

**Site Visit Report: Pazhassi Balamandiram Orphanage Project, Kerala, India**

**Volunteer Name: Bindu Pulimalayil Chapter Affiliation: Asha Kansas City Chapter**

**Day of visit: March 13, 2010**

Asha Kansas City Chapter has been funding the Pazhassi Balamandiram Orphanage since June 2009. In March 2010 during my visit to India, I paid a visited to the Balamandiram. Mr. Balachandran (fondly called Balettan) who runs the day-to-day operations of the orphanage took me around and introduced me to all the children. I was touched by the love and affection, the children share with each other and I was impressed with the staff's dedication in inculcating discipline in the lives of these children.

While the younger children continue to attend primary school that is located within the Balamadiram facility, the high school students have access to a government school about a mile away from the orphanage. The Asha funds are being used to compensate the services of two teachers who travel to the facility everyday and provide special training in Mathematics, English and Computers to students of various ages. In talking with the children and the teachers I learnt that the training provided by these two teachers has been positively supplementing their education. I was particularly impressed with one older child, Sreejesh (his aptitude, and inclination to succeed) who is attending a technical school, pursuing a course in computers. The inmates of the orphanage now have hands-on access to a computer as the first round of Asha funding was also used to procure a computer, a monitor and related accessories.

Recommendations:

1. Asha should continue to support this worthwhile effort.
2. If possible, Asha should provide some mentorship for Sreejesh - point him in the right direction and help him realize his dream.





