



NEWSLETTER

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education@aseema

If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in

- Rachel Carson

Our children constantly amaze us with the pleasure they take in little things – a simple white dress, a photograph of their class or a kind word from their teacher. The seemingly smallest things can keep them smiling and laughing for hours.

All of us at Aseema, witnessed this when we celebrated our Amar Inam Annual Day on 6 March 2008. The children were involved in conceptualizing and executing the entire event from the start and their excitement was palpable. They were helped to articulate their thoughts and develop a musical concert by Amole Gupte. The songs portrayed their views and feelings on matters that concerned them. Whether it was their idea of fun, their thoughts on Aseema and



education, or on 'world peace' – the concert was truly a reflection of them. Trishala Patel and her team then stepped in and took up the mammoth challenge of directing all our 650 children on stage. Costumes, props and dance rehearsals filled the days ahead of the show. The children finally performed for an audience of over 800 people and were cheered on by delighted family and friends. Performing on such a large stage, while retaining a warm and intimate atmosphere made this event so memorable for our children. We still see them skipping along in school humming the songs they wrote and composed for the event.

The children in our aanganwadi in Igatpuri also had reason to celebrate on their Sports Day in March. They enthusiastically participated in various races - running with a lemon and spoon, being the fastest to eat a banana, and many more.

Another important event in the Aseema calendar was the 13th Harmony Art Show held

in March and April. As before, Aseema was invited to exhibit and sell the paintings of our children at this prestigious show. The work of our children was showcased alongside those of India's premier artists and attracted the attention of many visitors. Two of our students – Ashish Gaikwad and Rubina Khan – were awarded the Vasanti Muzumdar Award for excellence in art.

The children's artistic talents were also evident at a photography workshop organized by TBWA. The workshop celebrated the themes and colours of India and gave the children a chance to learn and practice a new art. The children made use of an assortment of props and costumes, learnt about light and cameras, and posed like true professionals. The photographs they have taken are truly striking and we look forward to having them printed in the near future.

Even after school closed for vacations, the Aseema children were busy with several fun programmes. They performed once again in Raell Padamsee's play entitled 'Freedom'. They also enjoyed themselves in a summer camp and a workshop on teaching language through theatre.



Our staff in the meantime was also engaged in training sessions. A two-day intensive programme was organized by participants of the Top Management Programme of the UK's National School of Government to enhance the communication and team building skills of our staff members. With Aseema being on the threshold of so many new developments, this training helped our staff re-energize and prepare themselves for the academic year 2008-09.

This year brings with it many new beginnings. The Pali-Chimbai Municipal School adopted by Aseema, will now run in two shifts. With the increasing number of children studying in the school the need was felt to restrict the teacher-child ratio in every class. The additional batch and the resulting smaller classes will help our teachers offer each child individualized attention. An equally significant step was the shifting of our entire Pre-Primary Section to the Santacruz Municipal School. In addition to the Pre-Primary, this school will also run a Secondary Section in the English medium. Only one other municipal school offers secondary education in English. This project will therefore be a very welcome service for the many children who wish to continue their formal schooling.

We believe that each of these developments is testament to our commitment to the children we serve. Our abiding faith in their immense potential and conviction in the power of education has led us this far. As always, we owe thanks to the numerous people who supported us in these past few months - American School of Bombay, Amole Gupte, Choitee Ghosh, Dilshad Patel, Dawn Wylie, DBS, Divya Bhatia, Fidelity, Fiona Manklow, Inam Rahman & family, J.W. Marriott Hotel, Jeetu, John Dodds, Ken Thomson, Mark Robinson, Prisca Centre, Raell Padamsee & Create Foundation, Roger Drego, Rohan Malik, Sanjay, Selina Busby, Shailendra Barve, Shruti Pandit, Stephen Farrell, Stephen Otter, Stevie Farnfield, TBWA, Tech Mahindra, Tina Ambani, Trishala Patel, Trudi Elliott & Vasanti Muzumdar.

