

ATC-August 2008

Recently we were at a police station with a 3 year old child from our Night Care Centre in Kamathipura. His mother was with us. We were there to lodge a complaint against a pimp who had brutally beaten up the child and his mother. On seeing the plight of the child and the mother the police immediately responded and started registering a complaint. Just then a young sub Inspector started asking us about our work (he was recently posted at this station). After a few initial questions he inquired about our success rate with the children we work with. When we answered his question positively his next question was, “How come no one has still become a doctor or an engineer?”

This question is no more new to us!

When we started the work in the year 1986 in the Mumbai red-light areas based prostituted women and their children we were often asked by experts and laity if it was worth ‘investing” in the education of these children at all? “Do their mothers care for their children?” yet another question would unfailingly follow.

We started enrolling children in formal school system, the mothers were happy and so were the children. As the success story spread everywhere we were asked the next question almost in a challenging tone, “How long will you be able to sustain them in the formal educational system?”

We continued our efforts with as sincere motive. That is all we knew. We discovered through concrete experience that if appropriate support systems are made available to the mother and the child then the formal education of the child sustains.

We overcame this hurdle without letting it dampen our spirits. Now the questions were centred around the number of them who have reached or completed the important milestone of Indian educational system the 10th exam.

For the past 10 years we have been felicitating our children who have been passing pass the 10th std Board’s exam.

When the children proved themselves the Pundits summarize,” Well, 10th has no value these days. Has anyone reached graduation?”

Five years ago our first child completed her graduation. The number has grown since then. Every year we felicitate them and their mothers.

There are some simple people who support education with trust in the power of education. They also support because they trust us. There is one more reason for their support that distinguishes them from the Pundits. They consider that every child must get an opportunity to get formal education. No questions to be asked!

Our Pundits are now asking us whether any of these children could ever become doctors and engineers?

Our supporters say,” These are not the only indicators of success in life”

We have not given up. With so much encouragement from the children how can anyone?

But we do feel sad sometimes. When it comes to helping the underprivileged secure their basic rights the Pundits want guarantee about everything. How many of the privileged parents decide to put their children to school only after ensuring that their children will become doctors and engineers? Why do the underprivileged alone have to prove themselves all the time?

What follows below is a brief account of the achievements of our children on the front of formal education against all odds. This would not have been possible without the determination on part of the children and their mothers, the conviction on part of Prerana’s supporters and donors. Thus goes an African proverb “It takes a village to raise a child”.

Below we have attempted to document the academic performances of some of the children and these children could reach there only because several people trusted Prerana and the children of the prostitutes, “invested” in them, and lent them their unconditional support. Prerana salutes all those people who were members of this village.

Children who completed graduation in 2008

1. **Ms. JTS:** JTS an orphan was referred to us by Childline when she was 14 years young. Our investigation showed that she was from

Latur a district from the backward Marathwada region of Maharashtra state. We referred her to a shelter facility run by one Khedi Vikas Mandal, Latur and followed her case regularly. In June 2003 she passed her 10th standard and in 2005 her 12th. Subsequently, in June 2008 she completed her graduation with 62% marks. Prerana provided her with some funds so that she could complete her first and second year B.A. She is 23 years now.

2. **Ms.SVJ:** SVJ, age 20, began attending Prerana's Night Care Center (NCC) in June 1993 when she was 6 years young. In August 93 Prerana helped SVJ's mother enroll SVJ in Shraddhanand Mahilashram, Matunga, Mumbai. Two years later, i.e. in 1995, SVJ's mother passed away.

SVJ passed her 10th standard in 2003 with 50% and passed both the 12th std. and 3rd Year Bachelor of Arts in IInd class. After that SVJ worked as an assistant lab technician in a laboratory at Mulund, Mumbai and then at a center at Vile Parle. At that time, she resided in a Group Home at Vashi Naka set up and run jointly by Prerana and Our Children. In 2006 SVJ moved to another Group Home at Dockyard Rd. close to South Mumbai. Currently, she lives independently with a few friends in a rented house. In June 2008 she enrolled herself for Masters in Social Work at the S.N.D.T. Women's University, Mumbai.

3. **Ms.TP:** TP has been under Prerana's care when she was enrolled in the NCC in 1994 when she was 8 years young. Prerana helped her mother to decide about placing her in a shelter facility for long term residential education. Accordingly, she and her sister were placed at the Shrdhanand Mahilashram, Mumbai in 1998. TP's mother passed away in November 2002

In June 2003 she passed her 10th std. with 53% marks and in 2005 her 12th std securing 47% marks. She stayed in Shrdhanand Mahilashram for 7 years, and left in August 2005 to get married. Currently, TP lives in her own residence in Badlapur a small town far away from Mumbai. She works for a company in Bhandup. She continues to look after her younger brother, who is placed in a shelter facility. Her elder sister is now married and lives in Dharavi with her husband and has a 2-year-old son.

4. **Mr. SS:** SS, currently an orphan from the Kamathipura red light district Mumbai was placed by Prerana in the Dgadusheth Halwai Shelter in a neighbouring metro Pune in 1993 for residential

education. He was closely followed up by Prerana. SS regularly participated in the activities of Prerana during his vacations.

In 2002 he passed the 10th std Board's exam with 62% marks and then his 12th standard with 67% marks. In the year 2007 he cleared his Bachelors in Arts with 60% marks in the first attempt. In the year 2008 he passed his Masters in Arts with a second class from the Pune University. Later he secured admission for his Bachelors in Education by clearing his Common Entrance Test (CET) and secured admission in the H.K. College Mumbai in May 2008. He is 22 years old now. Prerana has provided sponsorship for his college education and also for the B. Ed. course.

SS has a younger sister who is 19 years old and stays at Andheri in Mumbai.

Prerana had also helped his sister with her education and subsequently to find a group home facility and a job placement at a petrol pump in Mumbai.

5. **Mr. LV:** LV was admitted in the NCC of Prerana at the age of 9 in June 1992. He was from the Kamathipura red light district. He passed the 10th standard in the year 2000 with 39% marks and in 2004 he passed his 12th standard with 71% marks. He was helped to complete his Bachelors of Arts in the year 2007 in which he secured 49.81% marks. He is currently pursuing his Masters in Social Work at Jalana in Maharashtra state.

6. **PK:** PK was enrolled in the Prerana's NCC in January 1994 when she was 7 years old. She was institutionalized in Snehasadan in Andheri in September 1995. She passed her S.S.C in April 2003 with 48% marks. In April 2005 she passed her 12th Standard from the SNDT University's Junior college with 54% marks. She went to Hyderabad in August 2005 to complete a 3 years' Nursing course at Mother Vanini College of nursing in Thadepalligudem, Hyderabad.

Children who passed 12th in 2008

1. **Ms. NSR:** NSR is 18 years young and has passed the 10th and 12th standards with 41.6% and 58.67%, respectively. She was admitted to Prerana's NCC in 1992 when she was 2 years young. Four years later she was placed by Prerana at the Shradhnad Mahilashram, Matunga, Mumbai for long term residential formal education and development. NSR's mother herself was a victim of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking and was rescued and

rehabilitated by Prerana. In her H.S.C, NSR studied Office Administration, and after passing in 2008, she was selected to complete an apprenticeship with a reputed company named Godrej at Vikroli, Mumbai

2. **Ms. TS:** TS age 19 was admitted to Prerana's NCC at the request of her mother in 1991 when she was very young. Eight years later Prerana found it absolutely necessary to place her in an external residential institution away from the red light area to ensure her safety and development. Accordingly, she was placed in the St. Catherine's Home in Andheri, Mumbai. Her mother died in 2004. In 2006, TS passed her 10th Std exam. This year she passed her 12th std. She is currently working at the St. Catherine's Home on part-time basis and hopes to secure admission for a Bachelor's degree course in Social Work next year.

3. **Ms. TK:** TK was admitted to the NCC of Prerana in 1992 when she was 2 years young. Her mother was a victim of CSE&T in a brothel in Kamathipura red light district. In the year 1998 Prerana facilitated her admission to a shelter facility named Aamche Ghar at a place Uttan, in Bhayandar a place outside Mumbai where she studied in an English medium school. She passed the 10th std Board's examination with 57% marks in 2006 and 2 years later cleared her 12th std Board's exam securing 67% marks. She was given a residential training in beauty care and is now capable of taking up a job in any beauty parlour. Currently, TK is 19 years old and stays with her mother in Bhayander. She is a First year B.Com student at the Abhinav College in Bhayander.

4. **Mr. SA:** SA's mother was a victim of CSE&T living in the Kamathipura red light district. He was the single child of her mother. In 1999 during one of the community outreach visits Prerana staff identified him and encouraged his mother to place him in the Night Care Centre of Prerana. He was 9 years young then. Subsequently, in 2001 for his protection and long term development, Prerana helped him to secure admission in Snehasadan a shelter facility in Mumbai. In June 2006 he passed his 10th std Board's exam with 75.6%.marks. In 2008 he passed the 12th std Board's exam with 60% marks. Prerana had arranged for his stay at Saathi and later from Aug 2006 at the Children's Home, Mankhurd.

Since his 10th standard, Prerana has resumed sponsoring the cost of his education including school supplies as well as travel. Mr. SA has now secured admission in the Dahanukar College to do his Bachelor's in Science in Information Technology. As SA has completed 18 years

Prerana is working to secure him admission in the government after care hostel as he cannot continue to stay in his earlier institution anymore because of his age.

Children who passed S.S.C. in 2008

1. **Ms. SP:** Ms. SP has been in care of Prerana since she was 12 years of age. Prerana helped her Mother decide her placement in a shelter facility for her protection and long term development as the mother was terminally ill. As SP's mother passed away in 2000 SP was shifted by Prerana to Snehasadan. In the year 2008 she passed the 10th std Board's exam with 60% marks. She is very good at drawing, and has therefore decided to complete a course in Fine Arts at the Sophia College in Mumbai. Currently, she is 20 years old and stays at Sneha Sadan in Mumbai.
2. **Ms. MYB:** MB was enrolled in the Prerana's NCC in 1991. Her mother died in the year 1995. MB was subsequently admitted to St.Catherine's Home in the year 1997. A year later MB's aunt got her out of the institution and forcibly married her off to a man three times her age. MB ran away from this man's house. Through an order from the Child Welfare Committee Prerana could place her at the Chitanya Mahila Mandal in Pune in Sept 2003. MB is 19 years old now. Two years ago she was admitted to Snehasadan. She passed her tenth with 61% in 2006
3. **Mr.TV:** Mr. TV was admitted in Prerana's NCC when he was 3 years young. In March 2003, his mother passed away and he had to be shifted to a shelter facility. Prerana placed him in the Shirur Balak Ashram, Vile Parle. His two sisters had also been placed in a shelter facility by Prerana. Both his sisters are now married and well settled. He is 15 years now. He excels in drawing and acting and has taken admission in the Pathak College in Santa Cruz Mumbai for MCVC Tours and Travels.
4. **Mr. PS:** PS was admitted to Prerana's NCC in 1999 and subsequently in 2006 he was placed in a shelter facility named Shirur Balak Ashram. Mr. PS is now 14 years and has passed S.S. C. with 38% marks.

5. **Mr. GR:** GR was enrolled in the Prerana's NCC in the year 1997. His mother was a victim of commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. They stayed in the red light area of Kamathipura. As per his mother's wish Prerana shifted GR to BJ Home in Dec. 1999. GR lost his mother in June 2003. He is currently pursuing a two year ITI diploma and staying in Bal Kalyan Nagri a shelter facility run by the Children's Aids Society. GR has two younger sisters one of whom is studying in the 8th std and the second is in the 3rd std. Both of them are currently the residents of Prerana's Naunihal shelter at Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.
6. **Mr. VLS:** Mr. VLS Passed 10th Standard in NOS with 58%. He is now enrolled in the R.M. Bhat Night School, for further studies with sponsorship from Prerana. VLS joined the Falkland Rd NCC of Prerana in 1998 at the age of 14. In 2000 he was placed at Snehasadan in Mumbai. He stayed at Snehasadan he stayed only for two months. As he couldn't stay away from his mother and visited her regularly by bunking his classes he was brought back to the Falkland Rd centre.
7. In 2003, he shifted to Kamathipura and was enrolled in the Bombay Central High School, where he continued until 2004. He could not pass his 10th std Board's exam. In 2005, he was placed at OASIS where he completed a one year long tailoring course from OASIS with Prerana's help and subsequently worked with OISS as a tailor for one year. He hopes to complete a fashion design course in future. After two attempts he cleared his 10th std Boards exam in 2008. Sanjay's younger sister stays in Prerana's Naunihal residential shelter. She is mentally challenged and is attending a special school.
8. **Mr. GLP:** GLP was enrolled by Prerana in class one in the Kamathipura Municipal school in 1997. He started attending Prerana's NCC in June 2003 when he was 13years old. GLP was helped to move to a shelter home in Ahmadnagar. He passed his 10th standard in June 2008 with 56.05%. He has now secured admission in Arts in Maha Ganapati Samajseveka college in Wadner.

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