Dear Friend,

There's an old saying that's often used in the context of bringing up children. It's said that, "It takes a village to raise a child". Which means that it's not just the parents, but also the community at large that shapes and moulds the child. Children can reach their highest potential when the entire community takes an active interest in contributing to their lives.

And that's how it is with our CRY community. The children that we reach out to are among the most marginalised and underprivileged in society. Children who have to struggle to receive the fundamental rights that most privileged children don't even have to ask for. It is these children who need us the most. As a caring community, we owe it to children to ensure that their basic rights are met.

We are the village. They are our responsibility.

Over the years, CRY has managed to reach out to a growing number of underprivileged children across India, only because we've had your support. You've believed in our work and you've joined our movement to make a difference.

In this issue of 'CRY in Action', we proudly bring to you stories of how YOU - our donors, supporters and well-wishers have actively participated to bring about lasting change.

We hope that together we can continue to be the community that our children need. That will be responsible for ensuring healthy, creative, happy and responsible citizens.

With faith and goodwill,

Puja Marwaha
Chief Executive
CRY – Child Rights and You.
CHANGE STARTS AT THE GRASSROOTS

In order to change behaviours, we first need to change beliefs. However, when these beliefs are entrenched over the years and fuelled by tradition and superstition, you know it’s going to be an uphill task all the way. But that did not deter two brave girls, who not only coaxed their families but also became catalysts of change in their communities.

Like daughter, like mother.

Sarka was a bright, motivated and determined 15-year-old student at Stalpur High School in Munger, Bihar. She had big dreams of continuing her education, but her parents, following social norms, had already started looking for a groom for her.

Sarka didn’t meekly surrender to her parents wishes. Instead, she alerted the children’s group in her village, ‘Munna Munni Manch’ and the women’s group. When her parents found out, they banned her from leaving the house and also began wedding preparations. Sarka’s refusal to bow down caused the CRY-supported project, Disha Vihar to intervene and sensitise her parents about the ill effects of child marriage. They also cautioned the groom’s family that the marriage was legally wrong.

The marriage was called off and Sarka happily returned back to school. Today, she’s pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in Arts alongside a basic computer course.

Her story doesn’t end there. Not just content with changing the course of her life, she has gone about raising awareness about the dangers of child marriage in her village and the neighbouring villages. Now, even her mother accompanies her on her mission to promote girl education.

Helping Nindi Kumari fight for her rights.

Nindi from the Shahbad Dairy, a slum area in Delhi, faced opposition to her education. As the eldest in the family, she was expected to do the chores and take care of her younger siblings. So when she came into contact with Saksham, a CRY-supported project, she eagerly joined the children’s group and imbibed the concept of child rights and her own rights.

As her confidence grew, so did her desire to do more than live the life her parents had in mind for her. She began to take a stand on issues like hygiene, sanitation and crime against children in the neighbourhood. With the high incidence of abuse in her locality, she decided to learn self-defence and also teach it to other girls. She was mentored by Saksham and was supported by a CRY volunteer who guided her and also provided the basics of martial arts.

Thrilled with her newfound ability and growing confidence, she joined a martial arts school to continue her training, paying her way by doing embroidery and stitching. She rapidly acquired mastery in the various levels and went on to win 3 gold medals, 2 silver medals and 1 bronze medal at state and national championships.

Nindi’s accomplishments are a resounding victory to the local goons, the school bullies and to those who have a blind mindset to restrict resources and opportunity to female children. Today Nindi has received her recognition in society and is a source of inspiration for many children in her neighbourhood.

A SPECIAL KIND OF PARTNERSHIP

One of our fundamental philosophies at CRY is that ‘everyone can contribute by doing what they do best.’ This allows one to leverage their own unique strengths and core competencies to make a difference. Whether it’s through a monetary donation or through building our capacity, everyone can participate in a way that’s most meaningful to them.

Oracle invests in children’s future.

Oracle

It is only when you have complete belief in an organisation that you actually step forward to provide support in infrastructure that you feel will bring even more efficiency and impact. Oracle did just that for CRY. They awarded CRY a grant for design and development of a Results Based Monitoring System (RBMS) and hardware support for 60 computers which will track on-ground programme results and use data analytics to measure progress, social impact, and outcomes of CRY programmes across India.

This implementation will help measure change better and demonstrate the impact of programmes at the grassroots level. These programmes address children’s rights to life, health, nutrition, education, and protection from exploitation and abuse. The current grant is for the period of April 2016 to March 2017.

Going a step further, during this partnership, Oracle employees will also explore opportunities with CRY to give their time, skills, resources or goodwill towards educational /developmental activities, events and skill-based volunteering to children who need it.

Success Menswear is giving.

Success

As a long-time supporter, Success Menswear has believed in CRY’s work and championed the cause of child rights. Their conviction is that the best way to give back to society is to nurture the next generation. Last year, they partnered with CRY to raise awareness and support among the business community, to generate much-needed resources to support CRY’s work with the underprivileged communities.
**EVEN A SINGLE INDIVIDUAL CAN BE A FORCE OF CHANGE**

**A child’s fight for child rights.**

School vacations are that time of the year when children have fun, play and indulge in their favourite pastimes. However, Jehan Ibrahim had other plans for her vacations. She decided to use her vacations to raise funds to support child rights. Using her skill in crafts and quilling, Jehan created wonderful key chains and quilled jewellery. She sold the trinkets and donated the proceeds to CRY. Motivated by the success of her efforts, Jehan repeated the activity during her school winter break and succeeded in raising funds and awareness about CRY.

**Quizzing for change.**

Priya Shah from Brisbane, Adelaide, always wanted to do something for children not as fortunate as her own. What spurred her into action was her 4-year-old daughter’s observation about street children, on their trip to India. On seeing young kids sell books at a traffic light, she asked why they weren’t in school. When the little girl understood the situation, she wanted to buy all the books from the children. Priya gently explained that it wouldn’t solve the problem, but that they could do something more to ensure that children like them have better access to education. In her own words, “CRY tends to address the problems of child labour and other issues at the grassroots level. We have been associated with CRY for more than a decade and I am truly grateful for being able to support the work that they do.”

Along with their friends, Priya and her family helped raise awareness and funds through various activities such as Quiz nights (2005, 2006), Walkathon (2007) and Information/fundraising stall at Mela (2005, 2006, 2007). On moving to Brisbane, she continued the good work through the sale of Prakrit skin care products. As she puts it, “Children are one-third of our global population but ALL of our future. The dedicated efforts of motivated individuals and organisations such as CRY show that we can come together and make this world a beautiful place for ALL children.”

**Making a difference through advocacy and research.**

Edwina Pereira was convinced that hospitals in India need to formulate a Child Protection Policy (CPP) and that most hospitals do not have one. As a recipient of the CRY National Child Rights Research Fellowship 2015, she undertook a research study on ‘The Scope of Strengthening Child Protection Systems and Programmes in Hospitals in India’.

In January 2016, she was invited to facilitate a workshop on Paediatric HIV at the Centre of Excellence at Lokmanya Tilak Municipal General Hospital, Sion, Mumbai. 19 staff members participated in the workshop. The department head took personal interest and formed a policy drafting committee, which agreed to come out with a policy on child protection in hospitals within a month’s time. As Edwina shared, “I used so much of the Review of Literature and the findings of the CRY study to drive home key points during the facilitation.”
Documenting the change.

As part of the campaign against malnutrition in Karnataka, Samajika Parivarthana Janaandolana (SPJ) has conducted a study and photo documentation of the status of 32 urban anganwadis in Bangalore. A CRY intern, Jeffrey visited the anganwadis along with the SPJ team and took photographs. Two other interns, Prashant Anand and Nayanatra, worked on the data consolidation, analysis of the report and a video presentation. Prashant, in particular, delved into understanding the gravity of child malnutrition at a theoretical and field level and contributed in analysing the information and data in a holistic manner.

The in-depth report attracted the attention of ‘The Department of Women and Child Welfare’ (Bangalore Urban) and they requested a copy of the report from SPJ. The interns were given the opportunity to present the report to the audience at the launch and SPJ duly recognised their work.

Walking to fight child labour.

The volunteers of CRY in Chennai organised a community walk in Nochikuppam and Surya Nagar emphasising the evils of child labour and the necessity of providing quality education as a key step in tackling child labour. This event was a prelude to the International Day Against Child Labour on June 12.

On the day of the walk, the Chennai volunteers and children of both the communities walked around their neighbourhoods holding placards that emphasised the need for every child’s right to a happy childhood and the indispensability of education.

Surya Nagar was abuzz with enthusiastic children ringing bells and walking around in groups with placards in hand. This walk was a head-turner with many from the locality becoming curious enough to enquire what was going on. As the walk was drawing to a close, a CRY volunteer Venkataraman gave an inspiring talk to the children, stressing on the importance of the event. It was followed by a group of children singing the revolutionary poet Subramaniya Bharathi’s lines “Acham acham illa...” (We have no fear...) in unison.

Summer fun with children.

Four Delhi Public Action Groups (PAG) conducted summer camps. The focus of the summer camp was to give children a chance to explore their creative abilities, build these skills, and give them the exposure to aspects relevant to their well being in a fun-filled and non-preachy environment.

Prior to the summer camps, the volunteer team brainstormed, invited inputs from children and volunteers and finally designed modules to keep the interest level of the children high. The emphasis was on learning new things through a process of questioning and understanding. Sessions on sports, good touch bad touch, arts and crafts, health and hygiene, life skills, dance sessions, computer basics, story telling, picnic, movie screening, calligraphy and basic spanish were conducted.

The camps were a success involving over 140 children and around 70 volunteers.
Bringing a school back to life.

The Harijan Vidya Mandir School in Howrah was a rudimentary one-room thatched structure where multiple classes were being held simultaneously. There was only one person who was running the school— the headmaster-cum-teacher. With only four benches, no toilets, no proper drinking water facilities and no teaching aids, the number of students dwindled until the school faded into oblivion.

The structure still stood, and so it was the dropout children who suggested making it workable again. The young and committed volunteers took note of the practical hurdles and with great zeal launched a campaign to make the school functional again.

A visit to the concerned authorities requesting renovation was the first step. After repeated visits to the Councillor’s office and follow-ups with the School Committee Members for almost seven months, the Councillor finally made a visit to take stock.

The volunteers’ and children’s persistence paid off and the school renovation started. Soon a two-roomed school was erected and the basic infrastructure was put in place. Teachers were recruited and parents began enrolling their children in the school.

“I had to drop out since my earlier school was quite far from my home and my parents could not accompany me every time. Now, with this school fully working so close to my home, I can once again go to school and can manage to go on my own too”, said Aditya, a student of Class III.

Making music for change.

CRY volunteers in Pune hit upon a novel idea to raise funds through entertainment. Using their personal connections they got music bands to sign up for free. High Spirit Café offered its space. Volunteers made posters to advertise the event. The event was a success and funds were raised in a matter of just three hours.
"If you really want to bring about the change, CRY provides the right platform to do so. Volunteering for CRY is an accomplishment and a learning process as well. I am very proud to be a CRY volunteer."

Nischal Nayak, CRY volunteer in Jeevan Bheema Nagar Public Action Group, Bengaluru, and Software engineer at Software AG

“I had started supporting CRY years ago when I would buy CRY cards to send to family and friends. I knew in a small way I was helping a good organisation support marginalised children. But in the past few years, I wanted to do more, and my search once again led me to CRY. What CRY does to ensure the child’s right to good food, education, shelter, good health and freedom from exploitation is truly commendable. I am sure this work involves serious challenges but I’m also sure that CRY will continue the work, building towards knowing one day we will have a society respecting children’s rights.”

Veena Thinmaya, CRY donor, Bengaluru

“I was going to a child’s home after the session when she suddenly stopped me in the middle of the market and asked if I was a Hindu or a Muslim. I asked her the reason why she was curious. She replied by saying that there was a beef butcher shop ahead and then took me through a different route. This incident made me realise that children are much more mature and sensitive than we give them credit for.”

Agnish Ghatak, CRY volunteer in Rajabazar Public Action Group, Kolkata, and Senior Engineer, Business Development at Larsen and Toubro
“My parents instilled in me the ‘joy of giving’ early on in my childhood. They were strong believers of giving back to society. Today I am happy to live their dreams through my association with CRY. I had always wanted to help underprivileged children of India and CRY’s initiatives in children’s education, health and hygiene inspired me. I am a tiny drop in this mighty ocean, but I’m confident that we are making a difference. Going forward, I am confident that my children will continue the tradition of giving back to society through CRY.”

Kalpana S Raj, CRY donor, Chennai

“I have worked closely on all the campaigns and went through a lot of challenges in slum areas. I have interacted with so many people and through this I have been able to deeply understand the government policies to tackle issues of malnourishment and child labour. After working on these diverse campaigns, I found out about volunteer led PAGs, where volunteers arrange for remedial and creative classes. We provided the children with a positive environment to encourage them to reach their potential and make them understand the importance of being a good human being. It makes me feel good to be a part of this movement.”

Shubham, CRY volunteer since 2013 and the current ‘Volunteer Lead’ at the Public Action Group at Rithala CRY- supported project Saksham, Delhi
Yes, I believe every child has a right to a childhood. My donation amount is:

- ₹3600 – Ensure 5 children get access to proper healthcare
- ₹8500 – Stop 5 children from dropping out of school
- ₹12000 – Ensure 10 children are out of malnutrition with proper care
- ₹40000 – Ensure an entire village is child labour free
- ₹………………… - Yes! I want to ensure a happy childhood

The receipt to my donation will be made in the name of:

Name:__________________________________________________________________________
Address: ....................................................................................................................... Pin: ___________________________ Telephone: _________________________________
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Cheque No: ............................................................................................................... Bank Name: ________________________________________________________________

Write cheque/DD in favour of CRY - Child Rights and You and mail it to one of the addresses given below.

189/A Anand Estate, Sane Guruji Marg, Mumbai - 400 011. Tel: 91-22-2309 6645
632, 2nd floor, Lane No.3, Westend Marg, Sainyad-ul-Ajib, New Delhi - 110 030. Tel: 91-11-30374700
Madhan Mansion, 12/7-1, Bachammal Road, Can Town, Bangalore - 560 005. Tel: 91-80-2548 4952
No. 14, 4th Lane, McNicholas Road, Chetpet, Chennai - 600 031. Tel: 91-44-2836 5545
352, Kalkaipur, Gitanjali Park, New no. 8, 2nd Street, Kolkata - 700 009. Tel: 91-33-3410 5007
C/o Tata Business Support Services Ltd., 1st Floor, Gowri Trinity, Chiran Fort Lane, Begumpet, Hyderabad - 500 016.

Tax Exemption: Donations to CRY are eligible for 50%/100% tax exemption u/s 80G, 80GGA/35AC.

For more information or queries write in to webinfo@crycle.org

- All funds are raised in the name of CRY - Child Rights and You only and not individual projects.
- All donations to CRY can be made by cheques/Demand Drafts payable to "CRY - Child Rights and You" only.
- All CRY representatives have identity badges. You can call the office nearest to you to verify the identity of the representative.