

Aastha Nishtha Foundation

Annual Report

(2022 -2023)



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DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

It was a year of extensive work for the development of children and learning directly from the field.

So many lives were touched and children benefited.

We started the organisation with the aim of changing the lives of children in misery, providing them with quality education, nutrition and healthcare. With our ongoing programs, I can proudly say that we are moving in the right direction with passion and motivation to give children what they truly deserve.

Our team works tirelessly at the grassroots level to know and understand the true status of children in order to develop such programs that are relevant and beneficial for the growth and development of homeless underprivileged children. The team was focused on providing foundational learning through activity and play based methods to promote learning in a joyful way and develop the interest of children. We also made sure to provide nutritious meals to children in hope of bringing a change in their nutritional status. Various awareness sessions for the health and well-being of women were conducted because we understand that a healthy child comes from a healthy mother.

The good news is that our idea of ideal childhood is spreading across people who have seen our work and have stayed connected with us throughout our journey. We are grateful to be supported by our kind and generous donors in order to make all this possible.

We will continue to do our work with utmost sincerity and hope to bring smiles on the faces of as many children as possible.

Sachin Wahi
(Founder)

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ABOUT AASTHA NISHTHA FOUNDATION:

'Children are like buds in a garden and should be carefully and lovingly nurtured, as they are the future of the nation and the citizens of tomorrow,' said Jawaharlal Nehru.

Aastha Nishtha Foundation works for the betterment and upliftment of the underprivileged children especially the homeless street children who struggle with the basic necessities of life. We aim to provide proper education, nutrition and medication to help raise smart, strong, healthy and happy children who will become the future of our nation.

We conduct remedial classes that focus on foundational learning and learning through play and activities, providing meals to the children while giving maximum priority to their nutritional needs and health check-ups are done to ensure good health and well-being of the child.

Our organisation takes several initiatives for raising awareness on issues that surround children, adolescent girls and even women. We conduct awareness sessions on topics that are not liked to be discussed in the open and thus cause several health issues such as menstruation, sexually transmitted diseases, intimate hygiene, family planning and so on.

We believe that education and nutrition are the basic rights of every child irrespective of their economic condition and with help of our generous donors we aim to create such an environment where every child is safe, educated, fed, healthy and happy.

To know more about Aastha Nishtha Foundation: www.aastha-nishtha.org





DEEP DIVE INTO OUR WORK

(APRIL 2022-MARCH 2023)

KEY HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR:

4,500+ LIVES TOUCHED

800 FAMILIES IMPACTED

500+ WOMEN PARTICIPATED IN
AWARENESS SESSIONS

1000+ MATERIAL DISTRIBUTED THROUGH
KITS

10,000+ DONORS ENGAGED

200+ EVENTS CONDUCTED

A young girl with dark skin and hair in two pigtails with red ties is sitting on a green mat. She is wearing a yellow ruffled shirt and dark blue pants. She is looking up at the camera with a slight smile. In front of her are several school supplies: a book with a rainbow cover, a box of yellow markers, and a small notebook with a drawing of a butterfly. The text "CHILD EDUCATION" is overlaid in white capital letters.

CHILD EDUCATION

REMEDIAL SESSIONS:

Education provides the building blocks to create a meaningful life. The best way to fight poverty is to empower people through access to quality education. We realise that sometimes school is not enough for children and they need extra support to get better in the subjects that they are weak in. Hence, we conduct remedial sessions that are purely activity and play based but at the same time the topics are followed according to their school curriculum. Children learn the most while they are having fun! The usual chalk and board method is not encouraged in our sessions as it does not bring out the true abilities of children and they are only required to copy paste the solutions. In our classes, we encourage children to find solutions to the problems in their own unique ways and trying is what matters to us the most. All the material used in the sessions is provided by our team and we try to include activities which are bought by us and kept at the centre to be used during the sessions. The children enjoy learning through fun games and activities and are enthusiastic to take part in them.



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CRAFT SESSIONS AND ACTIVITIES:

Children are naturally creative, it's our job to provide them with the right kind of environment where they feel free to explore and discover their inner creativity. We give equal importance to arts and crafts because it gives the child opportunity to express himself/herself in their own way and style. Our team makes sure that regular craft sessions are conducted in the community. As access to material remains an issue with the less privileged, we provide all the material for each activities conducted so that no child feels left out. Various different activities are conducted like science activity, free hand sketch drawing, newspaper craft, paper bag craft etc. that are enjoyed by all children. Through this, we also make them understand the importance of team work and how easy a task becomes when it is done together with the help of others. Children develop bonds during these sessions and friendships are built. Other advantage of having these sessions is that children who are not able to perform well in studies, surprisingly turn out to be excellent in crafts which gives them confidence to move forward knowing that they are also good in something and can do better in studies too.



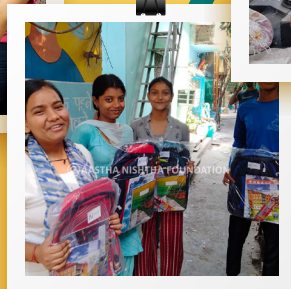
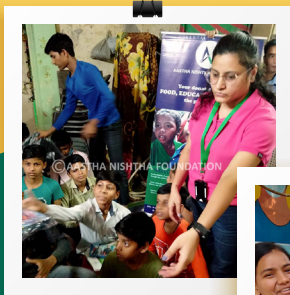
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EDUCATIONAL KIT DISTRIBUTION:

This campaign was focused on providing stationary kits to help underprivileged children study and to increase their access to educational materials. We realised the kids don't have access to educational material which hinders their learning and makes them feel inferior when they don't have the material to study in school. Hence, with the help of our donors, we were able to distribute stationary kits and new note-books so that the children can learn freely without hesitation of asking other children for material.



Having access to Education material is a Right.



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LITERACY DAY EVENT:

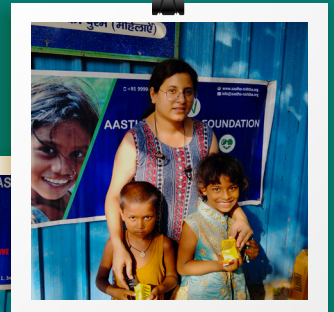
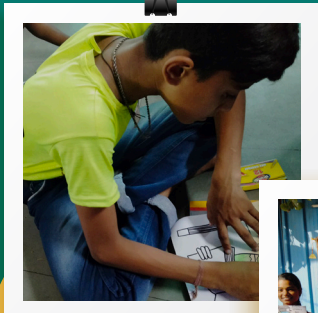
Several weaker sections of the society struggle to improve their living conditions but fail to do so as the cycle of illiteracy continues with generations. Even those who manage to get free education and go to school are neglected or fall prey to bad influences with less or no guidance and hence fail to learn.

During our visits in the community, we observed that even school going children were unable to recognize or write their own names when asked to do so. Names are an important aspect of learning and the first step towards literacy. They help us make a place in the world and maintain our own identity amongst others. It is important for a child to know how to write his/her name as it is required in every aspect of a person's life whether used to label something important to us, to fill up a hospital form, to enrol yourself in any institution, the possibilities are endless.

Hence, this literacy day Aastha Nishtha foundation conducted special name writing session that proved to be a combination of learning and fun altogether. The children had to write their names in different styles and decorate the sheet with their favourite colours. Most of the children who were facing a problem were given assistance and they were happy to be able to write their name by the end of the session. We also conducted an activity where they were asked to tell and recognize each other's names to give a sense of belongingness and to encourage new friendships in the group.

We also distributed a stationary kits to each and every child to encourage the practice of writing amongst children. The room was full of excitement and giggles and the children went home feeling accomplished to have learnt something valuable.

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A photograph of three young boys sitting on a wooden bench, smiling at the camera. They are holding their school lunch tiffin containers. The boy on the left is wearing a green t-shirt and dark pants. The boy in the middle is wearing a red t-shirt and olive green pants. The boy on the right is wearing a grey t-shirt and plaid pants. The background is a wall with peeling blue paint and a red cloth draped over it. The text "CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font. Faint text "Aashishtha Foundation" is visible in the background.

CHILD HEALTH AND NUTRITION

FROM,
MS. SHOBHA
AGARWAL

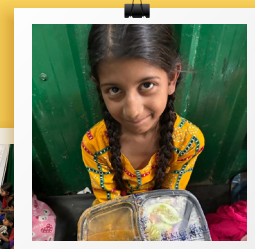
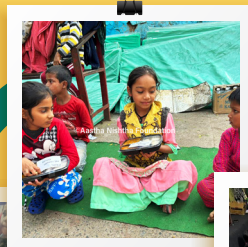
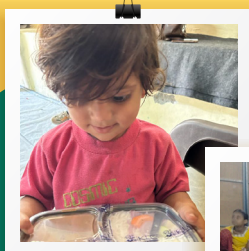
NATIONAL NUTRITION WEEK FOOD DISTRIBUTION:

India's ranking in the Global Hunger Index 2022, released in October, is now sadly 107 out of 121 countries. NFHS-4 found 43.8 percent of ST children under the age of five were stunted, 27.4 were wasted and 45.3 are underweight.

It's heart-breaking to see so many children struggling for something so basic as a decent meal to survive. Also, when we talk of feeding the poor, nutrition is never considered important and the focus is always on the bare minimum which is the cause of deadly issues like malnutrition in children.

Hence, during national nutrition week, we made sure that every child is provided with the basic nutrition as per their age and no child sleeps with an empty stomach. We served fresh, hot and **nutritious homecooked lunch to 100 children** so that the children feel special and loved.

Our aim is to extend and provide full three-time nutritious meals to the homeless children so that they grow up to be healthy and happy adults and break the cycle of hunger in their families.



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NUTRITION FOR ALL CAMPAIGN: (ongoing)

India still has one of the worst rates of malnutrition in the world , resulting in death of thousands of children.

We understand that a child will not be able to learn or perform any activity in life unless he/she is adequately fed and feels healthy enough to do so. Hence, providing food containing proper nutrition is of utmost importance when it comes to children as they are growing as each day passes.

In extension to the nutrition week initiative, our organisation started a campaign to raise funds to provide nutritious, healthy and tasty meal/ snack to the underprivileged homeless children during our educational sessions with them.



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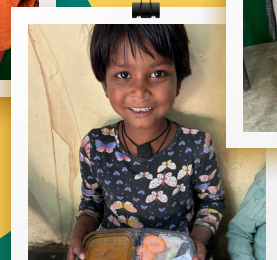
WORLD HEALTH DAY

Being healthy is not merely about keeping the body free of diseases, it is also about being emotionally peaceful and satisfied.

A child needs proper nutrition and a nurturing environment to grow into a healthy human being and it's the responsibility of adults to make it happen for them. Unfortunately, not everyone can afford to do so.

On this World Health Day i.e., 22nd March, 2023, Aastha Nishtha Foundation chose to spread awareness amongst the underprivileged children about the importance of being healthy, both physically and mentally. For that, we conducted various activities like exercises, yoga and mindful meditation. Through a chart activity, we also made sure that they know about various food groups to be included in their daily diet and how they can include quality foods at a low and affordable cost.

As part of our ongoing campaign, we treated them with a healthy and delicious meal which included dal, rice, salad and curd. It was only possible with the help of our donors to conduct such an event. We are truly grateful!



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ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND WOMEN HEALTH AND AWARENESS

MENSTRUAL HEALTH AND HYGIENE AWARENESS SESSION AND SANITARY KITS DISTRIBUTION:

Menstruation is a natural process unique to girls. However, it has always been surrounded by taboos and myths that include women from many aspects of social life. Very few cultures have accepted menstruation as a natural phenomenon, just as natural as any other function that a human's body perform.

Women are considered "impure" or "unclean" during these 5-6 days and are even treated as untouchables in some parts of India. This results in the use of cloth pads which are usually used in unhygienic ways as these women don't feel free to even dry these cloths in the sun because they don't want anyone to see it. Women in rural communities' fear disposing the stained cloth as they are of the view that it might fall into the hands of someone who can use "black magic" against them. Also, girls and women who are aware of the sanitary napkins available in the markets are too shy to buy it and end up using harmful alternatives like mud, grass and dirty cloths.

Therefore, education and counselling is a major requirement where all girls and women should be given detailed information regarding menstruation, clearing all the doubts and misconceptions that the society has forced upon them.

For this, Aastha Nishtha foundation came forward to conduct an engaging session on menstrual health and hygiene awareness for the adolescent girls at our educational centre in Munirka. The menstruation process was explained and the girls were made aware of the logical reasons behind it.

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Tips were discussed for keeping oneself clean, safe and healthy during their period. Nutrition is often neglected during these days as the whole focus falls on staying stain free, hence, a discussion was done on various nutritious products that are affordable and readily available to the community to ensure good health. Natural remedies like yoga possess for relieving menstrual pain and cramps were taught by one of the girls from the community to encourage others to do the same. This session acted as a safe space for these young girls to speak freely about the issues that they face during their menstrual cycle and discuss various solutions to overcome those problems. .

It was concluded by distribution of refreshments and sanitary kits that included a pack of sanitary napkins, two clean towels, Dettol and Dettol soap so that they can be better prepared for their next period.

SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AWARENESS SESSION:

World Contraception Day is celebrated on every year on 26th September to spread awareness about the importance and ways of contraception and family planning for women all around the world. It is a great initiative to towards population control and ending poverty specially in a densely populated country like India.

The Aastha Nishtha Foundation team conducted a discussion-based session on Sexual and Reproductive health for women of the underprivileged community. Breaking the taboos and stigma around women's health, we talked about the importance of being physically, mentally and emotionally happy and healthy in an intimate relationship. They were made aware of the concept of family planning and how it is not only beneficial for a women's health but also helps a family to break the cycle of poverty and bring quality over quantity in the family. Emphasis was laid on the correct spacing between children. For that, various ways of contraception were discussed. Both permanent ways like sterilization in men and women as well as temporary methods like Intra Uterine Devices, condoms and pills were discussed in detail. Afterall, prevention is always better than cure!

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Sexually Transmitted Diseases like HIV and AIDS were understood and the myths surrounding these were cleared so that one can act responsibly in future. Important issues like child marriage, violence against women after marriage and forced pregnancies were brought to light. We were not so surprised to hear from women that most of them didn't want to get pregnant with their first child as it was too early for them but they did so under pressure. Hence, we suggested them ways to speak out for themselves and to always have a say in what feels right to them for themselves.

We also created pamphlets that included the government helpline numbers in case of any such emergency faced by a woman. It is good to know that you always have options to get out of a situation that you do not want to be in. It was beautiful to see women having a discussion in a safe space on such important matters that are unfortunately intentionally ignored by the society.



A group of approximately 12 children of various ages are gathered outdoors in front of a weathered wall. They are smiling and making peace signs. In the center, a large, colorful rangoli is drawn on the ground, featuring a central yellow circle with a pink flower-like pattern, surrounded by green and blue sections. Several small, lit diya (oil lamps) are placed around the rangoli. The children are dressed in casual clothing, including t-shirts and a red sari. The background shows a concrete wall with some handprints and a striped cloth hanging on the right.

SPECIAL CELEBRATIONS AND DISTRIBUTIONS:

INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION

Each year, on 15th August, India celebrates its national freedom from years of foreign rule. It is a day of great importance that makes us realize how truly grateful we are to walk and breathe as free citizens of our country.

Aastha Nishtha foundation strongly believes that freedom should be for all irrespective of their age, gender, caste or religion. We aim to make the children from underprivileged communities free from illiteracy, malnutrition and nurture them into healthy and happy individuals.

This Independence day we took the initiative of bringing the colours of freedom in the lives of those children who are only familiar with the colours of traffic lights while they beg on the streets to make a living.

We organized a well-planned function, ensuring the engagement of each and every child at the educational centre in Munirka. Starting with a craft session where these children decorated the flags and kites in their own unique styles, moving onto a mesmerizing dance performance given by two of the community's talented girls in their beautiful dresses. This was followed by a power walk that featured our great freedom fighters like Bhagat Singh, Mahatma Gandhi, Rani Laxmi Bai and Jawaharlal Nehru ji. Their famous dialogues were proudly delivered by each child who participated in the walk. Each prop used in this event was handmade, specially made with love by our ANF team.

This remarkable event came to end with the distribution of refreshments that were savoured by all the children. .

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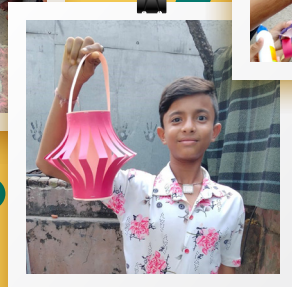


JOY OF FESTIVITIES EVENT:

We made sure to celebrate this festive season with those who cannot afford to have celebrations on their own. It was a fun filled event and each child actively participated in all the activities that were conducted. They decorated beautiful diyas, candles and wall hangings and danced to the beat of their favorite songs with their friends.

Children were super excited to receive their gifts. Luckily, we were able to make a good amount of gift hampers because of the help of our very kind donors who took the initiative of sponsoring gifts to one child or more. The hamper included eatables, sweets, juice and a fun game box that they can play with their friends and family. We made sure to put the name of each donor on the gift so that children knew who sent the gifts and why it was special. It was mesmerizing to see them opening their presents with such excitement and happiness.

All this wouldn't have been possible without the love and support of our donors who shared their peace of happiness with these children and made their festive season a memorable one.



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CHILDREN'S DAY CELEBRATION:

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CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION:

Christmas is a beautiful time of the year where people celebrate with their loved ones with hot chocolate, warm food and shiny gifts. Whereas, many are homeless, wandering on the cold streets hoping to get some food.

Hence, like each year, Aastha Nishtha Foundation decided to celebrate with the homeless children through activities, games and sweets.

We surprised them with a secret Santa and a big mouthwatering cake that was cut and enjoyed by all. They were super excited to chat with Santa and tell him all about their wishes this Christmas and received sweets for sharing. Children also took part in various craft activities like tear and paste for which they sat together in groups and learned to work together as a team.

It was a delight to watch these children getting excited and participating in the event with immense enthusiasm.



WARM CLOTHES DISTRIBUTION:

While winters are a special time for us where we love to stay warm in our blankets with our favourite cup of tea, there are many living on streets who shiver to sleep and pray for the chilly night to be over. This winters, we pledged to bring warmth in the lives of these children.

With the help of our generous donors, we were able to distribute warm sweaters, caps, socks and inners to the underprivileged children who can't afford to buy them on their own. Our team worked hard to procure all the items according to the specific measurement of each child in the community so that they can feel warm and loved at the same time. We made sure that each set was given in the name of each of our donor to make it more special and let children know that somebody is looking after them from afar!



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THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT:

This is the time where we stop to count our blessings! We are humbled by the continuous support of our donors through our campaigns. Through your donations, we are able to make it possible to provide homeless children with their basic rights and needs to grow up to be healthy and happy adults. It's people like you that make the world a better place to live in and we are truly grateful.

Aastha Nishtha Foundation (H.O.)

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