



Shishur Sevay
To Not Feel Alone in the Universe

LIFE AT SHISHUR SEVAY

Quarterly Activity Report April – June 2021

While earlier this year had raised our hopes for a return towards normalcy this quarter we were back to lockdowns and restrictions.

APRIL

West Bengal holds its State Assembly election every five years. This year some of our girls were eligible to vote. We had made sure that they already had the necessary paperwork for them to qualify for an Election Card. Voting rights are often ignored for children in institutional care. For most the care ends when the child turns 18. For the ones who can never be on their own we must provide lifetime care. The girls were really excited. As in many countries, exercising the freedom to vote is a Rite of Passage to adulthood and a symbol of pride.

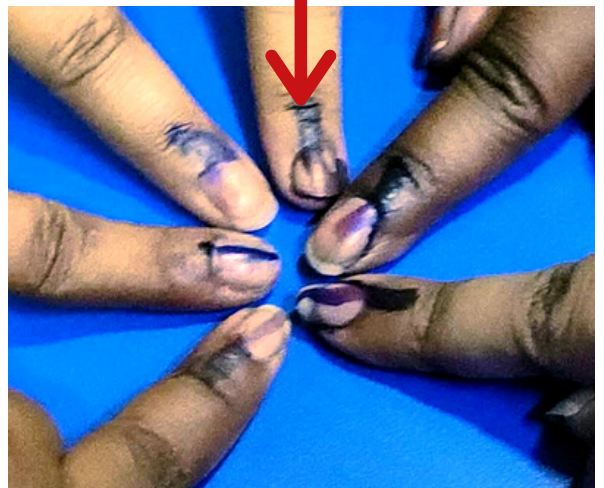


Heading out to the polling booth



Each person who votes must present their Election Card which has a photo ID. Then an indelible ink mark is made on the left forefinger so people cannot vote twice for the same election. People show this with pride.

See their proud faces



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- Dr. Harrison was interviewed by Soumyajit Mahapatra for his series Face 2 Face with Soumyajit. Soumyajit Mahapatra is the Chairman of Public Relations Society of India Kolkata Chapter and Chief Strategist of I Communications. We later projected the interview on the screen so everybody could watch it together and hear her talk about her journey with Shishur Sevay.



Here is a link to the interview:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dywx_G9lcUs



Ganga watched it separately, four more times.

- 15th April we celebrated Bengali New Year 1428. The day was celebrated with prayers and a feast later. Poila Boishakh or Bengali New Year marks the first day of the initial month of Baishakh of the Bengali solar calendar.



- Lockdown had begun to ease and we slowly, in phases, started bringing back some of the staff. However when one of our staff tested positive for Covid, we immediately tested the children and staff. Everyone was negative and remained healthy.



Getting the antibody test



Getting the Covid Test

Dr. Harrison decided to test antibody levels for all the children and discovered they all had antibodies.

MAY



- Another year, another cyclone. And, another May another lockdown. We prepared well, but Kolkata was spared the brunt of its impact.

You can never have too much of water

- When there are 15 children in a house, birthdays come often. With restrictions on going out, in-house celebrations have taken on more of an importance.

One among the many we celebrated this quarter



JUNE

- 14th June 2021 marked the completion of 15 years of Shishur Sevay growing and thriving. It was fun celebrating and looking back at all those years of journey that has brought us here today.



Dr. Harrison joins the fun!

- Puja started working with a long-time friend of Shishur Sevay and artist Rita Basumallick. Along with her ongoing art classes she has had online meetings with Rita once a week and learning more about painting from her.

This was an important milestone and we would liked to have celebrated it together with more of our supporters and well-wishers present, but due to Covid restrictions we couldn't. We did not let that dampen our spirits though.

Dr. Harrison talked about our journey in the last 15 years and the girls put up a beautiful program and the staff joined virtually. For the program, the girls did all, from planning to performance. They chose the music, choreographed the dances, planned the program and decorated the room.



A painting she is working on with Rita



- When India opened vaccines for 18+ the girls who were eligible, and staff staying at Shishur Sevay got their first shot of the Covid vaccine.
- Five of the girls attended an online workshop on Warli painting, a form of tribal art from the state of Maharashtra.



- One of the girls secured third position in an online Kalahi competition. Kalahi is a form of martial arts from the Philippines.

The girls at Shishur Sevay all have histories of violence and abuse. The related trauma has had a huge impact on them, so this is not just about winning a competition but much more. At Shishur Sevay we have always stressed on their safety, giving them the skills to defend themselves is just an extension of that. It gives their confidence a boost as well.

THE IMPACT

From Lost and Abandoned Children To Young Adult Credentialed Voting Citizens of India

Fifteen years ago we embarked on an exciting journey filled by hurdles and accomplishments, all shared together.

Shishur Sevay created an inclusive and safe environment, establishing a 'Best Practices' model of a family style inclusive non-institutional home for lost and abandoned girls, some having profound disabilities, all rejected for adoption.

Today these girls have the a sense of identity as citizens and members of our society, disproving that 'nothing can be done'. Showing what can be done with hardwork and perseverance.

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[Indian Donation : shishursevay.org](http://shishursevay.org)

**All Donations toward Childlife Preserve
Shishur Sevay are tax deductible under 80G**

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[U.S. Donation : friendsofshishursevay.org](http://friendsofshishursevay.org)

**Friends of Shishur Sevay is a 501(c)(3)
not-for-profit organization**

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