

Adruta Home Site Visit

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I informed the project partner ahead of time about my travel dates and plan to visit Adruta Home. Once our flight landed, we were received by Supreeti, who stayed with us and guided us throughout our visit. I arrived at Adruta Home, Bhubaneswar, on 19th around 2 pm. Most of the girls were at home, as it was Saturday. We took a tour from a very friendly guide, 5-year-old Gundu. There are 4 floors in the girls home. The ground level has office, kitchen, dining, learning center, art room etc. Three girls who graduated from Adruta Homework as care takers now. First level has meditation room and dorms.



We walked through the grounds and saw the garden and the shed where they raise cows. The milk from the cows is used to make curd and paneer, and to drink every day.



Then, we looked at the elderly home being built near the boys' home. It was still under construction, but the facilities seemed to be good, which includes pathology, homeopathy, acupuncture, nursing, physiotherapy, naturopathy, kitchen, recreation room, and more. They are hoping that spending time around these younger kids will boost the livelihood of the elderly people living in the home.



We also looked at the boys' home, which is structured similar to the girls home.

Afterwards, we spoke to some girls who are studying 10+2, BA, and BSc. Among many girls, a popular subject is clinical psychology. Apparently, it is being offered as a new subject in 10+2 along with math and biology, so many girls are interested to learn more about it.



The home also has a library, art studio, and meditation center in a multipurpose building. This building is also where meetings are held. There are many paintings done by the students on display, and many being sold. Many trophies and awards won by the students are also displayed here.



Later in the evening, we watched the kids doing activities to learn about money using the AV screen and projector we funded 3 years ago. The activities included things like figuring out how many things you can buy with a certain amount of money, calculating the amount of change, and understanding how transactions work.



The next day, in the morning we joined the girls for their morning prayers. They do prayers every morning, but on Sundays they do it for longer. After watching the girls for some time, we left to go to the home in Anugul.

We arrive in Anugul at around 11 AM. First, we went to see the boys home. There is an adoption center at the home, where 52 infants had already been adopted so far. The infants have a separate room, and are tended to by caretakers.

Then, we went to see the boys. They were watching tv when we went and greeted us happily. The rooms in the home are spacious and well-maintained. At the entrance to the building there was a birdhouse, where parrots were being kept and raised, providing background noise as we toured the building.



Next, we went to the girls home. Inside the home, there was a prayer room, and a room with computers and stitching machines for the children to use. The girls performed a few dances for us while we were there. They are learning both Odissi and folk dance.



Afterwards, we walked outside in the grounds for a while. There was a space to park the school busses, and the roof of this space was lined with solar panels that are currently not working. There were also some cows freely roaming the grounds that are being raised by the home.



At around 4:30 PM, we arrived at the next home in Dhenkanal, which is a boys home. There were about 30 boys in the home, and when we arrived they were in the middle of their daily exercise/yoga session.



They performed some dances for us, and then showed us more of the space. They were in the computer lab, which also included a 3D printer. The boys showed some of their projects and showed how they were using the 3D printer to teach all the kids more about technology with the Young Minds Tinker Space program.



The boys in the home are also learning to play chess, including one who has won many awards for chess.

We arrived back at the home in Bhubaneswar in the evening, and the girls put on a small singing and dancing performance for us. They are all very talented. We also saw some of the girls who were learning art from one of the older girls, who was studying art in school.



The next day we went to the boys home in Puri. There were 25 boys, and they were renting the building. All the facilities and spaces were well-maintained and clean. We did not spend very long at this location.

The next day, we spent in Bhubaneswar before our flight in the evening. In the morning, one of the girls came and braided my hair and daughters hair in a nice French braid crown. Then, another girl who was very talented in art did our Mehendi. The girls also made us a nice paper flower bouquet.



After lunch we met with Professor Mohanty before leaving to the airport. We spoke about the importance of leading kids in the right direction and making sure they grow up with the right values, and a strong moral code.

I provided some feedback to the project partners that some space at Anugul center and Bhubaneswar center could be used more efficiently. Also, the solar panels at Anugul needed to be repaired ASAP to fulfil the purpose of reducing electricity bills. They promised to implement these.

Overall, all the kids seem healthy and happy, and are all pursuing good studies and activities. The homes are maintained well and provide a good space for the kids to learn and grow.

