

Annual Report

April 2004 to March 2005

1. About Identity Foundation

Identity Foundation (E-3981-Pune) is a charitable trust registered with the office of the Charity Commissioner of Pune. Identity Foundation has been working with underprivileged children since September 2003. It is a not for profit organisation without any political and religious affiliations.

1.1. Vision Statement

We, the members of Identity Foundation, our friends, supporters and partners envision a society that respects human rights, especially the rights of children. We envision a society that ensures a safe, secure, stable and healthy childhood with an opportunity for education and development for every child.

1.2. Objectives

- To work towards creating access to formal education systems for underprivileged children and provide opportunities for alternative education.
- To partner with the formal education system to provide access to quality education to children.
- To make available medical aid to children and provide linkages and establish networks for referral services to ensure that the health needs of children are met.
- To provide opportunities for vocational training and life skills education for children and youth.
- To protect children from various forms of abuse.

1.3. Trustees

1. **Namrata Kavde-Datye** (Trustee + Programme Manager): Working with the children and managing the programmes. eMail: Namrata@identityfoundation.org
2. **Sudeshna Parmar** (Trustee): Has an experience of about 10 years of working with underprivileged children. Trustee of the non-governmental organisation Sparrows. eMail: Sudeshna@identityfoundation.org
3. **Sameer Datye (Trustee)**: Heads the User Experience Team in TietoEnator India. Helps in fund raising and communication and reporting needs of the Trust. eMail: Sameer@identityfoundation.org

1.4. Staff and Volunteers

- **Field Staff Employees:** 2 (full-time teachers)
- **Volunteers:** 4 (permanent - long association)
- **On-line volunteers:** 2 (Identity Foundation has patronage of an on-line community on www.NABUUR.com)
- **On-line neighbors:** 135 (and growing- www.NABUUR.com)

2. The children we work with...

Identity Foundation has been working with underprivileged children since September 2003. During the year 2004-2005 Identity Foundation worked with children at two locations in Pune city – the Pune railway station and the Swargate bus stand/Shankarseth Road. The children in both these locations fall under the category of street children¹ though they come from different social situations.

Brief description about the situation of the children on the Pune railway station and the Swargate bus stand/Shankarseth Road, Pune.

2.1. Pune railway station

The children on the railway station are on their own i.e they have either been abandoned or have left their homes for various reasons. There is no specific city/village from where these children land up on the railway station. They come from all over the country. Some of these children do have occasional contact with their family members. The railway station being an island by itself we find that children here are engaged in several activities which form their sources of livelihood. The railway station is home to these children. On any given day one would find 50 odd children on the railway station. It is difficult to tell the exact number of children on the railway station which may also go upto 100 or more because of the floating nature of this population.

2.2. Swargate bus stand/Shankarseth Road, Pune

The children staying at this location are children of pavement dwellers. These children live with their families. They belong to the Pardhi tribe and come from Solapur, Maharashtra and Bijapur, Karnataka. Their living standards are below subsistence levels. The children spend the entire day on the streets and are seen begging at the traffic signals, selling balloons, toys and other such items. On Saturdays and the full moon day and the no moon day they sell the good luck talisman² to ward off the evil. The children form the major source of income and parents are found engaged in activities such as gambling or chit chatting.

2.3. Commonalities between children from both these locations

One of the glaring commonality is that of a lost childhood and emotional insecurity. Children have to take on the role of adults. They stop trusting adults and other people around them. They are totally isolated from the mainstream society. Stated below are the commonalities between the children in both these locations.

- Children are engaged in labour.
- Lack of access to adequate basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing.
- Lack of access to education and health care services.
- Lack of access to recreation.
- Subject to abuse of various forms
- Hazardous Life

¹ **The United Nations definition of a street child is:**

“Any girl or boy ...for whom the street (in the widest sense of the word, including unoccupied dwelling and wastelands etc.) has become his or her habitual abode and/or source of livelihood; and who is inadequately protected, supervised, or directed by responsible adult.”

Note: Street children may or may not have a family to go back to i.e. they may be orphaned, abandoned or destitute and be completely on their own or they may have some contact with their families or they may be staying with their families.

² It is believed that a lemon and seven green chillies woven into a wire tied to homes, offices, vehicles, etc. wards off the evil.

2.4. Challenges

Some of the challenges that we faced during our work were –

- Developing a sense of trust – This process was an ongoing process and it took us a while to develop a relationship of trust between the children and us.
- Convincing both parents and children about the importance of education – One of the most difficult tasks is to convince both the parents and the children about the importance of education. Priority is always accorded to work but we still keep pursuing.
- Floating nature of the population – Something which we cannot control and is the characteristic of this population.

3. Programmes undertaken by Identity Foundation

With a strong belief that education is the key to transform and mainstream these children Identity Foundation focussed on non-formal education and life skills education, health related interventions and infotainment activities for these children.

3.1. Non-formal Education (NFE) and Life Skills Education (LSE)

Identity Foundation believes that all children should be attending formal schools and the NFE and LSE programme is a bridge for these children to be geared to attend formal schools. The NFE and LSE programme aims at creating the interest of children in education. Disparity in children's age, educational background, language, interests, time availability, etc. makes formal education a non-viable option. NFE sessions teach our children basic reading, writing, arithmetic and general knowledge through use of games and educational aids and engage them in creative activities like art, craft, music, etc. These sessions teach the child to sit in one place for some period of time and increase their attention span. Gradual mainstreaming of their education is the objective.

3.2. Medical Support and Health Care

The hazardous lives that the children live, makes this programme a primary necessity. Identity Foundation ran the Health Support Programme with the help of the Bhartiya Vidyapeeth Medical College and Hospital(BVMC&H) and Sadhu Vaswani's Shanti Clinic on the Pune Railway Station. The doctors from the BVMC&H made fortnightly visits to the railway station and conducted health check ups. They prescribed medicines which were made available by Identity Foundation to the children. Shanti Clinic gave permission to Identity Foundation to bring the children for treatment at 50% concession. In case of emergency children were also taken to the Sassoon General Hospital located close to the railway station.

3.3. Infotainment Programme

Activities like field trips, movie screenings, picnics, sports-days, etc. are organised to provide opportunities for overall social, emotional, physical, mental, moral & creative development of the children. This allows Identity Foundation members to spend quality time with the children and to create a healthy physical and emotional environment. This programme is mission critical to ensure a sense of belonging, acceptance, safety & security in our children.

During the rainy season this year around 50 children from the railway station were taken for a picnic to Mulshi (close to Pune) at a well wisher's farm house. The children had a wonderful time in the lush greenery of Mulshi. They were provided with breakfast of bhel and a sumptuous lunch

Reg. no.: E-3981-Pune (BPTA)
Sec. 80G Cert. no.: 80G ref. No.: Pn/CIT-I/12A(a)/80G/313/ 2005-06/4120
Reg. Office: Flat No. 5 Atharva Apts, Mayur Colony, Pune- 411028
Office: IndiaCo iCenter, 214 L.B.S Marg, Pune- 411030
Tel: +91 98222 94993 / 98220 30076
eMail: info@identityfoundation.org
Web: www.identityfoundaiton.org



of chicken curry and bread. They played in the swimming pool at the farm house and later there was an *antakshari* session. This was a welcome change for the children from their routine lives.

On 14th Nov 2004 (Children's day) children from both the Railway Station and the Shankarseth road centre were taken to Sambhaji Park for a programme organised by Pune 4 Change. A drawing competition and games were organised for the children. The children were provided with snacks.

4. Achievements...

- In this year our NFE and LSE programme has been able to reach out to about 100 children.
- Identity Foundation has 2 full fledged centers and is in the process of expanding to more locations.
- The MOST IMPORTANT thing that our 100 children have is the sense of 'security' that there is somebody who they can turn to in an emergency or even simple to talk to!
- The MOST IMPORTANT thing for us is that our 100 children love, trust and rely on us.

5. Funding & Resources

- Identity Foundation has managed its activities so far without organisational funding. As of today, the funds come from friends, family and associates of the people associated with us.
- Our biggest supporters are concerned members of the society who see our work and help us in their own little ways.