



## Indian Association for Promotion of Adoption and Child Welfare (IAPA)

### NEWSLETTER

Dear Readers,



GREETINGS to one and all !! We are happy to share another edition of our Newsletter with you, with further developments for the period October to March 2018.

IAPA has been active since several years in promoting the campaign of 'Safe Surrender' of children. In this issue we cover matters related to successful launch of publicity material and outreach programs related to it

We also share some relaxing moments provided to our foster parents who look after our pre-adoption children 24X7. On the other hand, students covered under our foster family assistance program also found renewed hope and self-confidence through a motivational workshop conducted for them.

Ongoing efforts of our Child Guidance Centre (CGC) to sensitize parents to emotional and psychological needs of their children resulted in interesting sessions whose glimpses we provide here. Some encouraging developments in our Computer Classes are also lined up in this issue.

We are sure you will share the enjoyment of children covered under our Khetwadi projects who participated in the Annual Sponsorship Day. Similar delight was experienced by the adoptive parents and children during our Annual Family Meet. We share all these memorable moments with you.

We bring you further positive outcomes of our Rural Project in Ratnagiri District, through the observant eyes of our Life Skills Facilitator for the project. Christmas is a period of joy and cheer for all; more so for children under our 'Asmita' Project as you will see in the issue.

Please feel free to give your feedback on [iapacw1970@gmail.com](mailto:iapacw1970@gmail.com) with Newsletter as subject line.

Thank You  
Team IAPA

#### OBITUARY



Dr. Zulie Nakhoda, Founder member-IAPA, left for her heavenly abode on December 15, 2017. Through her contact with Dr. Cicorella the then President of Italian Association of Adoptive Families (CIAI) visiting India, she was instrumental alongwith other likeminded stalwarts, in founding IAPA in 1970 to promote adoption of children, brought up in institutions. IAPA first started operating from the premises of the India Sponsorship Committee, thanks to the good offices of Dr. Nakhoda, the Director of the organization. IAPA owes immense gratitude to Dr. Nakhoda for its existence.

May Her Soul Rest in Peace

## LAUNCH OF POSTERS ON 'SAFE SURRENDER'



It is very often that a child is found abandoned near a garbage dump, near a station, a temple or any such public place. Such a child is exposed to severe harm and is at risk to grave exploitation and unsure future.



Majority are newborns or infants. In many cases the birth giver takes such extreme steps under great personal agony, due to fear of social stigma. Lack of awareness about safer alternatives and

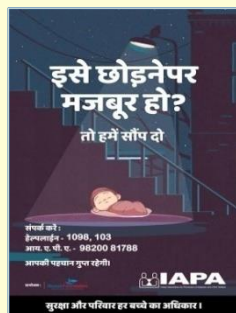
Mrs.Goriawalla,President-IAPA; Mr.Bhavsar, District Officer-DWCD; Mrs.Telang, ProjectDirector-IAPA ;Dr.Shiroorkar,Asst.Commissioner B Ward ;Dr.Mohokar, Medical Officer(Health), Dr.Madane,Assistant Health Officer; Mrs. Gokarn, Committee Member-IAPA

easy access to them, often deprive the child to a safe passage to rehabilitation through adoption.

IAPA initiated a campaign four years back, jointly with the Health Department of BMC, to address issues related to protection of children in such situations. The campaign aims to reach those facing the dilemma of dealing with the child they had never intended to bring into this world nor have the capacity or desire to raise. For creating awareness and knowledge among the concerned medical community who come in contact with the target group and the wider public, we have brought out publicity material, with the support of Mastek Foundation. These Posters and Leaflets were successfully launched on November 17, 2017.

A participative audience of 40 members-Community Health Volunteers (CHVs), Primary Health-care Nurses (PHNs), Assistant Medical Officers (AMOs), Auxiliary Nurse Midwives (ANMs) and co-ordinators from BMC 'B' Ward attended this launch cum outreach program. Talks given by BMC 'B' Ward officials reflected the support and encouragement given by BMC to this initiative.

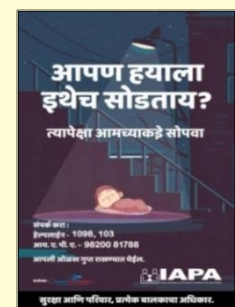
IAPA representatives explained the concept of Safe Surrender and availability of safer alternatives - Adoption, Foster Care and Sponsorship, to abandonment of children. The officials and audience expressed their willingness to reach out to appropriate target group to spread further awareness. We wish to take this "Safe Surrender" campaign forward to other wards to sensitize more health workers for wider outreach.



Poster on Safe Surrender I



Dr.Shiroorkar, Asst.Commissioner. BMC 'B' Ward addressing the gathering



Poster on Safe Surrender II

An article by Indian Express titled "BMC joins hands with NGO to raise awareness about safe way to surrender abandoned babies" reported the statement by Mrs.Goriawalla - "Under Juvenile Justice Act, only organisations registered with CARA can accept surrendered infants. Abandoning is illegal but we are creating awareness on safe surrender. Lack of awareness about a safer alternative and easy access to them, are the reasons that deprive the child of a safe passage to rehabilitation through adoption." Dr.Vilas Mahokar-Medical Officer, B Ward mentioned - "The community needs to be made aware about what to do when they find an abandoned child."



This launch was followed by another outreach program in "K" East BMC ward, which was attended by a group of 52 CHVs. Dr. Chetna Nipani, Medical Officer (Health) co-ordinated in spreading the message of the program



at BMC Ward level. The group of 52 CHVs who attended posed queries on adoption process, screening of parents, matching process and capability of parents post adoption. Participants were explained about the dynamics of relationships and how one needs to help expectant mothers and their families to prevent abandoning children.

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## ART THERAPY FOR OUR FOSTER PARENTS

Back bones for the pre-adoption foster care program, our foster parents need to de-stress from time to time. Art Therapy provided a much needed relaxation in their round the clock schedule of looking after our pre-adoption children. Organized by students placed in IAPA from TISS alongwith our social workers, the event proved to be an enjoyable stress-buster for the foster parents.



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## "NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE"- UNDER OUR FOSTER CARE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME



We strive to ensure preservation of family for children from difficult socio-economic backgrounds whose parents are unable to look after them due to crisis situations. This is done through our Foster Care Assistance program. A workshop was conducted on January 27, 2018 by TISS student social workers & IAPA, for students from Stds VII to IX under this program. The objective of this workshop was to provide a platform to instill hope and confidence and help them face life with refreshed mind and energy.

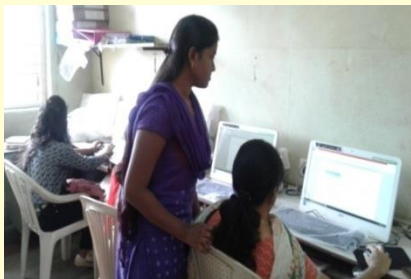
'Mission Possible', an ice-breaking activity which conveyed the central theme of the workshop 'Nothing is Impossible', set the tone for the workshop. A video clip of a sportsman with one limb who won gold medals in Olympics surmounting several hardships, brought about sharing of the students' own victories over challenges like examinations, language barriers, arts, sports and the like. Attention was drawn to the pressure exerted by society on children by constantly comparing and judging them which forces them into a position where they stop believing in themselves. Parents and others load the children with their own expectations, since their childhood. The students agreed that most of the labels and descriptions received from their parents, teachers, friends and family were negative.

The group was motivated to continue to believe in their own self worth and not define themselves by how others perceived them. They were encouraged to write and share about what they felt about themselves, their aspirations, merits and demerits. An ex-recipient of foster care assistance from a similar background talked about her journey of following her passion, against all odds and proving that nothing is impossible with the help of education and one's best efforts. The group dispersed with a renewed sense of hope and self-worth.



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## COMPUTER CLASSES



Terre des Hommes (TdH), Denmark has been sponsoring the infrastructure for computer classes conducted at IAPA, since January 2017. With their support, the class has been refurbished with 20 computers and other related expenses for software and the like.



An IT diploma holder has been appointed to teach 'Basic' and 'Tally' courses to college going students. Women of neighboring area also attend the class, along with some office going men. Students under our sponsorship program avail of these computer classes facility without any charge. This not only makes them computer literate but also helps them to secure jobs.

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## OUR CHILD GUIDANCE CENTRE (CGC) 'Aastha' REACHES OUT

- ❖ What if your child throws tantrums while going to school?
- ❖ What if your child refuses to eat?
- ❖ What if your child bullies other children?

Parents have always been troubled by situations like these. Their reactions can be crucial to the well-being of the child and the parent-child relationship. A good foundation plays an important role in the growth of a child. Hence the need for good parenting begins from a younger age. Taking this into notice, a workshop was conducted in November by the CGC team, on the subject 'Parenting' for the parents of children studying in Sanjivani Balwadi in West Khetwadi BMC school.



The main aim of the workshop was to open a platform for parents to discuss various issues concerning development of their children. It focused on how parents can contribute to the crucial years in the child's life through better parenting - which requires understanding the child and responding thoughtfully. The CGC team led discussion on topics like health, nutrition, hygiene, relation between parents and children, rewards and punishment, toilet habits, good and bad habits, and the like. The programme was largely interactional in nature and the overall participation was remarkable.

Another workshop was held for the parents of students of West Khetwadi Municipal School. The purpose was to make the parents aware about their children's problems. These students come from difficult backgrounds. Although their parents enroll them in school, they are unable to give them time or attention; as they are busy earning a livelihood. Hence the children are do not learn values, discipline or manners and exhibit several behavioural problems. The talk was aimed at motivating the parents to bring about required changes in themselves - especially since their children are at an impressionable age when they copy their elders.



Workshops were also held with students in Std. IX of Gilderlane Municipal School and Meghraj Sethi Municipal School. Their aim being to educate the students about adolescence age and various types of academic, behavioral and emotional dilemmas faced by them. Attempt was also made to inculcate values like self esteem, mutual respect for classmates and elders, punctuality, importance of hard work and the like.

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## ANNUAL SPONSORSHIP DAY

This is always a much awaited program for the students covered under our Khetwadi Projects, which took place this year on February 11, 2018 at Kawlemath Banganga Municipal School. The program which started with lighting of the lamp and a welcome song, was followed by various cultural and contemporary performances by the students. Felicitation of student achievers (Std X, XII & Graduation) with the support of Yogesh and Jagruti Mandavkar, always serves as an inspiration for others to follow in their footsteps. Our students were also regaled with engaging shows, a splendid lunch and Fun Fair filled with variety of games and prizes; before leaving with a parting gift. All this was thanks to the enthusiastic and committed support from Sanjiv and Priti Kapoor, who continue to be the backbone of this program, along with their family and friends.



Enthusiastic Performance by our Students



Entertainment Galore for the Audience

Lots of Fun at the Fun Fair

Games and Prizes for all



Post Felicitations-One of the Young Achievers



Our Promising Masters of Ceremony

## ANNUAL FAMILY MEET

This event for our adoptive parents and children is another event which is looked forward to by one and all. This time the Family Meet took place on February 17, 2018 at the Saraswati Mandir High School at Matunga. Many parents dressed in their 'Traditional Attire' as per the theme of the Meet, that they show-cased with enthusiasm and verve. It was heart-warming to hear the experiences shared by some of our adoptive children. A presentation on IAPA programs and services was an eye-opener for the audience. Bursting of balloons, tattoo making, games and acrobatic performance were enjoyed by one and all. Many of our adoptive families have become a part of the IAPA family. They are our strong and committed partners who play a major role in supporting and contributing to the success of our Family Meet, over the years.



Bursting Balloons



Sweet Sharings

Acrobatics

Tattoo making

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## HAPPY TIDINGS ON THE RURAL FRONT

We have started conducting Life Skills sessions with girls in Std. IX & X in Terewayangani as well as Agarwayangani schools covered under our Rural Project in Ratnagiri. We share some of the interesting observations of Mrs. Ashwini Vaidya, Facilitator-Life Skills Program, on the next page.



## THE RURAL PROJECT



### Background

Girls attending the rural schools come from underprivileged agrarian families.

Those in the age group of 13 to 16 years attend high school against all odds at family and community level.

Girl's education after SSC is often the last priority for their families due to economic constraints.

Patriarchal norms compel parents to get the girls married as early as 17-18 years.

Even if the girls work after SSC, it is as maid servants in Mumbai.

Girls are thus deprived of opportunities to acquire essential knowledge and skills to lead a self reliant life.

To bring positive changes in these harsh realities, Educational Sponsorship and Life Skills programs were initiated with the support of Terre des Hommes (TdH) Denmark and Chance Of Life (COL) Germany respectively.

### Life Skills Program

Conducted in order to prepare girls from villages to face the challenges of adolescence; by developing knowledge, skills & healthy attitudes

Sessions conducted through role plays, simulation games, essays, quiz, group discussions

Practical knowledge imparted through group visits to Local Self Govt., Bank and Postal Services, Rural Health services, Land records & other Authorities

Initially shy girls, when encouraged to express freely, share their feelings about discrimination and gender stereotypes experienced in families and community

The program aims to become a window for the girls in rural project to look at the external world with the right knowledge, skills and attitude...to rise as self confident and consciously active citizens

Mrs. Rita Steinau, Director - Chance of Life (COL) Germany, Ms. Claudia Schaefer and Ms. Elizabeth Overmeyer who paid a visit to Terewayangani and Agarwayangani on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February were very impressed with the work that was being done, especially for the girls.

### Educational Sponsorship Program [In the context of girl students]

Given opportunity girls can excel and achieve economic independence through educational assistance at school and college level; and for vocational courses.

Girls now study at least upto Std XII and then take up vocational training or work in shops, malls, imitation jewellery workshops; some continue education upto graduation.

Instead of working as domestic help they opt for jobs with more dignity like nursing, tailoring, computer operators and beauticians.

Early age marriage at 17-18 years which was very common earlier, has now been pushed up to 21-22 years. The resultant health risks related to early pregnancy get reduced.

Two years of college or vocational education helps them to get exposure to the world outside their village and boosts up their self confidence.

Parents have started recognizing the need to equip girls to stand on their own feet.



Visit to our Rural Project by Chance Of Life (Germany)





## SPREADING CHRISTMAS CHEER



Mr. Ananya Kulkarni our ardent well wisher and his friends once again held Christmas celebrations for students of West Khetwadi Municipal School, who are covered under our Asmita Project. Most of them come from deprived backgrounds and unstructured families. The significance of Christmas celebration was explained to them. This also brought about sharing of reminiscences of the much loved Late In-Charge of West Khetwadi Municipal School, who was fondly remembered.



The children put up energetic performance and enjoyed the camaraderie and sense of self-worth, before being regaled with gifts and savouries. They in turn happily present the donors with thank you cards in appreciation of their efforts. One of our past sponsored student motivated the children to study well and progress in life, with the support of IAPA.



**Contact us –**



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Regd. under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860: No. BOM/37/1971 and  
The Public Trust Act of 1950.

Registration No. - F-2230.

Guidestar India No, 528.

**(Donations to IAPA are available for deduction under Sec 80G of the Income Tax Act)**

