to take care of younger siblings.

Of the children, Vaishnavi stands out in our minds. She had been attending our sessions for 3 months and started doing really well and learning to read composite letters. One fine day she suddenly went away to her village and then suddenly returned after a month. Expecting her to have forgotten what she had learned earlier, teachers asked her to read a paragraph, in order to gauge her reading level at the time. We were surprised to see that she was reading better than when she left from here. We asked her how she was reading so well. Vaishnavi said, "My cousin goes to school and I would read his books as well as the newspaper. That is why I still remember how to read"!

Experiences like this tell us that when children develop a love for reading, it remains with them forever. Knowing this, we have also learned to motivate children to grow further along this path by awarding certificates and prizes in reading and storytelling competitions.



### 3. DSS Anand Park (Golvalkar) and Range Hills Centers

The volunteers from Cognizant had planned to conduct Science Exhibition and Dance competition for children from both the sites along with children of *Zilla Parishad* schools. In the competition, although the DSS children were the youngest participants, their performance was remarkable. In Dance competition children of DSS Anand Park stood first and in Science Exhibition children of Range hills got the first prize.



### 4. Kumar Siddhachal

Parents of Kumar Siddhachal are keen to send their children to government school. They agreed to partially fund the school transportation of the children since the center started and continue this practice. The new parents who enroll their children in school they also join them.



## 5. Kumar Surbhi

Whenever new child joins the site, the children of the class talk to his/her parents and take that child to the school. The school going habit is created among the children and they are able to even influence other parents and children to send their wards to school. Performance of the children has been appreciated by the School Teacher. The DSS Teacher had a large role to play in this transformation.

At the P.M.C. school when there was a cultural programme, children of Kumar Surbhi has also participated in the program. All the parents taken one hour off from work and attended the students programme.



## 6. Shivajinagar:

Children of Shivajinagar class generally do not like to go to school on Saturdays as the school timing is in the early morning. On the last Saturday of June all the students went to the school. The school teacher came to the DSS class and praised our teacher for her efforts. Now these children do attend school on Saturdays.



### 7. Simpli City:

Raju Nair is a 13 yr old boy attending our Study classes. He joined us in 2010 when he was 11 years old. He was always fond of attending class and would sit with others during play time. He would also help the teachers a lot in making displays on the topic of the month. We then enrolled him in the government school and he began attending regularly. We found him to be very creatively inclined and adept in various innovative mechanical and model-making activities, including detail oriented sliding windows of the model of a bus that he made where the windows actually slid.

Raju left home one day and had been missing for awhile. After much searching, we found him in a recycling shop searching for text books of Std 10. Surprised, we asked him ‘why do you want books of Std 10?’ He said. “Madam, if I can begin learning right from now it becomes easy for me by the time I get to Std 10”.

Raju made a battery operated lift with matchboxes to emulate such a product commonly found in construction sites. Doorstep awarded him a medal and a certificate for this work. He was so thrilled that he went around showing it to everyone in his community, his school as well as at the site. Our site supervisor, Mr. Dubey encouraged him further by gifting him Rs 100.



## 8. Sky Line

Babul Mohmin Shaik is 10 yrs old student of std 3<sup>rd</sup>. He is very bright child since two years he is attending DSS center. This year he has secured admission to **Vidya Niketan** school. **Vidya Niketan** schools are school where select children from different schools are admitted based on their academic performance. They get scholarship, educational material and transportation facilities from school.

## 9. Kumar Palm Grove

Name: Taufiq Sayyed

Student of Std.IV, Somji School, Kondhwa

Taufiq is a nine year old boy who moved to Pune with his parents from his hometown in Mugaon near Nanded about two years ago. His father can just about read and write a few words and numbers. He knows the importance of education and wants his children to study as much as they can. At present, he works as a laborer. Taufiq's mother is illiterate and works in the maintenance department. These parents have also had to split the family with their seven year old daughter studying in Std.III staying in their hometown with her grandparents and the rest coming to Pune in search of a better life. Taufiq has a five year old younger brother. Their family lives in a temporary tin hut in the labour camp and has access to power, water and toilets.

Taufiq is very serious about his studies when he comes to the DSS class. He finishes his homework and any other work given to him first, and then helps some of the other children who need help with their work. He also loves to read the story books available at the centers. His favorite character is 'Chhotu'.

Whenever Taufiq gets an opportunity, he likes to run and jump and play 'catching cook'. He likes to play with the other DSS classmates. He sometimes helps his mother fill water for their daily use and runs a few other errands for her. Taufiq likes to sing and readily sings whenever anyone requests him. Recently he participated in a school singing competition and won a prize. He smiles and asks if he can participate in a music reality show on TV!

Taufiq has been with DSS for about two years. His teachers in school and at the class are impressed with his sincerity and good behavior. His parents may have to leave their present site of work in the near future but he has already told them that wherever they go from here, he will definitely attend school. His parents are grateful to DSS for their support and guidance. They hope Taufiq will study a lot to ensure a better life for himself and his family.

## Exposure Visits and Events at all Centers

Apart from Educational activities we give children exposure through various activities and visits.

1. Science Quiz competition and Exhibition by children of DSS centers



2. Different festivals like Independence Day, Republic Day, Diwali, Holi, Christmas etc at the centres.



3. Children visiting Rail Museum and Botanical garden and a park



3. Children of DSS centers proud to display their winner Medals

