

Salaam Baalak Trust - Annual Report 2003 - 04

Preface

No human process has as much power to transform as does education. Freedom, democracy and sustainable human development - the key tasks of modern civilization - all require education to fuel their energies. In India, we have much to accomplish in this regard, as 100 million children who should be in school are not.

In its own way, SBT wrestles with one of the more difficult corners of this vast problem, providing education to destitute, runaway and detached children. In their context, education includes, but needs to go far deeper than, schooling. By providing them shelter, security and a whole range of social support, we see their education as a force for social changes. By extending our reach to other communities at risk, we sense the potential of education to combat poverty, empower women, and safeguard children from victimization, hazardous labor and sexual exploitation.

Our efforts at empowering children have succeeded in shaping the lives of a few children. Millions of others desperately need similar support. We seek support in moving on.

INTRODUCTION

To empower children is to empower society.

SBT is committed to liberating the potential of India's children, particularly those in unfortunate circumstances. With every year that passes, we are more convinced of their potential. The issue is of particular relevance in India, which is a country of the young. Almost half of our population is under 25, and we have more than 400 million children. Unfortunately, a substantial number of Indian children are deprived of the resources necessary for their proper physical, emotional and intellectual development. Among them, children who live away from their families are the most deprived. In its own little way, SBT tries to provide such children with what they most need.

The present report profiles SBT's efforts in this direction, through the provision of education, health services, shelter and emotional security. The ultimate goal of these efforts is that of all parenting - to help today's children become meaningful contributors to the social, economic and cultural life of tomorrow.

SBT works through 5 shelter homes and 5 contact points. Our shelter homes aim to provide the full range of services required to support children - food, health, education, recreation, life skills training, and above all a sense of belonging and emotional security. Contact points focus on immediate relief for the dispossessed or destitute child, chiefly by providing a safe, temporary shelter. Last year, our 5 shelters catered to 738 children, while 989 new children were identified and helped at the contact points.

Across the range of its services, SBT reached out to 3267 children during the year 2003-04.

During this period, we have also continued to extend our community outreach. This year, a

special night outreach was initiated to identify and help children in difficult circumstances - especially girls. The program contacted 143 new girls and boys.

We know that even the best shelter is a poor substitute for a real family. Therefore, our first effort with every new child is restoring them to their family. In the year under review, we were able to reunite 349 runaway children with their families. Every repatriation is followed through with visits, and, where needed, counselling of the child and parents.

One of the core strategies of SBT is to build capacity in all those with whom it works - the children who are its key constituency, but equally importantly its staff and other stakeholders. In this way, SBT's goals become more easily identified, and achieved.

Various forms of recognition help reassure SBT that its work is relevant. Mention might be made here of the Award for best work in the field of street and working children (2002-03) from the Dept. of Social Welfare, Government of India. We also received a license to run our girl child shelter, and were allotted space at the DDA community center, Katra Karim, for a 24-hour drop-in shelter.

Our greatest reassurance continues to come from the children we work with - from the emotion of families reunited, the reawakening of curiosity, the resurgence of emotional security, the pride in an emerging adult who has found his vocation.

It is to these intangible joys that we rededicate ourselves.

OUR VISION

Salaam Balaak Trust (SBT) works towards the creation of a just and equitable society, which respects the rights of the child to education, health & nutrition, family environment, recreation & constructive participation.

Mission

SBT aims to provide a sensitive and caring environment to street & working children and other children on the margins of society. It seeks to dissolve the barriers that rob children of the opportunity to realize their rights.

Objectives:

- To protect children and foster their holistic development.
- To evolve a responsive and accountable governance committed to providing the best conditions for the children
- To engage government agencies and other non-governmental and voluntary organizations in the task of sensitizing the environment to the needs of marginalized children.
- To encourage children, particularly girls, to participate in their own empowerment.

OUR SERVICES

Education

SBT believes that there is no instant solution for children who have been denied their right to education. However, we are charged with the imperative that there is no higher priority, no mission more important, than that of education.

Education of children at SBT has to be need-based and demand-driven. To fulfil these criteria, the trust employs various schemes of educational intervention, both formal and non-formal. Wherever possible, the objective is to bring children into mainstream education. The overriding goal, though, is to help children develop into informed, capable and responsible citizens of our nation and the world.

To these ends we variously engage with the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS), formal schools, non-formal education, and bridge courses.

National Institute Of Open Schooling

NIOS is a national scheme for open learning to which SBT was accredited in September 2000. SBT has developed innovative syllabi for levels A, B, & C. with the help of NIOS. Originally intended for SBT children, these courses are available to other young learners as well, providing an alternative route to educational attainment or higher education. Since the accreditation to NIOS, 56 children, including 17 girls, have passed NIOS (basic) exams. During the year, 109 children registered for NIOS examinations.

TABLE NO: 1
BENEFICIARIES OF NIOS

Level	No. of children registered		
	Boys	Girls	Total
A Level	13	3	16
B Level	17	X	17
C Level	13	10	23
Higher Secondary	28	5	33
Senior Secondary	20	X	20
Total			109

Formal Education

Ideally, SBT would like to channel every child into mainstream education. Formal education enables children to interact with their peers from diverse backgrounds. It also helps instill a sense of accountability, positive competition and the desire to excel.

SBT children are admitted into both, private and government schools of repute. So far, the Trust has been able to mainstream approx 2500 children in various classes. This year 234 children were admitted into various mainstream schools.

TABLE NO: 2
MAINSTREAMING AT SBT

Center	Name of the school	No. of children
Arushi (Girl Child Shelter)	Sarswati public school	27
	Saviors public school	02
	Shewta public school	09
Aasra	M.C.D School, Mantola	26
	M.C.D School, Chuna Mandi	12
	Govt. boys Middle School	10
	Sarvodaya Bal Vidyalaya	08
Apna Ghar	Govt. Middle School	25
	Sant Nirankari	03
	DAV Public School	01
	Sarvodaya Vidyalaya	09
	Nutan Marathi Public School	03
	Delhi University	01
Akanksha	MCD School	46
	St. Anthony Public School	06
	Raghmal Senior Sec. School	11
	Delhi University	03
	IGNOU	02
	Govt. Middle School	15
	Sarvodaya Primary School	03
	Jai Hind Public School	03
Drop in shelter	Govt Boy's Middle School	07
	Delhi University	02

	Total	234
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Non - Formal Education (NFE)

Non-formal education at SBT takes care of children's individual educational needs. The primary goal of this program is to motivate and prepare children to gain admission into formal school. NFE focuses on interesting and interactive learning through a participatory approach. A wide range of techniques are employed under the program, including painting, games, story, telling, papier mache, songs, quizzes, bachhon ki adalat etc.

**TABLE NO: 3
BENEFICIARIES OF NFE**

Center	No. of Children
GRP	443
Platform	247
Prerna	32
Kishalaya	240
Akanksha	34
Aasra	362
Apna Ghar	-
Drop in shelter	208
Arushi	17
TOTAL	1583

Bridge Education/ Course

SBT also provides bridge courses to those children who have suffered breaks in their formal education. The program provides intensive coaching to such children, aiming to help them rejoin formal schooling in a class appropriate to their age.

Health Program: Health Monitoring

The health status of street and neglected children is almost inevitably poor. This stems from a variety of factors that are part of their existence - poor access to health care; unhygienic living conditions and poor nutrition. In addition, they are prone to substance abuse and to sexual practices that put them at high risk to HIV/AIDS.

SBT children most commonly require medical help in dealing with skin diseases, cuts & wounds, chest infections (including pulmonary TB) , diarrhoea and other vector borne diseases.

SBT arranges regular medical checkups to monitor and improve the health status of its beneficiaries. Primary health services are provided at each of the Trust's homes; however, children acquiring specialized treatment are referred to identified health institutions. All children are vaccinated against Hepatitis, Tetanus, Typhoid, Cholera, and Meningitis.

Health Program: Drug De-addiction

Street children are exposed to drugs and other addictive substances at an age when they are not fully aware of the implications of consuming these. The range of addictions is wide - solvents, spirits, opium, marijuana, heroin, tobacco, pan, gutka and alcohol. De-addiction is a specialized field, and children in need of help are referred to qualified centers to help rehabilitate them. .

SBT is grateful to:

- Kalawati Saran children's Hospital
- Smt. Sucheta Kriplani Hospital
- Ram Manohar Lohia Hospital
- All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)
- NDPF (full form?)

**TABLE No. 4
BENEFICIARIES OF HEALTH SERVICES**

Center	Regular Health checkups	HIV/AIDS	Referrals	Hospitalization or long term treatment
Arushi	261	-	116	10
Akanksha	466	-	25	33
Apna Ghar	553	02	271	52
Aasra	444	05	70	07
Drop in shelter	277	12	183	20
GRP	453	60	87	11
Platform	29	16	18	04
Kishalaya	162	15	40	04
Prerna	174	60	06	16

Health Awareness Campaigns

While aiming to improve the living conditions of children under its care, SBT also seeks to spread awareness of health practices and their relationship to disease among its client communities. Hepatitis, and HIV/AIDS are two areas SBT particularly focuses on, using

health camps and health meals to disseminating information about healthy habits & practices. During the year under review, 2 health awareness camps were conducted.

Place	No. of beneficiaries
Akanksha (State entry road)	150
Katra Karim	178

- An AIDS awareness campaign held at Ajmeri Gate on 11th December 2003 addressed 10,000 beneficiaries.
- 32 awareness sessions were held on health and hygiene, HIV/AIDS/DTS/STDs.

HIV Care & Support & Prevention

A recent SBT conducted survey among 100 street children at the New Delhi Railway Station, revealed that 86% of boys in the age group 14 - 18 yrs were sexually active; however an abysmally low number of them knew about safe sex protection and condom usage. Not one of them reported having ever used a condom. The study signaled that such children run a high risk of contracting HIV/AIDS due to -

- Lack of proper knowledge about sex, sexuality, HIV/AIDS, STDs and condom usage
- Lack of access to health services for treatment of STDs
- Risky behavior

In view of these findings, a HIV/AIDS community based care & support project was initiated in July 2001. This was augmented by an HIV/AIDS prevention project funded by CAA (? Expanded form) with effect from September 2002. SBT has screened 225 children, and none of them were found HIV positive. The project aims to enhance children's access to information and care in respect of HIV/AIDS & STDs. In addition, it hopes to diminish the stigmas and discrimination against children affected by AIDS, by mobilizing community and peer support for AIDS victims.

During the year 2003- 04 the project undertook:

- Voluntary counseling and testing (V C T)
- Counseling
- Focus Group discussions
- Street plays
- Capacity building training

Partner Organization Imparting VT:

- Jan Shikshan Sansthan
Computers: 01
Tailoring: 12
- VIMHANS: 06
- Electrical: 08
- Triveni Kala Sangam:02
- Sculptor Radha Krishan: 01
- ITC Group: 01
- Others: 12

Advocacy & Networking

SBT addresses a number of concerns under the ambit of child rights. Its advocacy initiative is a multidimensional endeavor, which targets beneficiaries and primary stakeholders as well as duty holders about the issues involved. Networking seeks to give these issues a wide platform, sensitizing the community, society and the institutions of governance to the areas of SBTs concern, namely the rights of the children.

In the first instance, SBT advocates respect, promotion and implementation of the rights of children, among the children most deprived of these rights. At the same time, it works with parents, and other organs of society to help ensure better provision and realization of those rights. The core advocacy concerns of SBT are education, health care, and decriminalization of poverty of children.

SBT Advocacy And Networking During 2003 - 04

- Strishakti camp organized on 15th February 2004 at Sarvodaya school- 915 ladies registered in this camp and follow-up is being done with 150 ladies.
- 10 children and 2 staff participated in the World Social Forum at Mumbai. Children performed a play on child rights.
- Drop in shelter children participated in the Yamuna cleaning program organized by "We for Yamuna"
- Annual plays organized on 16,17,18 October 2003 at Chinmaya Mission Trust, Lodi Road. The plays: 'Antahpur ka darpan' and 'Rani Nagfeni Ki Kahani'. Avinash Yadav 'Baboo', an SBT alumnus, has his own Dance group, which also performed on the occasion.
- Two Health Camps organized: at Akanksha on 17th July 2003; and at Katra Karim on 10th December 2003.
- Aids awareness programme organized at Ajmeri Gate on 11th December 2003--- 200 SBT children and 10000 external audience attended.
- Salaam Baalak Trust children performed a play at Hotel Grand Hyatt organized by American School.
- On June 5, 2003 CHILDLINE participated in a meeting on HIV/AIDS organized by Lawyers Collective. .

Repatriation And Restoration

No shelter or home can substitute for the natural setting for a child - the family environment. Salaam Baalak Trust's primary effort with every child is to restore him or her to this environment. The Trust's workers try to develop an understanding of the circumstances under which the child felt compelled to run away.

In most cases, the child has been the victim of hardship, abuse, or exploitation. SBT counselors work with the parents and children to try and remedy the situation prior to reuniting the family. If the child returns to the family, SBT regularly monitors the case to minimize the chances of the child running away again. Where circumstances do not suggest

the possibility of improvement, SBT supports the child with its services.

The issue of restoration is much more complex when dealing with girls, as they are much more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Unfortunately, in many of the cases we deal with, it is the family that has turned into predators of the child. SBT is careful to restore girls to their families only when its staff is convinced that the children are not likely to be abused. This year SBT had the pleasure of restoring 349 children (including 58 girls) to their families.

Award Program

The Duke of Edinburgh International Award is an exciting self-development program that encourages young people to undertake a range of voluntary and potentially transforming activities. Covering over 100 countries, the program empowers young people to develop their life skills, thus making a difference to themselves and their communities.

SBT is allied to the program, and exposes carefully identified individuals to the extraordinary self-development opportunities offered by it. In the year under review, 66 SBT children qualified for the different categories of the award, by taking up stimulating activities such as trekking, dramatics, karate, sports and social work.

**TABLE NO.: 5
BENEFICIARIES OF AWARD**

Award level	No. of children
Gold level	04
Silver level	31
Bronze level	17

Sports & extra-curricular activities

While games comes naturally to children, street and working children often lack the opportunity for wholesome sport. SBT believes that - aside from being fun - sporting and outdoor activities promote a sense of togetherness and belonging among its children, and facilitate learning in other areas as well.

Sporting and other extra-curricular activities are thus an integral part of life at SBT. All children in SBT's shelter homes make an annual trip to hill resorts, to help break the monotony of their routines, and to expose them to new stimuli. In addition, sports events are regularly organized, and SBT children are also encouraged to participate in similar events put together by other organizations. When children are identified as having special talent in any discipline, they are provided with special training over a sustained period.

Sports At SBT

7 boys are being trained in Karate. 2 have been awarded Black Belts

3 boys were selected for Delhi State Interschool squash Tournament

36 children are being trained in soccer by Mr. Arup Das

(Joint Secretary, Indian Youth Soccer Association).

SBT won the Golden Goal Award in the Kutumb football tournament featuring 16 NGOs.

20 children are training in cricket

2 boys have been selected for advanced cricket coaching at the Indira Gandhi Stadium.

SBT received the runners-up trophy for performance in cricket from the Delhi Child Rights Club

Theatre, Street Plays AND Puppetry

Theater has always been an important tool in the development of Salaam Baalak Trust. The release offered by this medium helps children unleash pent-up emotions and deal with unresolved issues. In its long involvement with theater, Salaam Baalak Trust has been able to identify and promote a large number of extremely talented children.

The involvement of SBT children includes writing scripts, planning scenarios and helping produce plays. The children also design and create beautiful puppets, which are often used in shows dealing with social themes

Together with street plays, puppet theater forms part of our outreach program, which seeks to sensitize relevant audiences to issues of our concern, such as drugs, health & hygiene, HIV/AIDS, education and the environment. SBT theater groups take their work to a wide range of venues - slum clusters, schools, public places, and dedicated campaigns & meets.

Capacity Building

Continuous up-gradation of the skills of its staff members is integral to the SBT culture. Regular capacity-building workshops and training programs greatly contribute to SBT's ability to deliver high quality services, especially in core areas such as counseling, first- aid, innovative pedagogy, mental health assessment and child development.

When necessary, SBT engages individual consultants or specialist organizations to help build capacity. At the same time, in-house expertise is available for many areas of training, which is also made available to other institutions.

TABLE NO: 6

IN - HOUSE CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS 2003 - 2004

Topic	No. of workshops	No. Of Beneficiaries
Mental Health program orientation	1	12
Mental Health assessment	3	7
Communication skills and counseling	3	26
Life-Skills education orientation	1	8
Crisis management	2	21
Reading of common signs and symptoms of the children	3	23
Management of ADHD (Attention Deficit	1	12

Hyperactive Disorder)		
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**TABLE NO: 7
WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED BY EXTERNAL RESOURCE PERSONS**

Resource person/ Organization	Topic	No. of workshops	No. Of Beneficiaries
Family Health Intervention	Technical update of issues related to IMPACT-CAA'	4	3
Butterflies	Story writing and story telling skills	2	2
NAVJYOTI	Drug demand reduction practice	4	16
SAHYOG	Adolescent counseling	1	3
Mr. Tanvir Rizvi & Ms. Rosenara, Naaz Foundation	Sex and sexuality	2	20
Ms. Gunjan Sharma	Counseling skills	2	20
Dr. Kusum Khanna, Pediatrician from U.S.A	First -Aid Training	2	12

OUR PROGRAMS

Contact Points

These are points at which new arrivals are met. Working children also use them as day-care centers, which provide proper nutrition, clothing, medical aid and recreational facilities.

SBT contact points are primarily counseling centers - they attempt to either repatriate runaway children to their families, or to rehabilitate them in full-care shelters run by the agency or by other appropriate NGOs. Since many children coming to the contact points have high-risk behavior, these centers also seek to inform children about health & hygiene, substance abuse issues, HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment of STDs, and reproductive health.

SBT works through the following contact points in New Delhi's central zone:

1. General Reserve Police or G.R.P CENTER, New Delhi Railway Station

Situated at New Delhi railway station, this was the center where SBT began operating 15 years ago. This half-day care center is offers medical assistance, non-formal education, awareness programs, and games and recreation.

2. PLATFORM, New Delhi Railway Station

The platform has often been an informal SBT contact point, but since the year 2000, it has become a permanent Contact Point. The Platform school came into existence in 1996, and now has over 20 students. It also functions as a contact point for street children at the Ajmeri

Gate car park of the station.

Since the railway station is often the point of arrival for runaway children, this contact center helps SBT establish contact with children before they fall into irreversibly damaging patterns of behavior or company.

3. KISHALAYA - HANUMAN MANDIR, CONNAUGHT PLACE

Kishalaya at Hanuman Mandir has been a regular day center since it was opened in December 1999. It caters to over 25 boys and girls in the age group of 3-18 years. Many children visiting this center have had to undergo drug de-addiction in the drive to help them join the main-stream of society.

Other services at contact points :

- Provision of proper nutrition, clothing and hygiene facilities.
- On-going education, through non-formal education and the National Open School (NOS) system.
- Provision of first aid, medical check ups and tests, HIV/AIDS testing (on voluntary basis), and referral to drug de-addiction programmes.
- Recreational facilities: art and craft, music, out-door and indoor games, excursions within Delhi, and an annual educational tour to hill resorts.
- Savings schemes to encourage financial prudence.
- Child Rights awareness program, in association with Child Rights Club and Bal Adhikar Manch.
- Fostering a sense of communal harmony and an awareness of other religions, through observance of all major festivals.
- Capacity building of the contact point staff on regular basis

Shelters

Full care centers

These shelters provide the children security, a sense of home, and an opportunity to receive all the critical inputs of childhood. Word of mouth brings some children to these centers directly, but there are also several sources of referral - SBT's Contact points, the Childline service, and concerned citizens.

Each SBT shelter caters to a specific group of children:

1. Aasra - a Shelter for boys between 5-12 years

Aasra, literally shelter, is one of the earliest Salaam Baalak Trust facilities. Set up in 1992 at Paharganj, near the New Delhi railway station, today Aasra is home to over 50 runaway children. Having left home very young, these children are in danger of having childhood pass them by. The shelter staff aim to provide them with a nurturing and loving environment that helps restore their childhood to them. It is not an easy task, but when it succeeds, it makes a meaningful difference to tender lives.

2. APNA GHAR - a Shelter for boys 10-15 years

Apna Ghar, or 'Our Home', is a full care home of Salaam Baalak Trust, established in 1999. It currently houses around 63 boys, and focuses on preparing them to integrate into mainstream society. Extensive counseling aims at helping these children to think independently and rationally about their own problems & situations.

The performing arts are another major component of Apna Ghar activities, helping its residents gain a sense of self, and explore their own talents.

3. DROP-IN-SHELTER - A Shelter for older working children

Established in 1997, this 24-hour facility caters to older street and working children between 14 and 18. It recognizes their need for freedom, and also provides age-specific counseling and vocational training. Most of the boys using the shelter work at the nearby New Delhi railway station, and retreat here to take a shower, wash their clothes, eat or rest.

4. ARUSHI - A Shelter for girls

Life is tough any child living on the street. For girls, the difficulties are vastly compounded. Easy prey for pimps, many are lured or forced into prostitution. Those who escape the pimps are not much better off - many end up selling their own bodies to survive. In any case, without secure shelter, they are highly vulnerable to sexual abuse by older boys and men. Created in 1997, with the help of USAID, Arushi is situated far away from the station, in West Delhi's Uttam Nagar.

Inspired by its name, Arushi aims to be the first ray of sun in these lives, otherwise doomed to the darkness of exploitation.

Shelter Activities

All SBT shelters have well-evolved programs for looking after the core needs of shelter, education, nutrition, clothing and health. In addition, they seek to round out the children's lives through:

Sports: A full-time sports coordinator oversees the children's get training in various sports like cricket, soccer and squash. Children also attend swimming and karate classes, and participate in various local and inter-organizational games & sports competitions.

Recreation: Children living in SBT shelters learn dance and music from renowned artists. Movies are regularly screened in the shelters; there are weekly outings, and every year children take a 10 day excursion to a hill resort or tourist destination.

Life Skills Training: This has two aims - enhancing the day-to-day decision-taking ability of children; and providing them with livelihood options through vocational training, and job placement. The program is run by a full-time life-skills co-coordinator, who structures modules and guidelines to strengthen these activities, with assistance from respective coordinators & counselors.

Income Generation: SBT children are involved in candle making and papier mache work. These products are sold at prestigious outlets such as FabIndia, Dilli Haat and Full Circle, and sales proceeds deposited in respective children's bank accounts.

Vocational Training: Is provided to the children above 15 years according to their interest and aptitude. Some of the trades in which SBT children have been trained are candle-making, tailoring, electrician, motor mechanic, cooking, photography, computer operations, driving etc.

Skill development: Training in crafts, music, needlecraft and handicrafts.

Job Placement: After providing vocational training SBT also assists children in getting suitable employment. The trust supports promising candidates by providing small loans in order to help establish them in small-scale businesses or jobs

Outreach Centers

Akanksha

SBT runs an outreach program in slums neighboring its area of operation. Established in 1993, the program aims at preventing young residents of the area from becoming street children. A major component of the outreach is education, both formal & remedial. Today, over 130 boys and girls between 6 and 18 are educated under the program; school-going children attend formal coaching classes, whereas drop-outs are encouraged to join the NOS system. Children unable to go to school receive non-formal education.

Children below 6 are helped to prepare for school through the Play way method.

Salaam Baalak Trust also helps empower the women of these areas, thus hoping to improve the overall quality of family life. Some of the interventions in this area include the provision of a credit facility; Income Generation programs; the establishment of cooperatives; adult education; community development; and health and awareness programs covering family planning, HIV/AIDS, Personal Hygiene, Child Rights and Women's Rights.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR

- State Award for the Year 2002 -03.
- License to run the girl child project, Arushi, awarded by Dept. of Social Welfare
- DDA allots space for 24 hour drop-in shelter at Katra Karim
- SBT children take the inaugural metro ride thanks to DCP (Crime Branch).
- Mohammed Ali repatriated to Bangladesh from Drop in shelter.
- US Ambassador, Mr. Robert O. Blake, visits.
- SBT publishes resource directory of NGOs (non-governmental organizations) in and around Delhi.