

Annual report of Bal Ashram 2008-09



Background

“I experienced love, freedom, care and protection after several years, when I reached Bal Ashram. The surroundings of Bal Ashram remind me that I am a free and independent person”- **Kinsu Kumar** (undergoing rehabilitation in Bal Ashram, stood first in the entire school with a percentage of 90.6 in the annual examination)

“Bal Ashram is second home for me which gave me love, care and happiness. It taught me what my rights are and how to start a new life.” – **Kalu Kumar** (a former bonded labourer in carpet industry and now a change agent working to eradicate child labour)

“I used to drink alcohol, use drugs and smoke. I used to quarrel with my friends and sleep on road sides and verandas. I used to beg for food and for alcohol. Now I am ashamed of my past activities. Bal ashram has changed my life” – **Alamin** (studying in 4th standard)

“I don't know about my parents, brothers and sisters, now I am least bothered about that because Bal Ashram is my father, mother and everything for me” – **Vishal** (studying in 3rd standard)

These are some of the views of the children at the Bal Ashram.

A short history of Bal Ashram

Bal Ashram was established in 1998 to provide rehabilitation to the children liberated from bondage, who have suffered years of mental and physical trauma and hardship. Bal Ashram gives them a feeling of cohesiveness, education and vocational training thereby helping them to become self-supportive, self-confident and to overcome the traumatic spell of the past. So far 1300 children have been rehabilitated successfully till 2009.

Bal Ashram imparts training to freed child workers covering six aspects: social development, conventional education, vocational education, health and physical education, leadership development and cultural education. Bal Ashram also ensures holistic development of these children through various physical and social education activities.

Bal Ashram is a pioneer institution for the rehabilitation of children freed from bondage. Every year approximately 200 children are rehabilitated through this institution. The hallucination of Bal Ashram is to create a child labour free society, where all children receive free, compulsory, quality and meaningful education.

Bringing Change

Children who come to Bal Ashram are rescued bonded child labourers from various types of exploitative situations and worst forms of labour. The child feels the love and freedom in the air when he enters the Bal Ashram.



Children engaged in group discussion

Bal Ashram believes that systemic change can only be achieved when the victims themselves become change agents against the exploitation and abuse that they have suffered. Therefore as a first step the child would be provided with counseling and medical facilities. The children currently undergoing rehabilitation in Bal Ashram welcome the new child and introduce them to other and encourage him to come forward and make new friends. This becomes the first step for the child to become a social human being which he was lacking from many years while working behind closed doors.

Mission

To create a child labour free society, where all children receive free, compulsory, quality and meaningful education and free from all kinds of exploitation.

Vision

To identify, liberate, rehabilitate and educate children in servitude through direct intervention, child and community participation, and mass mobilization.



Children are back from the school



Children engaged in gardening

Objectives

The objectives of Bal Ashram are:

- To restore their childhood, by giving them a sense of identity, dignity and freedom
- To infuse self awareness and confidence among the children
- To provide a comprehensive and pragmatic training that could enable them to integrate into the mainstream of the society smoothly
- To provide basic and meaningful education
- To make the children, above 14 years, self-reliant through vocational training
- To provide a favorable environment for learning, and for their multidimensional development so as to enable them to grow as self-supportive human beings who can fight for their own as well as others' rights.
- To provide social education and leadership building.
- To provide health care.

Day to Day activities of Bal Ashram Children



Lunch at Bal Ashram

Games



Evening meditation



Cultural programme (every day after dinner)

Facilities and Programmes

Psycho-social counseling and psychological approach to interactions

Time to time psycho-social counseling of the released children is done by the Bal Ashram teachers and volunteers to understand and to foster the intellectual growth of children. Also psycho-social counseling and psychological interactions with children helps immensely to promote safe, supportive, and effective learning environments. Also it is an easier way by which new children can get used to new environment and forget their past and relive their childhood.



Children during study hours



Yoga and Meditation

Yoga and meditation are practiced by all the children every day. Yoga and meditation harmonizes the mind with the body and hence result in real quantum benefits. It also increases the will power of children and enables them to achieve extraordinary physical feats, which proves beyond doubt the mind and body connection. And yoga through meditation works

remarkably to achieve this harmony and helps the mind work in sync with the body and keeps the children active throughout the day. Yoga workshops are held regularly.



Practicing yoga

Medical care

Every month a medical checkup is done by a qualified medical practitioner wherein month wise monitoring of health of the children is done and a detail record of every child is maintained. Bal Ashram is also maintaining a medical room for the emergencies and gives first aid to the children in the necessary situations.

Music therapy

Ms. Sumedha Kailash, Director of Bal Ashram is a qualified classical singer and she introduced the music therapy in the Ashram. Music has helped a lot in bringing all children together and also brought harmony. All the children belong to different economical and cultural background but during the classes they sit together and sing the lines of the poem which is inculcating a spirit of togetherness in them. The songs which are sung are about unity, patriotism, different cultures, environment, childhood etc. This helps all children to relate in a better way to their surroundings to their surroundings and also it helps them. It has also been observed that the children, who were depressed, reserved, isolated or had been through traumatic conditions changed to more open and free person and have started interacting with other children.

Physical training

Bal Ashram children are given physical training and training in sports and games. This kind of physical training makes the children strong and courageous. This keeps the children physically as well as mentally healthy and fit.



Physical exercise

The Ashram has capacity of rehabilitating 120 freed children in one batch of 6 months. Apart from non formal education, they also undergo training in different vocational courses such as tailoring, carpentry, motor winding, painting, screen printing and welding upon their interest. Non-formal education being provided in the Ashram is intended to enable the children to be a part of the mainstream education after the completion of training in the Ashram. Vocational training empowers them to earn a living for themselves in future when they grow up.



Rehabilitation of children- the various methods

I. Social Development

Some of the key components of the child rights based programming for social development are as follows:

<p>Focus on children: A clear focus on children, their rights and their role as social actors are ensured in all the activities of Bal Ashram.</p>	<p>Holistic view of children: Considering all aspects of a child while making strategic choices and setting priorities.</p>
<p>Participation: The promotion of children's effective participation in and to challenging</p>	<p>The best interests of children: All the Bal Ashram activities are planned and</p>

discrimination on such grounds as gender, class, ethnicity, (dis)ability, etc.	implemented in the best interest of children and in consideration (with children) of the impact on children of all programme choices.
Children as part of a community: An understanding of children's place in their families, communities and societies and the role that their parents and other care takers have in defending their rights and guiding children's development.	

II. Leadership Development Initiative: The committee system was devised to promote leadership qualities amongst the children. A committee of children elected by the children in a democratic manner is formed to see to the smooth and effective functioning of the Ashram's food supply, maintenance, security and discipline. This creates in the children a sense of responsibility and accountability.

India @75: A workshop was held by the Bal Ashram along with students of Jaipur Engineering College and Research Centre (JECRC) a few days before the 75th Independence day celebrations. The main objective of the discussion was to assess India's progress since Independence and where would India be 75 years hence. They came up with interesting answers with the major thrust being: 'India has grown in several fields like agriculture, industry etc, but perhaps human rights issues need to be looked at more closely. The gap between the rich and the poor is widening and the challenge ahead is to find solutions to these problems.' They are very positive about the future though. All of them said that the current generation has the best of everything in terms of technology and that youth and children like them with good intentions and will to do good will make India a progressive nation within the next 75 years. A few photos:



Workshop-India @75

III. Human Rights Education: Awareness on human rights is also imparted to children. Moreover, they are encouraged to discuss issues related to children and women's rights, gender equity and environmental protection and thus sharpen their thinking process. Children are also made aware of the various cultural and religious practices.

This activity is a part of their social education class. The children have this class every day in the afternoon when they discuss human rights issues including child rights, their fundamental rights, how to seek them if denied etc. The older children like Om Prakash Gurjar and Kalu Kumar also take this class oftentimes.

Means of social change

Group discussion

Issues which are relevant and socially important like importance of education, social unity, child marriages and various other social issues are given to the children for group discussion. The group discussion is facilitated by different people from Bal Ashram and experts from outside Bal Ashram. Different audio visual aids are also used in the discussion like documentary movies, audios etc.

For the older children who are now adolescents, sex education is given twice every week by the staff of Bal Ashram. The physical changes that manifest due to hormonal changes are explained and healthy respect for the subject of sex is the focus of this education.

CHILDREN'S EXPOSURE VISITS:-

Organized rallies in villages

On 7th of March 2008 a rally led by the Bal Ashram Children in which about 600 children of other school also took part was organized by the Bal Ashram. Children were shouting slogans against the child labor and passed through the main market. At Panchayat Bhawan children made a human chain and drew the attention of the government officials towards the child labor issue. The Tehsildar of Virat Nagar was also present. One of the Bal Ashram children Kinshu addressed the children and requested Tehsildar to take strong steps against the employer of children and help them (child labourers) to come out of the trauma and help the nation by mainstreaming them through effective rehabilitation process. Children also gave him a memorandum signed by them.

Meeting with the Chief Justice of India

15 children from Bal Ashram and 10 children from BMG visited supreme court on 14th of November 2008. On the eve of Children's Day, Chief Justice of India, Honourable Justice Shri K. G Balakrishnan promised former child labourers rescued by BBA that the time would soon come when child labour and exploitation of children would be eliminated from society. In a programme organized by the National Legal Service Authority (NLSA) with Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), the Honourable Justice was joined by other eminent judges from the Supreme Court and the High Court. 30 children from Rajasthan and a Bal Mitra Gram (Child Friendly Village) of Meerut had an interactive question and answer session. At the beginning of the programme, the children performed a skit weaving the true story of how

children in many parts of the country are still in the grip of child labour and illiteracy and how important education is for a bright future. It won the hearts of the judges.

Qs by Pradeep Kumar who was rescued at the time when he was being sacrificed by his parents, wanted to know – "Whenever children complain, the police say that they would take action; but then nothing happens as the employers go scot-free. What should we do in such a situation?"

Ans – Chief Justice of India Justice K. G Balkrishnan replied - "Children or anybody can write to National Legal Service Authority (NLSA) or to the Supreme Court Legal Services and we would take action and any such reports would be welcomed."

Q- Rakesh, 12 years and a child labourer for 6 years asked – "There are so many street children and many are trafficking for forced labour. Why are authorities not taking action against the traffickers and what measures should be taken to solve this issue?"

Ans – Honourable Justice Shri Arijit Pasayat echoed the same statements as the Chief Justice of India's and said - "You can write complaints on a post card and send it to the Supreme Court and action would be taken against your complaint."

During the conclusion of the programme, Honourable Chief Justice of India, Justice Shri K. G Balakrishnan expressed his happiness at the children and their wise, probing questions. He said – "These children will shine like stars. I congratulate BBA for their success and this programme has made us also are more sensitized by problems that these children encounter."

The President of BBA, Shri Ramesh Gupta said that this group of confident children after all that they went through shows that there is hope in the society. And this is right message on the children's day. **"Send us a postcard, and we will ensure punishment against employers of children"- the Chief Justice of India promises former bonded child labourers**



Amarlal, receiving honor from Chief Justice of India Mr. K.G. Balakrishnan



On the eve of children’s Day Manan from Bal Ashram puts forward various demands before Supreme Court Judges

Children’s day at Bal Ashram

On the eve of children day some of the children visited Supreme Court and met Chief Justice of India. Honourable Justice Shri K. G Balakrishnan promised former child labourers rescued by BBA that the time would soon come when child labour and exploitation of children would be eliminated from society. In a programme organized by the National Legal Service Authority (NLSA) with Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA), the Honourable Justice was joined by other eminent judges from the Supreme Court and the High Court. 30 children from Rajasthan and a Bal Mitra Gram (Child Friendly Village) of Meerut had an interactive question and answer session.

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Rest of the children at bal ashram and along with the staff went for picnic in Hanuman Mandir at Viiratnagar. Children enjoyed the day. There were two volunteers also went with children in Hanuman Mandir. Children spent 3 hours and played lot of games.

Programme on Kalpana Chawla in Shahpura

Name of the Event.....: Kalpana Chawla Smriti Pancham Puraskar
Vitrana Samaroh
Date/ Duration:..... 15/11/08 4 hours
Theme/Topic:..... Felicitation and in the remembrance of Kalpana
Chawla in the eve of her anniversary
Venue:..... Shahpura
ParticipantsPeople around - 400
Resource Person.....Mr. Ansuman Singh [former Rajasthan
Governor],
Mr. Benarsilal Chawla [Kalpana’s father]
Mr. Rao Rajendar [MLA, Viratnagar]

On 15th of November 7 children from Bal Ashram namely, Kinsu, Pradeep, Amarlal, Manan, Viru, Bunty and Rakesh attended the programme in Shahpura. There were more than 400 people participated in the programme. On that day Mr. Ansuman delivered speech. In his speech he emphasized the importance of education and he said that we need to fight against child exploitation and eliminating child labour from the society and ensuring them a bright future. Some of the children performed various colourful events at the programme. Later on Mr. Ansuman Singh distributed trophy to children from Bal Ashram and children from other schools. The program was concluded with tea and refreshments.

Children’s visit to SLV International School in Pavta

Name of the Event.....: Deepawali Celebration
 Date/ Duration:..... 25/10/08 3 hours
 Theme/Topic:..... Anti fire cracker campaign
 Venue:..... Pavta
 Participants200 Children

On 25th of October 7 children from Bal Ashram namely, Kinsu, Pradeep, Amarlal, Manan, Viru, Bunty and Rakesh visited to SLV International school in Pavta. There were approximately 200 children attended the programme. There were children from various school came to attended this programme. Children who went from Bal Ashram performed couple of events. Mr. Amarlal delivered speech during the programme. There were children from other school also performed various colourful events. Mr. Kailash Satyarthi gave speech. In his speech he spoke about anti crackers and its hazardous such as air pollution and it effects mental and physical growth of the children especially children who work in the factory making crackers. The programme was ended with the vote of thanks by one of the children from SLV International school.

Computer course

16 children from Bal Ashram attended one week computer course at Jaipur, which was organized by MNIT College. Children were given basic knowledge of computer such as using internet and MS Office.

List of Children who were participated in the Computer Course in Jaipur Engineering College

Sl.No	Name	Class	Age
1	Amarlal	8 th	12
2	Kinsu Kumar	8 th	12
3	Bundi Kumar	8 th	14
4	Rana Prathap	8 th	14
5	Abdul Malik	8 th	13
6	Kailash Kumar	7 th	13

7	Manan Ansari	7 th	12
8	Ravi Kumar	6 th	13
9	Abdul Salam	9 th	13
10	Nittu Kumar	9 th	15
11	Puran Banjara	10 th	17
12	Suman Kumar	11 th	17
13	Suresh Kumar	5 th	12
14	Mukesh Kumar	5 th	11
15	Alamin	5 th	11
16	Rakesh Kumar	5 th	13

Other activities

Games and sports events

Bal Ashram also is a center to bring back childhood to the children who have lost it and games and sports are the best means to bring back the energy and enthusiasm of children. In addition to evening sports classes daily, Mini Olympics is also organized so that the children can know their abilities and interest in sports. This mini Olympics also brings in competitive spirit and a spirit to excel in their lives. It is heartening to see sporting-spirit of the children.

Pictures of ‘Mini-Olympics’ Bal Ashram





Bal Ashram kids painting on plane T-shirts with fabric paints

Training on social issues

Training on social issues like dowry, child labour, corruption and child marriage is imparted to the children to instill in them certain basic social values. Efforts are undertaken to make them introspect on these burning social issues, which allows them to become responsible citizens who in turn can communicate these values to the coming generations and bring major changes in the attitude and thinking of people on these issues.

IV. Non-formal Education:

Non-formal education is provided to all the children in Bal Ashram. Most of the children who are coming for rehabilitation are either illiterate or left studies years back. Hence it is very much necessary to provide them basic education on Language, basic Maths, General knowledge, general science and English. It is ensured that all the children, coming out from Bal Ashram are able to read and write. They are trained in basic reading, writing and arithmetic skills. This also generates in them an interest towards education. The curriculum is annexed as Annexure 3



Social science class

V. Vocational Rehabilitation:

Vocational rehabilitation is provided to the children along with non-formal education thereby all the children would be able to read and write besides the particular skill he learned. There are five trades currently in Bal Ashram- Carpentry, Tailoring, Painting, Welding, Motor Electrical and Motor winding.

The children have the freedom to choose the trade in which they are interested in to get trained. Children are given counseling before the selection of the trade. They choose the disciplines that they are interested in and that which is best suited to their expertise and chances to establish in their own village. Once the training period is over, a merit certificate is given to each child. After the successful completion of the training, the children are sent to their own villages and then are sent to a formal school where they can be integrated into mainstream education.



Painting and wall writing



tailoring



Carpentry



welding trade



Electrical trade

A brief report of the non-formal education and the trades for the Jan-June 2009 batch are as follows:

	No. of children	
	Jan- June 2008	July- Dec 2008
Non Formal Education	30	36
Painting	8	7
Motor Winding	3	6
Tailoring	5	4
Carpentry	4	
Welding	2	
Total	52	53

A total of 105 children were provided with vocational training and non-formal education. The list of all children in the various vocations and NFE is given in Annexure 2. In addition there were 29 children who are enrolled into formal education in a government school nearby where they are various classes.

Disciplinary policy

The management committee of Bal Ashram is formulated a disciplinary policy as well as a child protection policy. All the activities of Bal Ashram are based on these policies. The Disciplinary policy is attached as annexure 3

Events of the Bal Ashram



Play – by Bal Ashram children



Holi festival of clours



Independence Day celebrations Bal Ashram



Bal Panchayat (children's parliament) election – Bal Ashram



Painting exhibition Bal Ashram



Kids with paintings



Painting competition



Won the first prize

Excursions

The boys who topped the class and who passed their examinations and some other children who couldn't go to their village during summer vacation went to New Delhi and visited various places of their interest. They visited science museum, Lal Quila and other interesting places. This tour really helped children to enhance their knowledge on different subjects

Children's visit to Shahpura

On 23rd March Bal Ashram children were invited to attend a *Bal Mela* (children Fair) in Shahpura. Children went to *Bal Mela* and presented a cultural program through which they sent a message to the other children and their parents and other community members regarding the child labor and the importance of education. The children also appealed the people present there to come forward and take steps for those children who are far away from their rights.

In this Children's Fair Chair Person of Global March and the founder of Bachpan Bachao Andolan Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, Director of Bal Ashram Smt. Sumedha Kailash were the Chief Guests and one of the eminent Doctor from UK, Mr. Anand who was in Bal Ashram was also

present. Mr. Satyarthi and Smt. Sumedha Kailash threw light on the situation of child labor and other social ills in the society and how child labor is aggregating the situation to the worst. They also gave emphasis on the participation of the people and the importance of quality education and equity in education for all the children for the better future. On this occasion Mr. Satyarthi also released the first issue of a magazine for the children named “*Killool*”. Some of the paintings and poems of Bal Ashram children were also published in this magazine.



Bal Ashram director address the kids



Children taking oath -anti fire cracker campaign

Trade report

List of the children in non formal education and vocational training

A list of all the children that benefited from the Non-formal education and vocational training in Bal Ashram during Jan-December 2008 is as follows:

Non-Formal Education

	First Batch			Second Batch		
S.No.	Name	Age	% marks in exam	Name	Age	% marks in exam
1	Ram Lal	13	65%	Anil kumar	11	60%
2	Prem Kumar	12	80%	Suddir Kumar	12	65%
3	Ramesh Kumar Banjara	12	60%	Santosh Kumar	13	60%
4	Vijai Kumar Nayak	11	75%	Shakti Kumar	11	40%
5	Ajai Kumar	9	70%	Nissimudhin	12	65%
6	Aravind Kumar	11	80%	Muffidhudin	13	60%
7	Gulashan Kumar	10	50%	Raffique	10	40%

8	Manoj Kumar	11	60%		Salim Mohammad	11	45%
9	Narendra Kumar	11	65%		Noor Mohammad	12	50%
10	Deepak Kumar	11	55%		Rahul Sada	12	60%
11	Rahul Chougan	13	60%		Virendra Kumar	12	50%
12	Sunil Kumar	12	60%		Anil Kumar	12	60%
13	Ashish Kumar	12	70%		Ajit Kumar	12	65%
14	Salman Ghan	11	50%		Rithyanand	12	60%
15					Santosh Saha	13	65%
16	Birju Kumar	11	55%		Sunil	12	70%
17	Arjun Kumar	9	45%		Rajesh Kumar	12	65%
18	Alamin	12	60%		Bhola Kumar	11	60%
19	Salim	11	65%		Thazir Kumar	12	65%
20	Mahandra Kumar	12	60%		Aman kumar	13	45%
21	Naresh Kumar	12	50%		Anil kumar	12	40%
22	Jibreel Ansari	12	55%		Sajan kumar	12	65%
23	Vikas Kumar	10	60%		Prakash kumar	11	70%
24	Abbas Ansari	12	65%		Jithendar sada	12	60%
25	Arvind Kumar	12	70%		Sitaram	13	70%
26	Prakash Kumar	11	75%		Baljith meda	12	50%
27	Ravi Kumar	13	70%		Abdul Ahad	13	80%
28	Sabbir	12	45%		Karan kumar	11	55%
29	Bahadur	11	55%		Sonu kumar	12	55%
30	Arun kumar	12	55%		Ajai kumar	11	60%
31					Jai kumar	10	45%
32					Minku	13	40%
33					Manjai	12	30%
34					Mithun	14	35%
35					Raj gati	12	30%
36					Badkku	8	70

Painting

S.No.	First batch			Second Batch		
	Name	Age	% marks in exam	Name	Age	% marks in exam

1	Bittu Kumar	14	45%	Jithendra Kumar	13	50%
2	Jithendra Kumar	14	40%	Lal babu	15	80%
3	Lal babu	15	45%	Manish Kumar	13	75%
4	Manish Kumar	16	50%	Ramai Kumar	13	70%
5	Ramai Kumar	13	40%	Bittu Kumar	14	70%
6	Kishore Kumar	14	40%	Rakesh Sada	14	80%
7	Rahul Meena	15	50%	Dinesh Kumar	13	60%
8	Sumit Kumar	13	70%			

Motor Winding

First Batch				Second Batch		
S.No.	Name	Age	% marks in exam	Name	Age	% marks in exam
1	Ramesh kumar	16	60%	Anil Kumar	15	76%
2	Saddam Hussein	15	42%	Divesh Kumar	14	65%
3	Baghirati	14	64%	Vikram Kumar	17	90%
4				Prakash Kumar	15	64%
5				Ramesh Kumar	16	86%
6				Abdul Gaffar	15	92%

Tailoring

First Batch				Second batch		
S.No.	Name	Age	% marks in exam	Name	Age	% marks in exam
1	Ranjith Kumar	14	45%	Mithun kumar	16	45%
2	Vijai Kumar	15	79%	Ashish kumar	13	58%
3	Sunil Kumar	16	55%	Rana Pratap	15	75%
4	Subod Kumar	13	68%	Nirala	13	68%
5	Omprakash	14	68%			

Welding

S.No.	Name	Age	% marks in exam
1	Shyam Kumar	15	70%
2	Radhe Mohan	16	60%

Carpentry

S.No.	Name	Age	% marks in exam
1	Bajrang Kumar	15	59%
2	Badram Kumar	16	62%
3	Prakash Kumar	15	65%
4	Anil Kumar	16	56%

Annexure 1: Time table of a day

TIME	ACTIVITY
5:00 AM to 6:00 AM	Wake up and Morning walk
6:00 AM to 7:30 AM	Sun prayer , physical exercise & yoga
7:30 AM to 8:00 AM	Work for self development (<i>Shramdan</i>)
8:00 AM to 8:30 AM	Wash time/ Bath
8:30 AM to 9:00 AM	Breakfast
9:00 AM to 10:00 AM	Prayer, news reading and interactive session with the teacher
10:00 AM to 1:00 PM	Educational and vocational training classes
1:00 PM to 2:00 PM	Lunch break
2:00 PM to 2:30 PM	Rest
2:30 PM to 3:00 PM	Group discussion
3:00 PM to 5:00 PM	Social/ Moral science class
5:00 PM to 5:30 PM	Work for self development (<i>Shramdan</i>)
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM	Outdoor Games
6:30 PM to 7:00 PM	Wash time
7:00 PM to 8:30 PM	Meditation and cultural program
8:30 PM to 9:00 PM	Dinner
9:00 PM to 10:00 PM	TV program (Saturday and Sunday only)
10:00 PM	Time to Sleep

Annexure II

Curriculum

For Literacy/ Non Formal Education classes

Introduction of Ashram
Hindi and English letters (use pictorial chart)
Vowels and Consonants
Barah Khari (Hindi) (use pictorial chart)
Making Words from the letters
Reading, Writing, Pronunciation

APPROACHES TO READING

Shared Reading
Guided Reading
Independent reading
Phonics and spelling
Home Reading

APPROACHES TO WRITING

Phonics and spelling
Emergent writing
Shared Writing
Guided Writing/Independent Writing
Extended writing
Handwriting

Making sentences
Numbers and counting (use pictorial chart)
Tables (use chart)
Simple addition, subtraction, multiplication and division (pictorial charts, books etc)
Art and Painting Classes
Assessment, Marking (Responding to children's work/feed back).
Weekly test, Monthly test and Final test at the end of the session.

SOCIAL CLASS

Children's right
Child Labour
Illiteracy (Importance of education)
Unemployment
Child Marriage
Gender Bias
Moral Science
Panchayati Raj System
Child Friendly Society
Why do you celebrate festivals
Discussion on current affairs

Annexure III

DISCIPLINARY POLICY FOR BAL ASHRAM

Introduction

The Oxford Dictionary defines discipline as “the practice of training people to obey rules or a code of behaviour.” In the field of child development, discipline refers to methods of modeling

character and of teaching self-control and acceptable behavior. Every institution has its set of rules that each person who is a part of that system has to abide by. When it comes to a disciplinary policy for an institution whose main working group are children, the policy should be crafted with care and respect for the child as an individual rather than just as a beneficiary.

Bal Ashram was started as a transit rehabilitation centre for rescued child bonded labourers in 1998 by Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA). More than 1,300 rescued children have been rehabilitated in Bal Ashram since then. Boys in the age group of 6-14 years are provided with rehabilitation at the Bal Ashram. They have come from situations of long hours of work and usually have undergone some extent of verbal and/or physical and even sexual abuse at their work place and/or home. They come from economically poor families. They may or may not have attended school earlier.

Who is the policy for?

This policy has been drafted for the purpose of children, staff and visitors of Bal Ashram. It has been drafted with the fundamental ideology of BBA that children are subjects of rights, rather than merely recipients of adult protection, and that those rights demand that children themselves are entitled to be heard, in the manner best suited to their situation. This policy extends beyond the boundaries of the Ashram – to trips and excursions, participation in BBA activities and other organizations etc.

Most of the child labourers have gone through trauma and are in a state of fright. They are not in a position to trust people around them and may react in violent ways. Sometimes their reactions may also be dangerous, hurtful, or otherwise socially unacceptable. In order to help the children to develop appropriate social behaviors, the staff of Bal Ashram must guide them with correctional psychological method and expected behaviour.

Non-negotiables

Every organization has its non-negotiables, which are inviolable. The principles laid out below are the non-negotiables of BBA in all its actions - during all stages of caring for preventing, protecting, identifying, rescuing, repatriating and rehabilitating child labourers and trafficked children.

- i. **Rights of the Child:** All actions undertaken in relation to child victims shall be guided by applicable human rights standards and in particular by the principles of protection and respect for children's rights as set out in the Indian Constitution and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ii. **Best Interests of the Child:** In all actions concerning child victims, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, police, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.
- iii. **Right to Non-Discrimination:** Every child shall have, without discrimination of any kind as to race, sex, language, religion, ethnic or social origin, birth, or other status, including immigration status, the right to such measures of protection as are required by his or her status as a minor.

- iv. **Right to Information:** Child victims shall be provided with accessible information regarding their situation and their rights, including protection mechanisms, other available services, and the processes of family reunification and/or repatriation. Information shall be provided in a language that the child victim is able to understand.
- v. **Right to Confidentiality:** All necessary measures shall be taken to protect the privacy and identity of child victims to ensure the safety and security of the victim and his or her family. The name, address and all other information that could lead to the identification of the child victim or his or her family members shall not be revealed to the public or media in accordance to Sec. 21 of the Juvenile Justice Act.

Rules and regulations- core values

1. Individual Attention: Children need to know that they're special. Ignoring this need can lead to misbehavior in order to get attention, which is undesirable in any group situation.
2. Affection: Encourage the positive atmosphere between adult and child that naturally leads to good behavior on the child's part.
3. The Ashram belongs to the children. They should be involved in decision making and day to day management to ensure that they feel confident and empowered about enforcing discipline on themselves as well as on others. Their participation enhances confidence in themselves, the system and ensures transparency.
4. Firm, Quiet Discipline: Children can be guided calmly and not through power or authority of being an adult.
5. Responsibility: Even at an early age, children can begin to learn responsibility. We can teach them to pick up after themselves and to share in the general cleaning; we can teach the older ones to help take care of the younger ones. The children often seem to take pride in simple accomplishments like putting something in the trash or carrying their own plate to the kitchen.
6. Positive reinforcement: It's better to congratulate a child for doing something well (and thus encourage him to repeat the behavior) than to wait for him to err and then punish him for doing something wrong
7. Creative Interaction: Our goal is to stop quarrels before they begin. Be on the look-out for potential trouble, and provide a variety of interesting activities at suitable intervals to keep boredom from erupting.
8. Corporal punishment and verbal abuse (including yelling/screaming) are NEVER options. Formal time-outs and removal of privileges will not be used as disciplinary tools. We believe that at these ages, children can only understand immediate and direct consequences of inappropriate behaviors. Food will also never used as punishment (or reward).
9. Redirection: By keeping the children involved in activities that they are interested in, we can often prevent situations from arising that require further intervention. Also, by ensuring that the children are adequately supervised, situations can be dissipated before they escalate.
10. Use corrective discipline primarily for behaviors that are harmful to others or dangerous for the child.
11. By all means if the correctional measures are not adapted by children, it will be considered a failure of pedagogical (instructor's) failure and not on the part of the child. It also means that other alternative modes of learning and instruction are needed.

Some of the types of unacceptable behaviour by children and ways to deal with them

- **Verbal Abuse:** Verbal abuse through speaking obscenities and expletives is one of the most common forms of abuse. Whenever a child is engaging in verbal abuse, he should be stopped, and told explicitly that it is prohibited to speak in that manner. It is best to lead by example. The staff should present examples of dealing with situations which incite the children to verbal abuse.
- **Hitting and pushing:** These are the most common behaviors that require intervention. When this occurs, the child should first be stopped from inflicting harm to others. If one child is hitting another, stop the child non-violently. For example, you could pick up the child being hit, make sure they're fine, and remove them from the reach of the child who hit them. This is often preferable to removing the child who is hitting, because it does not reinforce the negative behavior with special attention. Tell the child who hit, in a firm manner, that what they did is not acceptable. Refrain from judging the child (i.e. don't ever tell a child that he or she is bad - only that their behavior is not allowed). If you know what brought about the hitting, or can find out from the kids, suggest an alternative behavior that would have been acceptable. For example, encourage the children to use their words to tell other children to stop their offending behavior instead of hitting them.
- **Fighting:** Fights usually arise due to material possession like books, toys, bats etc. If a boy is fighting for a toy or an object away from an older child, ask the older child to get a different toy for the boy. This helps show the child that he is entitled to hold on to the toy that he was playing with, but that he can also help the other child to accept this. We can teach the children to resolve their own disputes by taking advantage of opportunities that arise in which we can guide them to peaceful cooperation.
- **Violent behaviour:** Sometimes the fights/squabbles may turn ugly and lead to serious injury to one or both the parties involved. The injured child(ren) should be given immediate medical attention. The violent child should be dealt with immediately and strict action should be taken against him. For ex. his play time could be withheld for a period of a few days, he could be separated from others during meal times and his fun time on a Sunday could be curtailed. This is to drive home the point that he has committed a mistake. He should be made aware that this action is due to his behaviour towards another child. At the end of the punishment period, the manager should speak with him. His actions must be observed closely for a few weeks, by the staff.
- **Bullying:** This is usually invisible to the staff. So a system of conflict resolution and grievance redress should be present. A regular meeting between the staff and disciplinary committee (refer below) with children's participation where general complaints are addressed should be held regularly. A complaint box should also be present where the child can drop his written complaint into. Wherever the child deems the matter to be more serious, a weekly time can be allotted by the manager when such matters will be discussed confidentially and dealt with appropriately. This assurance must be given by the manager. The perpetrator needs to be reprimanded and made aware of his mistake. The solution must also be given in front of both

the parties so that the perpetrator is aware of the presence of the victim. In addition this also emboldens the victim that there is a higher authority to protect him. All such complaints must be shared with the Chairperson.

- **Sexual misconduct:** The older children might behave inappropriately with younger children or having been at the receiving end sometime in their childhood, they might want to vent out their anger on to the younger ones. Or it might be a case of the children being curious about their bodies as they grow up. Sex education should be given to all children, appropriate to their age. Whenever a child is sexually abused, the first reaction is usually of shame and guilt. Hence the staff must be able to inspire trust in order that a child may approach them whenever he is a victim of sexual misconduct. In all cases, the details of the matter must be kept confidential. The perpetrator must be counseled rigorously and made aware of his mistake. Reasons of his conduct and his past experience must be completely understood. He should be placed under a mentor for a period of few weeks and encouraged to develop healthy respect for others' boundaries.
- **Stealing:** Some children may resort to stealing material from other children or something that belongs to the staff or the centre. Stealing is to be relayed to the children as a serious offence and that such an act would be punished. Some punishment that could be meted out are withholding play-time for a time period, fun time on Sunday etc.

Disciplinary committee: Any indiscipline, abuse, or misbehaviour will be first discussed with a disciplinary committee comprising children. This will be to redress the grievance, take corrective measures and promote children's participation and initiative in enforcing discipline.

In all the above cases, there are instances where the staff may have to resort to negative reinforcement. Wherever necessary, the staff could carry out a punishment as per their discretion. All matters of unacceptable behaviour and the corrective action taken must be properly documented and maintained. Wherever there are other kinds of unacceptable behaviour, the staff could act as per their discretion or take the help of the management committee in deciding an appropriate action.

Unacceptable behaviour by staff and ways to deal with them

There are also chances of an errant staff being capable of involvement in any of the above mentioned forms of unacceptable behaviour. Wherever a staff member is involved, it will be properly and duly recorded. One warning should be given to him/her and he/she should be placed under close observation. In case he/she repeats the behaviour, he/she should be suspended from work for a time period deemed fit by the Chairperson. All the children must also have access to the contact numbers of Chairperson and other relevant staff of the Central office to address their complaints to. Necessary action would be taken by the management committee. Management committee consists of a few board members,

Sexual misconduct is a serious offence and will be dealt with through appropriate disciplinary and if necessary, legal action against the perpetrator.

Causes of unacceptable behaviour

- Background – Lack of trust and affection because of past abuse.
- Anger and frustration – Annoyed at not meeting others expectations.
- Boredom – Child may hurt other children because there's nothing to do.
- Desire for attention – Some children need more than others from adults.
- Disruptive behavior rewards negative behavior and may become the most effective way of getting attention.
- Imitation – model behavior on what child has experienced elsewhere.
- Tiredness – when children are tired they may be easily irritated.
- Excitement – some children lose control when over excited.
- Jealousy – hurting others may be an expression of jealousy towards another child.
- Social clumsiness – some children do not have the social skill to initiate a social interaction.
- High activity level – some very active, energetic children cannot seem to channel their activity constructively.
- Any other

Any single or a combination of these causes may manifest as behaviour in various forms. Some of the most common ones are:

1. **Withdrawal:** Some rescued children would not talk or interact with other children or staff in any manner. They may follow all rules, but the interaction might be minimal or nil. Such children may have undergone deep trauma and may be wary of the people surrounding them. This may range from being on the guard to being suspicious of everybody. For such children, gentleness is the key. Firstly, they must be left alone if they so wish, but they should be told and made to feel 'people are present for me' should he need them, at any time. It is necessary to monitor their movements to see any signs of improvement in interaction. This can be done through speaking to his peers- the children who share the same dormitory as him, teachers, counselors and other staff. It is necessary to give constant positive reinforcement. It is necessary to protect these children from being bullied and/or threatened by other children and/or staff.
2. **Resistance:** Some children are resistant to instructions. They just would not want to hear. Ignoring the instructions is also a kind of resistance because they fear that listening to instructions means that somebody else is controlling them. Such children should be gently reminded that the rules are for everyone, not for him alone, hence there is no need to feel threatened. This attitude of control could be changed through subtle encouragement of children who follow rules (not by any material means, but by verbal praise, a pat on the back, announcing their name in the class etc.)
3. **Aggression and violence:** Some children are aggressive and violent in behaviour. This could be due to too much control or physical abuse that they may have suffered at workplace from their employer/other child labourers or supervisors and also possibly from their family. In all such cases, it is necessary to help them reveal their dark background and instances of abuse. If the child has been sexually abused by peers or by supervisor at work, it is all the more necessary to ensure that the child understands and feels that he is secure. The child would need to be

provided extensive counseling. He should be handled gently. But his aggression must never be justified due to the abuse that he has undergone. Firstly he must be provided with immediate counseling and told about the proper way of behaviour. If necessary, he must be removed from others so that the others are not hurt and NOT as a means of punishment. This must be made clear to him as well.

General Suggestions for working with the children

- Do not raise your voice or abuse the children verbally or physically.
- Never, in any way, remind the children of their background or experiences. (apart from counseling where the objective is to resolve the past trauma and requires talking about the background head-on)
- State suggestions or directions in a positive, rather than a negative, form.
- Give the child a choice only when you intend to leave the choice up to the child.
- Your voice is a teaching tool. Use words and a tone of voice which will help the child feel confident and reassured.
- Avoid trying to change behavior by methods which may lead to loss of self-respect, such as shaming or labeling behavior as "naughty" or "selfish."
- Avoid motivating a child by making comparisons between one child and another, or by encouraging competition.
- Redirect the child in a way that is related to his/her own motives or interest whenever possible.
- If the child feels to be in a helpless state, approach him with love and understanding rather than through pity or through a sense of favouring him through your actions.
- The effectiveness of a suggestion may depend largely on its timing.
- Give the child the minimum of help in order that s/he may have the maximum chance to grow in independence, but give the help the child needs.
- Make your suggestions effective by reinforcing them when necessary.
- Forestalling is the most effective way of handling problems. Learn to foresee and prevent rather than mop-up after a difficulty.
- When limits are necessary, they should be clearly defined and constantly maintained.
- Be alert to the total situation. Use the most strategic positions for supervising.
- The health and safety of the children are a primary concern at all times.
- Every action should be to empower and strengthen the expected autonomy in the child.
- Enjoy the children!

In a nutshell- Bal Ashram discipline involves

- Participation of the children themselves.
- **Positive reinforcement-** Focus on things children are doing right, rather than on negative behaviors: "good job using soft touch!"
- **Redirection-** distract the child's attention from the undesired behavior to something else
- **Forestalling** (Proactive) - Anticipate children's actions before they happen. You can then intervene and stop a behavior from occurring (look for warning signs that an action might be about to happen.)
- **Modeling** appropriate behavior. Show children how to act by example.

