



# LIFE AT SHISHUR SEVAY

Shishur Sevay  
To Not Feel Alone in the Universe

Quarterly Activity Report July – September 2022

From the founder:

## Coming of Age at Shishur Sevay

*From Meriam-Webster: COMING-OF-AGE is the attainment of prominence, respectability, recognition, or maturity.*

It happens slowly, in steps, in more successes than failure, in goals achieved, in getting through hard times including these last two years of lockdowns and profound uncertainty about the futures of all of us. And then like emerging from a storm, we had the opening of our school, Children's Smart Centre and the success of working and teaching and performing meaningful work.

Our Shishur Sevay Mission was: To protect orphans and abandoned children, including those having differing abilities and disabilities, by providing a safe environment where they will be sheltered, nurtured, and educated in ways that build Competence, Confidence, Independence, and Leadership.

Read on about our Daughters who have come of age, our younger ones on their way, and our daughters with disabilities who are also finding their way with the love and support of their Shishur Sevay Family.

Dr. Michelle Harrison

# JULY

- Puja received her black belt in karate and came home proud to show it. She trains at Shivaji Gaanguly's Academy Mind & Body. Puja is now employed as a Karati instructor at a private school.



*Puja with her black belt, flanked by her proud sisters*

She is the first among the girls to get a job and has done so despite all odds. This has been really exciting for all of us. To prepare her for being paid we helped her open a bank account.



*The bank representative at Shishur Sevay*

- As required by the government, the girls all needed a medical check up. Dr. Budhaditya Chattopadhyay visited to examine and check medications.



*Dr. Chattopadhyay doing the check-up*

- Nabanita, a neighbour and former teacher at Ashok Hall became a volunteer. She helped us create an assessment form for Children's Smart Centre (CSC) and is working on lesson plans. She also works with our Special Educator. She is a welcome addition.
- Mani wants to be a special educator. While she works towards getting the requisite degree for that training, she has begun a certificate course in Yoga, which will broaden her skills as a special educator.



We installed a large mirror on the top floor for practice of yoga, karate, kalahi and dance.

- Independence Day 2022
- Flag raising at Shishur Sevay
- A program at Rajubala Adarsha Vidyalaya School
- Celebrating at Children's Smart Centre



Flag raising at Shishur Sevay



A performance at Rajubala Adarsha Vidyalaya School



Girls and Boys at Children's Smart Centre



## AUGUST

- Traditionally on Rakhi sisters tie rakhis (bracelets) on their brother's wrist, symbolically protecting the boys from harm.



At CSC the children made rakhis and then put them on each other's wrists with the wish for protection of brothers, sisters, and friends.

- Janmashthami is the celebration of the birth of young Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna is placed on a swing and is offered all his favourite items like butter, milk, sweets, coconut ladoos etc. All the Daughters of Shishur Sevay swing Lord Krishna.



- Making standing (vertical) lines is one of the first steps in learning to write. We use chalk on board, pencil on paper, but also magnetic sand for practice.



Standing lines on magnetic sand



Matching colours

# SEPTEMBER

- Teacher's Day this year we decided to give a token of appreciation to our girls for their work at CSC. The next day both Ganga and Bono used tobii to call for our accountant. They wanted to know where their share was! We were stunned. With that money Ganga wanted to buy a toy for the school and Bono wanted KFC. A trip to the mall and its food court followed.



*Bono talking to Mummy*



*The girls at the mall*

When we talk of quality of life for the children with severe disabilities this is what we mean. They are not alone, they are heard, they joke around like any kid would.

- Shishur Sevay received the Times Ascent NGO leadership Award presented by EIILM, Kolkata and organized by World CSR Day. Dr. Harrison accepted the award on behalf of Shishur Sevay.



- We had another Parents Teachers' meeting at CSC. We updated the parents about the progress of the children and some of the issues dealing with mobile , saying no. For the children who will be turning five, we discussed plans for admitting them in schools. We also handed out some more of the bilingual materials to take home.



Karate and dance competition took place in the same week.

- Shivaji Ganguly's Academy Mind & Body organized the West Bengal State Karate Full Contact Championship and the West Bengal State Kalahi FMA State Championship. It was supported by the Physical Education Foundation of India a National Sports Promotion Organization recognized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs Sports, Government of India. Two of the girls bagged silver in karate in their categories and another one bagged a bronze both in the karate and kalahi competitions.



The girls in action and with their medals



Proud mother



- Khusbu is in the advanced group at Mamata Shankar's Udayan Kala Kendra. She participated in the choreography festival- Udayan Choreo Utsav, a competition among all centres of Udayan. Her group bagged gold at the Choreo Utsav.



Receiving the honours from Mamata Shankar

- Khusbu also appeared for her class XII, Senior Secondary exams through NIOS. Her project for the painting practical for Painting exam was really appreciated by the teacher who showed it to others as a model of how projects should be made.



- We visited Sahapur Sabitri Balika Vidyalaya the local government primary school where our girls first attended and we got information for any of the CSC parents who want to send their children there. Shishur Sevay had given the school their first computer.



We had also convinced them to take Ganga and Bornali, thus making the school inclusive.



Bornali and Ganga in their classroom in 2008

The school later received an award for being inclusive.



- Most years, just before Durga Puja holidays begin, the girls and staff of Shishur Sevay go pandal hopping. We could not do it the past two years because of Covid. This year we started our tradition again and took the girls to see the local puja pandals. We planned for two days this time. It was nice to see almost all pandals being accessible.

It was beautiful but also quite hot so some of the girls decided to stay home the second day. That day just five of the girls went. They walked almost 5 kms and saw some of the most popular pandals in South Kolkata. They also ran into friends from dance and yoga classes.



Accessible pandals, because festivals are for all

The pandals had beautiful work and with Durga Puja being inscribed on the UNESCO representative list of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2021, the festivities were even more elaborate this year than other years.



*While pandal hopping the girls enjoyed bioscope. Moving pictures are shown with music.*

*It's very rare in recent times. It was the first time for the girls and they enjoyed it!*



## THE IMPACT

1. Shishur Sevay is the best practices model of inclusive non-institutional care for lost and abandoned girls, some with profound disabilities, all of whom had already been rejected for adoption.
2. We meet or exceed The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2006 standard.
3. Stigma is one of the major challenges faced by the orphans and the disabled in society. We challenge the stigma by our presence thus promoting inclusivity among the community.
4. Once denied to enter at the community park today we are running an inclusive community free playschool.

### Foreign Contribution

Account Name: Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay  
SBI New Delhi Main Branch, 11 Parliament  
Street, New Delhi - 110001  
FCRA Current Account No: 40108969339  
IFSC Code: SBIN0000691  
SWIFT Code: SBININBB104

### Domestic Contribution

Account Name: Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay  
RBL Bank Limited, New Alipore Branch  
Account No: 309013832148  
IFSC Code: RATN0000280

### ONLINE DONATION

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

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

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

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