

A LIFETIME HOME FOR LOST AND ABANDONED GIRLS, SOME PROFOUNDLY DISABLED



Shishur Sevay

To Not Feel Alone In The Universe

INCLUSIVE LIVING
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
INCLUSIVE DANCE
TOBII EYE TRACKER, ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY
CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF THEIR ROOTS
LIVES WITH DIGNITY

Organization Profile

A safe and inclusive non-institutional group home for the female children otherwise housed in government institutions.

- The Time:** Founded in 2006 as Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay
- The Place:** Kolkata (Calcutta at that time) in West Bengal, India
- The Person:** Founded by Dr. Michelle Harrison, an American physician, author, leader in women's health, and mother of two daughters. Her first daughter was born to her and her second came from Calcutta in 1984 at 2 months of age.
- The Reason:** Her questions were, "What happens to the orphans not adopted?" What if the girls rejected for adoption in India were given the same opportunities of those abroad, but without the loss of their country, culture, heritage, and religion? When her daughters were grown, Dr. Harrison sold her belongings came to Kolkata to create a model of care.

The twelve girls placed with Shishur Sevay had been lost, abandoned, and in government institutions. They were rejected for adoption, had no trace of their families, and ranged from 18 months to 10 years. They came with cerebral palsy, autism, seizures, visual and hearing loss, development delays, microcephaly and severe malnutrition. Those with disabilities were severely underweight, some not expected to live very long.

Mental health conditions included: depression, psychosis, behavior disorders, suicidal ideation and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They came having experienced the brutality that is inevitable for unprotected girls. The girls were fierce and proud yet terrified.

Sixteen Years Later

A Hub of Innovation: Shishur Sevay is where new ideas take hold and old ideas are adapted to the needs of the children. Shishur Sevay is a replicable model of the best practices available in specialized educational and residential care.

Shishur Sevay is an **Inclusive Home**, where abled and disabled girls are living together. and inclusivity worked as we attended to their individual needs. The girls are the Daughters of Shishur Sevay.

When schools could not meet the needs of our children we opened **Ichche Dana Inclusive School**, providing a safe learning environment to build basic skills, curiosity, knowledge, and confidence. It has drawn the attention of researchers at Vanderbilt University because inclusivity developed out of need, rather than theory. Two of the girls with severe cerebral palsy are using Tobii Eye Tracker to communicate. The life trajectories of the girls have changed. They now imagine a future of meaningful work, stability, and marriage of they choose.

Shishur Sevay has opened a free inclusive play-school, **Children's Smart Centre** for the community where the Daughters of Shishur Sevay are teaching. The girls always wanted to serve the underprivileged.

The Daughters of Shishur Sevay are grounded in their Indian identity, culture, heritage, and religion. Shishur Sevay has a "zero tolerance" for abuse within and outside the home. Sufficient staff, CCTV, and vigilance protect the girls.

The organization: Childlife Preserve Shishur Sevay

- Sound financial policies with full transparency, and regularly audited accounts.
- Recipient of GuideStar India Transparency Award 2016; Gold Seal 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022
- Received FCRA Registration, having all renewals and fillings up to date.
- Registration as a Society under West Bengal Societies Act XXVI of 1961; No. S/IL/37263/2006-2007.
- Received 80G
- Licensed as a home for children by W.B. Directorate of Social Welfare.
- JJ Act Certificate
- Received registration under Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, from the Government of West Bengal
- Social media presence on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram
- Sister Organization: Friends of Shishur Sevay, in the US is a non-for-profit with 501 (c)(3) www.friendsofshishursevay.org

