

It has been a very busy few months at Vidiyal and we include as much information as we can in this newsletter.

Examination results

12th standard, taken when the young people are 17, is equivalent to our A-levels. It is required that a student passes in every subject to achieve a qualification. The Vidiyal youngsters achieved 7 successes out of 8, the remaining student just needing to retake one subject. In addition, Venkataswari scored 85% and Balamurugan scored full marks in Mathematics. It is also encouraging to know that 5 of the young people are girls.

10th standard, taken at 15 years old, is equivalent to our GCSE's. 100% success was achieved by 9 girls and 4 boys. Some of the marks were so exceptionally high that the results were reported in the newspapers.

Jolly Camp

The 18th Jolly Camp took place at the end of the school year with more than 250 children attending. The central theme of the camp was "Journeys" with the motto "Run to chase your ambition. You shall go places."

Activities included story telling, outings, cooking and craft. The children had such a good time that they asked Jim to run the camp for a month next year instead of nine days!



Jim reflected on the camp at the end of the nine days: "Everyone felt very happy at the valedictory and there were a lot of take home gifts, not only the material ones but also the non material ones like joy, friendship and a feeling of oneness. The story in the assembly was brought by Ramachandran, one of our alumni. He brought the visual image to the stage of how the journey of a child begins at Vidiyal when he joins the "beginners" group and how he or she can reach up to the Olirum Muhangel forum (alumni) and continue the journey of victory to transform the society. It was very moving and touching.

The presence of the alumni was very much felt and they supported and contributed to the success in every possible way. The roof top of Vidiyal was packed with parents and children. The children thanked you all for being close companions in their journey down the years."



Poverty No Deterrent for These Urban Poor Children



(From Left) P Nandhishwari, R Bhagamprya, S Sonamuthu and A Arunkumar, who scored over 80% marks in the SSLC examination, are all smiles | N VAJRARELU

by V Vignesh

Madurai: Despite living in acute poverty, four slum children in Madurai have managed to score over 80% marks in the SSLC board examination, the results of which were declared recently, thanks to Vidiyal, a non-government organisation.

A resident of Thideer Nagar, R Bhagamprya, who secured 470, said, "I managed to get a good score be-

cause of attending training classes conducted by Vidiyal in the evening hours."

The girl's father Ramamurthy, a daily wage labourer, has been struggling to support his family with his meagre monthly income of ₹ 4000.

P Nandhishwari, daughter of sewage cleaner, scored 416 marks with 99 in Science. She, who aspires to be a Math teacher, too gives the credit to the NGO for con-

ducting science forum which helped her score high in the subject.

Sonamuthu, who had discontinued studies in class nine, rejoined and passed out with 425 marks.

A Arunkumar, a differently-abled, also coached by Vidiyal scored 325 out of 400 marks.

Vidiyal's effort to engage trained youths from slums as volunteers to teach these kids has borne fruit.

INDIAN EXPRESS

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epaper.newindianexpress.com/c/5411420

Jim says: "I need not tell you how many difficulties these children overcome and whatever marks they achieve we are proud about it. The parents of these children are in overwhelming joy and send their love and thanks to you all. Baham Priya's father called me and said that if not for Vidiyal this would not have been possible."

Sponsor Day

Each year Vidiyal has a day called Sponsor Day when the children who are sponsored remember their sponsors and celebrate that relationship. This year some of the children were randomly selected to write poems about their sponsors and you can see those below. Children who have joined the sponsorship scheme this year cut the celebration cake.

Sponsorship entails writing a postcard to your child 2 or 3 times a year, as well as sending a card for birthday and Christmas. There is no minimum donation set, sponsors give what they wish to in monthly or yearly standing orders. At present there are some children eagerly awaiting sponsors so, if you think you can help, please contact Sandra Davies on 01473 311148 or s.e.davies10@gmail.com.

POEMS ON SPONSORS BY CHILDREN ON SPONSORS' DAY MAY 2015

The deer is in the jungle
The cuckoo is in the nest
You are in my heart

A.Karthick

I asked God to create
A star whenever I remember you
Dad and Mom
Come out and see the sky
To find how many times I've remembered you

P.Nandhishwari

Whenever I remember you
My eyes winkle
Because you are my eyes
I wish to see you

P.Prema

Life was crippled once
But you enabled me
To find my path
You are not only my sponsor
You are my granny

N.Mahalakshmi S.No.38

The moon is in
Far away distance than yours
I am able to see the moon
Why not you?

A.Durga

Vidiyal lit the lamp
To ride away darkness in life
I thank you
For joining hands
To the rise of a NEWDAWN

Venkateswari

I feel you in the air
When I breathe
I feel your warmth
When the sun shines

D.Ramesh Babu

You gave me life
You gave me education
You set my path
You are the light in my life

V.Marnadu

How many miles away
Doesn't really matter
I travel on love
To reach my destiny

A.Sathya Narayanan

The winning team on Sponsors' Day



Education Awareness Campaign

Following on from the individual examination successes, Vidiyal has launched an education awareness campaign in the slums of Madurai. The programme was run by the Vidiyal Alumni and the theatre group of the Vidiyal Child Rights Movement. The team visited 5 slums in Madurai and emphasized the importance of education. 63 children who were school drop-outs were identified and efforts have been taken to place these children back in school.

This campaign also made the newspapers. Olirum Muhangel (Radiant Faces) is the name of the Vidiyal alumni.

Jim says: "It was lovely to watch the leadership potential in our children and I am quite confident that our children will lead the organisation in the future."

MADURAI
THE HINDU • MONDAY, JUNE 1, 2015

Slum children egged on to continue studies

Olirum Muhangal's initiative through folk dance and skit

S. Poorvaja

MADURAI: On the eve of a new academic year, with a view to discouraging poor children from dropping out of school, Olirum Muhangal, a city-based organisation, conducted awareness programmes on the importance of co

ntinuing education in the slums of the city on Sunday.

Members of the organisation said that they were able to complete their education with the assistance of 'Sakthi-Vidiyal', a non-governmental organisation based in Madurai, and that they were working while pursuing higher studies. "Since all of us received support and encouragement to complete our studies despite many hurdles, we decided to give back to the community by propagating the importance of education through folk dance and skit," said K. Kalidass, president of Olirum Muhangal.

The group performed traditional dances such as 'Maattu kombattam,' 'Kaliyal' and 'Oyilattam,' and put up a mime show in the slums at Kalmedu, SMP Colony, Thathaneri, Manjalmedu, Karumbalai and Melavaasal. "After the performance, we visited houses in the slums and conducted a survey to assess the number of dropouts.



FOR A SURE FOOTING: Members of Sakthi Vidiyal enacting a skit highlighting the importance of education at S.M.P. Colony in the city on Sunday.

— PHOTO: R. ASHOK

At S.M.P. Colony, we found 20 school dropouts and at Kalmedu 30," said R. Venkateswari, a volunteer.

Reasons for dropping out

Mr. Kalidass said that in most of the cases, the children had either dropped out owing to poverty or a mental block about school and were reluctant to continue their studies.

"After a detailed survey of all the slums, we will hand over the data to the District Childline officials who will

contact the children and help them continue their education," he said.

N. Surya, another volunteer, who is studying ninth standard, said that in many places they visited, the parents approached them with an appeal to encourage their children to get back to school. "In many cases, children drop out because they do not want to study or they are scared of something that might have happened at school. We talk to them about the importance of going to school and motivate them," he said.

NewDawn India News

We are very excited that Jim Jesudoss will be visiting the UK in October and that, this time, he will be bringing his wife Sharmila with him. It is Sharmila's first visit to the UK, in fact her first trip out of India. Jim and Sharmila will be visiting various groups to talk about their work at Vidiyal and there will be several opportunities to meet them between 3rd and 19th October. For those of you on email we will send a list of dates and times through in a couple of months. If we do not have your email address, please keep an eye on the website www.newdawnindia.org or contact 01473 311148 for further information.

One occasion when it will be possible to meet Jim and Sharmila is at our **2015 curry evening on 17th October** and booking is essential, particularly this year. (Contact Brenda Sturgeon 01473 310125.)



Jim and Sharmila "at work"



IMPORTANT

If you are happy to receive up-to-date news and these newsletters via e-mail please send us a working address. Also, if you change e-mail address please let us know. Postage and printing costs continue to rise and it is a big help if we can cut down on these. The cost of posting a newsletter to you would provide 10 meals for a child. Just send your address to s.e.davies10@gmail.com.

NewDawn India; funding work with slum and street children in Southern India Legacy Gifts

We understand that making or updating your Will is a sensitive and private subject, but if you are thinking about including a gift to charity, we would be very grateful if you could consider NewDawn India.

Legacy gifts can help NewDawn maintain their commitment to a dedicated team who work with some of the neediest children in India. NewDawn funds the work of Vidiyal in Madurai, South India, where the projects are developing and growing all the time. Leaving a gift can enable us to continue giving these precious children a chance in life they would not otherwise have and to achieve their full potential.

The process is quite simple, particularly when you are making or updating your will. If you are using the services of a Solicitor or other professional, they will be used to discussing gifts to charity and familiar with the appropriate wording. Otherwise, a short paragraph in the Will along the following lines will be suitable: "I bequeath to NewDawn India, of 8 Long Perry, Capel St. Mary, Ipswich IP9 2XD (registered charity No. 1001535) the sum of £ for their work with the street children of Southern India". Any such legacy to a registered charity will be free of Inheritance Tax and not liable to Capital Gains Tax or Income Tax; it will not affect the gifts you wish to leave to other people or charities in your Will.

As a charity local to Ipswich, run by a small number of voluntary Trustees and helpers, we can assure you that we have virtually no overheads and every penny donated goes directly into the work with the children. We have offered a trustworthy service since Vidiyal's inception in 1996. Legacy gifts make a life-changing difference to young lives. Thank you for reading and thinking about this information.