



Every child has  
the Right to Education

Newsletter  
March 2014, 23<sup>rd</sup> Edition

*“For to be free is not merely to cast off ones chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedoms of others.”*

This famous quote by Nelson Mandela was recently repeated in a very special book, “The Right to Be”. Almost two years ago, our children had worked on illustrations for this book on human rights authored by Ms. Zena Sorabjee. The book was launched with the children’s striking illustrations in November 2013.



In the weeks leading up to Human Rights Day, some of our children poured over this book, Government of India reports and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The children conducted a survey on child labour in their community and then presented their findings in a very comprehensive manner. The experience was different from other projects they had undertaken. As Sakshi - a student of Standard VII - remarked, *“This project is different from any other, because it talks about our present and our future. Through this project, we are not just*

*sharing information. We are actually asking people to change something – to stop child labour and protect child rights.”*

The right of all children to be protected from harm and abuse holds special significance in our world today. Workshops on ‘Safe and Unsafe Touch’ were therefore held for students across classes at the Kherwadi Municipal School. These workshops, conducted by representatives of an NGO, ‘The Foundation’, aimed to apprise students on the basics of personal safety and hygiene.

The resource persons discussed safety rules and helped children understand what kinds of touch were acceptable and unacceptable. In case they were subjected to any inappropriate touch, the children were asked to confide in a trusted adult and to keep telling someone until they get the help they need.

In December 2013, Aseema celebrated 'Mind & Me' – an Emotional Health Awareness week. The week was dedicated to promoting a better understanding of emotions and mental health amongst our children, parents and staff. Through role plays, activities and a lot of reflection, our counsellors addressed topics such as labelling, individual differences and self talk. During the sessions, our children came up with remarkable insights into their own thoughts and feelings. Our work will continue over the year to create an environment that supports their emotional development and well being.

A sense of excitement and anticipation fills the air towards the end of each year. The school calendar is full with events and celebrations. Sports Day was celebrated at our Education Centre for Tribal Children in Igatpuri. Our little children participated in races with complete abandon – eating chocolates and waving to their parents as they ran along.



In Mumbai, the children rejoiced on Dussera and danced to traditional folk music. Another much awaited event took place on Children's Day. A group of our students went aboard an aircraft and were taken on a 'Fantasy Flight' around Mumbai. Volunteers from AIESEC visited us early this year and conducted sessions on mask making, pot painting and diya painting.



Christmas brought with it a lot of festivity and joy in the schools. The children of our Support Centre prepared a beautiful play highlighting the spirit of Christmas. Their parents and other visitors cheered excitedly each time a new character was introduced on stage. Our students at the Pali Chimbai Municipal School enjoyed a special treat with volunteers from BNP Paribas. Tattoo artists, balloon sculptors, magicians and mascots turned our school into a 'Mela' and

had the children completely enthralled. Others enjoyed celebrations with Hotel Sahara Star, Hyatt Regency Mumbai and Reliance Foundation.

The Mumbai Marathon saw a huge turnout once again. Teams from L & T Financial Services, HSBC, Nivea India and Moët Hennessy ran along with our children and staff members. A large number of individuals also pledged their support for us at the race. The energy and cheer of this event is quite contagious. Our children who participated now look forward to going back each year!



In the new year, we are pleased to welcome four distinguished persons to our Board of Advisors. Ms. Ashu Suyash (CEO, L & T Investment Management), Ms. Bhaswati Mukherjee (Former Ambassador of India to UNESCO and Former Ambassador of India to the Netherlands), Ms. Farida Lambay (Co-founder – Pratham, Former Vice Principal – College of Social Work, Nirmala Niketan) and Dr. Indra Munshi (Former Head of Dept, Sociology – University of Mumbai) bring with them a wealth of experience and fresh ideas to Aseema.

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Anand Trivedi, Anuja Kapadia, Arhaan & Zara Shaikh, Art Haat Event, Arvind Gautama, Association of Investment Bankers of India, Astha Corporation Pvt. Ltd., BKC Police Station, BNP Paribas, Bandra Gym, Besant Montessori, Bhakti Karve, Bhavna Shah Lalka, Being Human – the Salman Khan Foundation, Benaifer Reporter, CAFRAL, Cathay Pacific Ltd., Chinmaya Organization for Rural Development, Concern India Foundation, Create Foundation, Cusrow Baug, Deutsche Bank, Dhirubhai Ambani International School, Diageo, Dilip Bhende, Ebay Inc., EdelGive Foundation, Essence Collection, Firmenich Aromatics (India) Pvt. Ltd., Forever Mark Diamonds Ltd., GE & Jet Airways, Gabbana, George Aikara, Gharda Chemicals Ltd., Goodlass Nerolac Paints Charitable Trust, Grand Hyatt, HCC, HSBC, Hotel Sahara Star, Hyatt Regency Mumbai, IAPA, ICICI Lombard, IL&FS, India First Life, Indian American Education Foundation, Indus, Infiniti Retail, J.J. Hospital Nursing Association, Jasudben School, Jayanti Shukla, K.C. Mahindra Education Trust, Kaarmic Moove, Kainaaz Irani, Kala Ghoda Art Festival, Kapadia Education Foundation, Ken Spillman, Keystone Realtors, L & T Financial Services, L & T Investment Management, Lanxess India Pvt. Ltd., Mahindra Finance, Marico, Mayank Shah, Mehli Mehta Music Foundation, Mocha, Moet Hennessy India, Montex Pen Industries, Multi Commodity Exchange, Mumbai Indians – Education for All, Navjeet Community Health Centre, Neha Narain, New Galaxy Services Pvt. Ltd., Nielsen, Nirmalaya Trust, Nivea India, Novartis, ONGC, Ogilvy & Mather, Papiya Bose, Percy Mistry, Plan India, Plastindia Foundation, Project Heena, Radiant Corporation Pvt. Ltd., Radiant Industries, Ramesh Kapadia, Ravi Kundalia, Reliance Foundation, Richard Evans & family, Rotary Club of Bombay West, SBI Capital, Sadhu Vaswani Mission, Saint Gobain India Foundation, Sambhav Kundalia, Sanofi, SAP Labs India Pvt. Ltd., Saurabh Gupta, Seeyourimpact.org, Seth Jeevanji Jamasji Mistry's Surat Adarian Fund, SEWA Lucknow, Shree Mahalaxmi Temple Charities, Silicon Valley Community Foundation, St. Paul's Publication, St. Xavier's Institute of Communciation, State Bank of Patiala, Super Cassettes Industries Ltd., TBWA India, Taj Lands End, Tania Fernandez, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Teach for India – InspireEd, Tech Mahindra Foundation, The Bai Alamai & Seth Ardeshir Talati & Seth S.B. Mody Charity Trust, The Foundation, The Lotus Trust, Tony Sleight, Toolbox India, Trident, Tridha, Trustplutus, Turf Club, United Way of Mumbai, University of Toronto, VFS Global, Vakils, Feffer & Simons Pvt. Ltd., Veera Bandrawala, Velocity, William Serle and Whistling Woods International.