

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

A Best Practices Model of a Family Style Inclusive Non-Institutional Home, That Is Now a Lifetime Home for Lost and Abandoned Girls, Some Having Profound Disabilities, All Having Been Rejected for Adoption

INCLUSIVE LIVING
INCLUSIVE EDUCATION
INCLUSIVE ART
INCLUSIVE DANCE



TOBII EYE TRACKER
ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY
INDIAN CULTURE AND HERITAGE
LIVES WITH DIGNITY

*To Not Feel Alone In The
Universe*

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



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, academic, medical ethicist, leader in women's health, and mother of two daughters. Her first daughter was born to her; her second adopted daughter 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 as those adopted abroad, but without the loss of their identity, country, culture, heritage, and religion? When her daughters were grown, Dr. Harrison sold her belongings and 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, and some were 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, proud and terrified.

Seventeen 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 inclusive educational and residential care.

When schools could not meet the individual 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, leading to multiple publications*.

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 their choice.









For the girls receiving wasn't enough, they wanted to give back to the community to serve other children like them. Their dream became **Children's Smart Center**, a free inclusive play school for the underprivileged children of the community, where they now teach. The girls went from being at the bottom rung of society to being respected teachers.

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.

*Forber-Pratt, A. J., & Sarkar, T. (2024). Shishur Sevay: Promoting Civic Engagement and Belonging for Disabled Young Women in India. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies In education*.

Forber-Pratt, A. J., & Sarkar, T. (2022, March). Unpacking the Possible: A Qualitative Case Study of Inclusive Teacher Practice in India. *Institutionalised Children Explorations and Beyond*, 9(1), 34-46.

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- 2023.
Received FCRA Registration, having all renewals and filings 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

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Holding 80G and FCRA

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Reg. West Bengal Societies Act XXVI of 1961 Reg. #S/IL/37263 of 2006-2007