



SAHRUDAYA

VASAVYA MAHILA MANDALI



HOME / COMMUNITY BASED HIV / AIDS CARE AND SUPPORT PROGRAMME
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From the Editor's Desk

It is our immense pleasure to put forth the fifth issue of "Sahrudaya", bi-annual newsletter. Vasavya has gained experience, geared the effort in pace with the emerging needs and challenges like orphaning due to HIV/AIDS, community strengthening through support groups, more involvement of children at decision making and monitoring levels.

We are sure that new initiatives like community fostering, education and life skills for children and adolescents, psychosocial support to children through a module, child centric programming, positive speakers, e-newsletter, focus on operational research, documentation and publications will show new pathways for all those in the field of Home/ community Based HIV/AIDS Care & Support Programme.

We welcome your suggestions to improve the lives of millions of people living with HIV/AIDS, their families and children.

Yours in service,

G. Rashmi

Executive Director

Home / Community Based HIV/AIDS Care & Support Programme

Vasavya Mahila Mandali

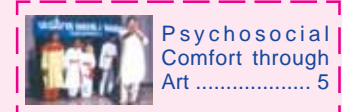
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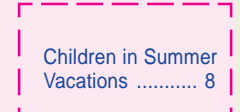
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Children in Summer Vacations 8



"My dear boys and girls don't feel alone, we are with you"- His Excellency Sri Susheel Kumar Shinde, Governor of Andhra Pradesh.
 His Excellency, Sri Shushil Kumar Shinde, Governor of Andhra Pradesh (AP), (Centre) Left- K. Prbhakar Reddy, IAS, Collector, Sampath Kumar, IAS, Joint Collector, Krishna District. Right- Chennupati Vidya, President, Dr. Samaram, Medical Director, VMM

CHILDREN SUPPORT GROUPS: (COMMUNITY CORE GROUPS)

Introduction: Support groups Concept was initiated in Home/Community based HIV/AIDS Care and Support Programme (HCBCS) with an objective of reducing stigma and discrimination by sharing their experiences and providing psychosocial support mutually within the community. This was successfully piloted in Vasavya implementation programme, by forming 15-20 people living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) and family members affected by HIV/AIDS (FAA) of male and female of above 18 years into a group. The entire network NGOs in coastal Andhra Pradesh (AP) has replicated this model. By seeing this, the children have expressed their concern towards children forming into support groups and promoted into children support groups in due course of time. The word "support group" itself got stigmatized as the PLHAs have formed into groups. Hence children have chosen to name them as "Community Core Groups".

Inspiration & Evolution: At the beginning of 2003, Ms. Anandi Yuvaraj and Ms. Fazeka from India and International HIV / AIDS Alliance shared their experiences and the best practice of formation of "**mothers clubs**" in providing qualitative psychosocial support for mothers and PLHAs in South Africa. The sharing meeting is the inspiration to develop a concept led to formation of children core groups.

Models:

- Children in the groups are children affected by HIV/AIDS and the community children in order to reduce the stigma and discrimination. Each group is with a size of 10 – 30 children with OVC (orphans and vulnerable children).
- School support groups with 30 children, 2 teachers and 6 volunteers.
- Adolescent girls support groups: 11 to 18 years.
- Young boys groups: 15 to 18 years
- Early childhood children support groups: with below 10 years



School Support Group

Capacity building:

Why to build the capacities of children: Children are the caregivers in the family without knowledge or skill to manage the sick people. The childhood is shortened with adult responsibilities due to the situation in the family. Instead of getting guidance from adults they themselves are guiding their younger siblings as well as adults.

Focus of Capacity building is - basic knowledge on HIV/ AIDS, care giving, life skills, interpersonal relations, communication skills, self-care, home care, low cost nutrition, first aid, photography and vocational skills.

Activities: • Emotional support and bereavement counselling with peer group at community level. • Peer groups mobilizing school dropouts as a part of back- to -school drive. • Members of Children support groups are instrumental in giving the education to other children of their ages on issues like HIV/AIDS, life skill education and care giving. • Demonstration of low cost nutritious food to Children support group members and repeat demonstrations by the members to others in community • Tracking the school going nature of each other in the group. • Sensitizing the teachers and community through cultural troops • Facilitating in scaling up the children support groups throughout coastal AP • Play equipment for each group managed by them. • Library-cum-recreation center for all the children • Inter and intra-group children interaction.

Sustainability: • Primary stakeholders are beneficiaries of the program from planning level to review. • Following the exit strategy- training and strengthening the children support groups in implementation of the program after NGO withdrew from the area. • Community ownership of the program by increased involvement of the community leaders who can make a difference. • Child to child approach involving the co-students of other schools becoming child mentors.

Impact : Increased involvement of community children after renaming the children support groups as Community Children Core groups due to reduction of stigma attached to HIV/ AIDS • Increased community acceptance of PLHA and their families after initiation of support groups. • Dissemination of information on HIV/ AIDS. • Widening the reach with active participation of support groups in the program. • Children are better prepared for the mortality in the family. • Decreased school dropouts due to peer encouragement and parents valuing the education.

Scaling up:

❖ By seeing the effectiveness of the children support groups in improving the quality of life of children, it is being scaled up in all the partner and non-partner NGOs of HCBCS by formation of 146 children support groups in coastal Andhra Pradesh.

❖ Through these children support groups VMM is able to reach 1785 children of 5-18 years age group. Among about 52% are boys and 48% girls, which show the active participation of both gender and also community acceptance for girl children to be a part of the process. If we take the type of children in the groups, there are approximately 59% children Affected by HIV/AIDS, 41% Community Children. The parents of the community children are also encouraging their children to be a part of these groups that highlights the extent to which the community is mobilized. Among the groups if we take the participation of orphans in these groups, there are 31% and among them 7% orphans, who lost both parents and 25% semi-orphans, those who lost one parent. Among the group members the school dropouts are 4%. They are unable to go to school due to care giving or child headed families, where the children are shouldering the family responsibilities. After the school support groups formation back to school drive has picked up momentum.

Replication

- Increased exposure visits from various parts of India to replicate the innovative concept
- The entire partner NGOs (10) working on HCBCS with VMM have replicated the model.

Challenges:

❖ Temporary migration of children to various places in summer vacation, for their livelihood. ❖ Children, heading the families are unable to attend the group meetings regularly due to their family responsibilities. ❖ Some of the community children, involved in the support groups are expecting support like for education, medical and vocational. ❖ To gain confidence of the adults was a challenge ❖ Lack of IEC material on support groups ❖ At times teachers were reluctant in promoting school support groups fearing that children might lose their school hours.

Lessons learned:

- ❖ Involving the community children in the support groups has reduced stigma and discrimination towards CAA and is supportive.
- ❖ Children are happier after getting involved in the support groups as they are getting a respite from the harsh realities.
- ❖ Psychological relief to the parents by seeing their children being happy
- ❖ Domination of older children by the younger children has given an idea to form separate children support groups for early childhood groups and also with different age groups, as the needs and ideas differ from one age group to the other.
- ❖ Teachers are sensitised to the issues of CAA
- ❖ Impact of school support groups is visible in the quality of education to CAA.

Children support groups are necessary for second generation knowledge building and prevention linked to care programs. The most victimized group-children and their needs can be advocated through children and also more stable generation can be expected. We can show a better future with more hope for many families.

CHILDREN'S VOICES AND PROGRAMME INNOVATIONS

Alliance India has taken up the Children's Voices and Programme Innovations in all the 3 Lead Partners in Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu and Delhi. The programme aims at giving visibility to children's issues and the impact of Home and Community based HIV/AIDS Care and Support Programme. VMM has successfully initiated this innovative approach.

The proposed intervention of 'children's voices and programme innovations' aims to document the stories of children in their own voice. It is intended to reach out to a variety of audiences that includes programme planners, donors, NGOs, State and National level governments. The document is expected to raise awareness amongst various stakeholders regarding issues of children affected by AIDS, which will facilitate planning effective and meaningful interventions. Till June 2005, 96 children from 10 iNGOs in Andhra Pradesh have given their life stories and it is being translated after transcription. Children are very enthusiastic to give their stories by recording in the tape recorder. "A new experience for us" expression of a CAA. Children have expressed that they are able to ventilate their feelings and emotions.

Alliance, VMM and Implementing NGOs will disseminate the publication to the District and state authorities, legislators and at the national, international level.

AP state level children's interactive meet with His Excellency Sri Sushil Kumar Shinde, Governor of Andhra Pradesh:

His Excellency Sri Sushil Kumar Shinde, Governor of Andhra Pradesh, interacted with 150 HIV/AIDS affected children of coastal Andhra Pradesh on 23rd February 2005 at Vijayawada, organized by Vasavya Mahila Mandali. Children affected by HIV/AIDS from 10 NGO partners working in five districts, expressed their issues after they lost their parents to HIV/AIDS. Children have appealed to the Governor to support the children infected by AIDS and also their ailing mothers. Those were most touching moments when the audience empathized with the children affected by HIV/AIDS. The children narrated their anguish and despair in the presence of the Governor, and at the same time have utilized this platform to express their feelings towards developing child friendly policies



Governor's response:

"I have no words to say after hearing the voices of these children. I was moved by the plight of these kids. I felt very sad that the flowers and leaders of tomorrow are being affected by the dreaded virus. Pointing to Tsunami, the trail of destruction left behind by a natural calamity will fade away from our mind over a period of time but the scourge of HIV/AIDS will continue to haunt victim wherever it goes. I think the time has come to look at the problems of our brothers and sisters. I am happy that children themselves expressed their concerns. I appreciate the confidence of the children though they lost their parents. Vasavya Mahila Mandali is doing humanitarian work for the children affected by AIDS that cannot be compared with others". "My dear boys and girls don't feel alone, we are with you". He assured the kids that they may not suffer and languish. State machinery will certainly help them to gain their self-esteem, he added.

A motivated freedom fighter: By seeing the expressions of the children with the Governor and moved by their issues telecasted in media, a pension holder came forward and donated one thousand rupees for the cause of CAA from his monthly pension. Thanks for the humane gesture!!!!



CHILDREN - PSYCHOSOCIAL COMFORT THROUGH ART

Children Cultural teams- scaling up:

Folk art is purposeful, and non-commercial. The contemporary artists proclaim that this art is for art sake. The ancient aestheticians of India repeatedly emphasize that Art must have a purpose; Art must stand for lofty ideas.

Keeping in view 23 years of experience of VMM through 'Vasavya Nrutya Vihar', dance schools for bringing social change through folk arts like dance, music and painting. It has mobilized communities on various social, health, environment and gender issues. After seeing the impact of adult cultural teams, VMM then decided to form children cultural teams, as children messages would be more meaningful and gives more impact than adult cultural teams. So children cultural teams were formed in all the 10 implementing NGOs and these teams are being utilized to sensitize the communities on prevention-linked care and support issues.

The 'children cultural team' aims at mobilizing the communities to reduce stigma and discrimination and to scale up the programme. The children cultural teams are trained in different themes of HIV/AIDS like prevention, stigma and discrimination, care and support, myths and misconceptions, testing, counselling, confidentiality and ethical issues and Importance of nutritive diet.

VMM to support the iNGOs and children from the cultural teams to initiate process documentation, and provide proper guidance to the children.

Scaling up:

- iNGOs to scale up the programme in new areas and involve these children cultural teams in reducing stigma and discrimination.
- VMM to support iNGOs in scaling up the programme.

Experiences from AIRTDS

In our observation during the cultural training programme between 27-5-05 and 31-5-05 here at AIRTDS, we are able to realize that the participants involved more and expressed themselves openly.

Hence, we talked to Mr. Vijaya Mohan, key resource person from CALA, about the possibility of comforting PLHA and their children in distress through art and folk forms.

Currently in our HCBCS programme, we use interpersonal and counselling skills to provide them emotional comfort and build up confidence in them. But the greatest limitation here has been the ability to make counselling client friendly and personal involvement of PLHA to make the service more useful to them. Further, such supports over a period become monotonous and initial enthusiasm and concentration tend to fade. Besides, the psychosocial/ counselling support is either given at their surroundings or at NGO and the environment is not always conducive. Still, our people view such support as advice and they pay little attention to such efforts over a period of time. More over, it addresses the issues personally or at the maximum within the family circle. To overcome these difficulties and make PLHA address and orient on collective issues, we understand that providing comfort through art and folk form shall be more appropriate. It would not only engage PLHA and children attractively but also provide space for them to emotionally be together and this would be a strong foundation to sustain their collectiveness for a further prospective activities. It's a compliment to existing psychosocial support service.

Yet another advantage is that the art and folk form addresses emotions and involves individual for a commitment. Each individual could experience and share the emotion freely in a group and this becomes a strong bond. This form provides more scope for ventilation of feelings and at the same time each person gets support from the other. Further, this gives scope to strengthen our traditional art and folk.

Based on these realities, we discussed with Mr. Vijaya Mohan on possibilities of different forms of art and folk that can be effectively used to bring psychosocial comfort in PLHA/children and group support to them. We believe that feelings like-isolation/loneliness/withdrawal, frustration/confusion, feelings of anger/guilt, uncertainty, insecurity and sorrow as a result of death, can be addressed and these forms can be developed in PLHA/children the sense of safety, positive values, sense of identity, belongingness, qualities of appreciation and reassurance.

True, this form will not address these feelings at a point of time at an individual but this instead helps PLHA/children to develop a mechanism within them to avert such feelings in days to come and engage themselves in ventilating such emotions or coping with the eventuality.

The primary methods and forms of art and folk that can be made use here are music/message, one-act plays, comedy/puppet show, future play let, group folk art, imagination exercises, situational performance and drawing. This method of comforting PLHA/children on emotional well being can be held periodically and this will enhance participants' opportunities in grouping together. It also increases their quality of participation.



RECENT HAPPENINGS

Education Development Center Inc (EDC), a US based International NGO: Angela Chen, Regional Project Director, EDC, Bangkok, visited VMM on 25th March 2005 and interacted with children affected HIV/AIDS and members of children support groups. She was highly impressed with the work of VMM supported by Alliance/Abbott for improving the quality of life of children affected by HIV/AIDS, their parents and family members. She has expressed *"I am so impressed by the innovation and enthusiasm of staff and children. I hope our partnership will be fruitful for both of our organizations"*.

This project is an extension to the existing HCBCS programme for education and knowledge building.

Media clipping...

- The Hindu, National news paper

2000 CAA in coastal AP will go to school from July 2005, thanks to the humane gesture of the members of the Deutsche Bank Asia Foundation. The Bank is extending funds for implementation of the project to EDC to implement the education drive in Andhra Pradesh through its lead partner in the country the Vasavya Mahila Mandali (VMM) working in collaboration with various national and international organizations for rehabilitation of HIV/AIDS victims in the coastal districts of the state. VMM along with its 8 other partners has chalked out elaborate action plan envisaging schooling for 1300 AIDS affected children and imparting non-formal education to 600 children in addition. Of these at least 300 beneficiaries of the non-formal education would comprise street children

Worthwhile objective The objective of the education scheme is to enhance the literacy rates among the 5000- odd children affected by AIDS in the coastal districts of state, spread awareness among adolescents by imparting education in life skills, there by bringing down the number of cases pertaining to HIV transmission, instilling self esteem among the victims

Solution Exchange of United Nations: Anuradha Sen Mukharjee, Knowledge Management Resource Person- Gender, Solutions Exchange, United Nations has initiated for launching of the Solution Exchange at VMM on 29th March 2005 with the representatives from government, NGOs, community volunteers, positive networks, academicians and media. Solution exchange is the first initiative of United Nations country team in India that offers communities of development practitioners a forum where they can provide and benefit from each other's solutions to the day-to-day challenges they face.

Information Needs Assessment Study (INAS): Criaana Cannorn and Patricia, MIS (Management Information Systems) consultants from clayconnal Consultants, UNESCO visited care and support programmes of VMM and Needs Serving Society, a partner NGO. Interacted with support group members and conducted focus group discussions with people living with HIV/AIDS. VMM has coordinated with the District Collectors of Krishna and Guntur and Criaana, for developing a proposal for conducting Information Needs Assessment Study (INAS) to build capacities for evidence-based planning at district level for HIV/AIDS programming, which is under process.

Advocacy initiatives in HIV/AIDS: VMM has coordinated a consultative meeting with the people living with HIV/AIDS, NGOs and Positive networks at VMM on 1st April 2005. Dr. B. Gangaiah, Regional Director Planning commission and Philipha Consultant from Future Group also participated and interacted with the group. The meeting explored the advocacy initiatives to be pursued in relation to prevention, care and support in HIV/AIDS through Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Avahan project.

The Global Struggle to overcome HIV/AIDS- a meet: Office Of the Public Affairs, U.S Consulate General for South India, Chennai, Green Vision And YMCA have jointly organized a programme on "The Global Stragggle to over come HIV/AIDS" at Visakhapatnam from 16th May to 21st May 2005. In this meet they organized the poster presentation and film show on HIV related issues.



Country Offices (CO)/Lead Organisations (LO) meeting at Brighton, Mrs. Rashmi, Executive Director, Vasavya Mahila Mandali attended the CO/LO meeting held at Brighton, UK, from 13th to 18th March 2005. This meeting has paved a way to share the experiences of all Alliance partners. In addition, the meeting discussed future strategies and planning of the Alliance

Global fund round table conference: Mrs. Rashmi, Executive Director, VMM, attended the conference held from 27th to 29th April 2005 at Delhi on working on HIV/AIDS, TB and Malaria

Alliance India strategic planning meet: held at Hyderabad from 9th to 11th May 2005 organized by Alliance India. Mrs. Rashmi from VMM participated in the meet. The in-depth discussions centered on an overview of the epidemic in India, key challenges posed by the epidemic, mapping the work of the Alliance in India, and the identification of priorities for the future within the parameters of the Alliance's global strategic framework.

Alliance India Directors Meet: The Directors of the Alliance's Lead Partners (LPs) in India, the Management Team (MT) of the India HIV/AIDS Alliance (Alliance India - AI), and two senior staff members of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance (IHAA), met on 9th May (half day) to strengthen the development of a shared vision of Alliance partnerships, so that the Alliance in India is better able to work together in supporting community action on HIV/AIDS. The discussions focused on the developing a shared understanding of Alliance partnerships in India, emerging issues and challenges, roles, relationships and responsibilities, review & re-planning (R&R) processes and national/state coordination and collaboration mechanism.

OXFAM/GB meet was held at New Delhi, in collaboration with National AIDS control organization (NACO), Sexual health resource center (SHRC) and UNAIDS. Mrs. Vidya, President, VMM has given a Presentation on experience on "working with street children in prevention work."

RECENT HAPPENINGS

Rotary centinal celebrations were held from 18 to 22 June 2005 at Chicago, US, on the eve of 100 years completion of Rotary International. A one and half-hour session was held on HIV prevention and care and support initiatives. Many experts and professionals of Rotary from different countries have participated and shared their experiences on working with HIV/AIDS. Dr. Ratan Kumar from Rotary Community Service Trust (RCST), Vuyyuru attended and presented the activities of Home community based HIV/AIDS Care and Support programme and the role of corporate social responsibility in addressing the issue of HIV/AIDS in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, India. The main focus of this meeting is on children affected by HIV/AIDS. Most of them shared their experiences with regard to institutional care and services to children especially for education and medication. Rotary Community Service Trust, Vuyyuru is the only organization who presented and initiated Home and Community based care and support for children affected by HIV/AIDS among the rotary clubs supported programmes.

Birth Registration – Importance: Mrs. Keerthi has participated in the “Birth Registration – Importance” organized by UNICEF and government of Andhra Pradesh at Hyderabad on 10th June 2005. The purpose of this is to make the birth registration of all the children is a mandatory and the NGOs to facilitate the process in collaboration with local self-governments.

Protective homes- well being of the children (OVC): Mrs. Vidya from VMM has participated in a state level consultative meeting on “Protective homes- well being of the children” organized by UNICEF and women and child development department of government of Andhra Pradesh.

Standards for Placement of children affected by AIDS: Friends International based at Cambodia and Education Development Center Inc (EDC), Bangkok invited Keerthi to share VMM's experiences in the Asia level regional workshop on the Standards for Placement of children affected by AIDS, held at Cambodia from 12th to 16th June 2005. NGO representatives from Cambodia, Vietnam, Bangkok, Korea, Laos and India have participated and developed certain standards for placement of CAA in foster care, extended families, grannies, institutional care / orphanages and schools, and in the case of faith based organizations too.

National VCTC workshop on scaling up HIV testing and counselling in India by Alliance India was held at New Delhi from 06th to 9th June 2005. The participants included members from the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), the Lead Partners of the Alliance, government VCTC counsellors, representatives from State AIDS control societies of AP, Tamilnadu and Manipur. It also included participants from NGOs and members of the key populations as well. The outcome of the workshop was the development of policy recommendations to facilitate the scaling up of HIV testing and counselling in India.

Training programme on Child centric programme (CCP): Three days training programme was organized by Alliance India from May 30 to 01 June 2005 at Hyderabad for three Lead partners and implementing NGOs' staff. From VMM 3 CAA also actively participated and contributed valuable suggestions. Ms Kate Harrison from International HIV/AIDS Alliance has facilitated the training and Ms Keerthi from VMM has co-facilitated. This workshop has developed conceptual clarity on CCP and also discussed various strategies for increasing CCP and developed LP wise action plans.

Media coverage:

Rachabanda on TV9 (Voices of community Opinion leaders): The children and adult voices from the VMM implementation programme, Vijayawada was telecasted on 24th and 27th March 2005. TV9 is conducting a community level opinion programme on various issues. So in that, with the support of APSACS, the media channel has conducted the programme by recording the voices of children affected by AIDS, PLHAs, pastors, teachers, community leaders and NGO representatives. They have expressed about their life stories and coping with the situation. The message disseminated to the wider population on issues like stigma and discrimination, orphaning, Grannies taking care of grand children, school support groups and on positive living.

Advocacy through All India Radio (AIR):

- Mrs. Keerthi, Technical Support Manager, VMM and Dr. Samaram, Medical Director, VMM have participated in a telephone live-in programme of All India Radio, Vijayawada on 24th April 2005 and clarified the myths and misconception of people who asked queries through phone in both perspective i.e., social worker and Medical Doctor. More than 100 calls came but due to time limit, able to address 13 calls within 30 minutes.
- Dr Deeksha, Medical Director of VMM has given a talk on support groups with other positive speakers.
- Dr Bhaskar Rao, Honorary Project Director of Rotary community service trust (RCST) promoted by KCP Ltd has given a talk on corporate social responsibility towards preventing HIV/AIDS.
- Rashmi, Executive Director, VMM has given a talk on Child headed families in HIV/AIDS scenario in AP.
- AIR has broadcasted the live talk of Mrs. Vidya, President, VMM on Impact of HIV/AIDS on women.
- Positive speakers have given their live stories in AIR
- 3 Children on streets from partnership sexual health project (PSH) have actively participated in the 25 minutes discussion on HIV/AIDS – counseling with Rashmi, NGO management, 2 Outreach workers.

Happenings at VMM...

- Established a home for PLHA, FAA and CAA under Swadhar scheme of Government of India.
- June 26th is observed as Torture day in support of UN declaration of torture victims. Sensitization meet was conducted at Maris Stella College, Vijayawada.
- 3 peer educators are on the staff rolls in partnership sexual health project among street children.

CHILDREN in SUMMER VACATION

School going children, wait for the vacations to enjoy and play. Severe economic crisis in the family is making the life of children to be more vulnerable, to attend for the livelihood options by doing hard work and foregoing the joy of enjoying holidays. Here a child working is inevitable. Let us see what the children tell about their life in holiday...

- **“My hand did not move after serving water to the guests in a marriage party for four hours and I was afraid as I remembered my father’s hand which did not move when he was sick. Only after sometime I could move my hand. I felt tears in my eyes as I remembered my father.”** 12 years aged boy child has started working in this summer holidays as a server in a catering unit to clear the debts in the family due to his father’s illness secondary to HIV. He sleeps after 2 AM, as he has to travel a long distance to his house. He expressed his late nights as *“I can sleep late in the day but I can earn INR 60 per day and it is very useful for us. I miss coming to group meetings but what can I do?”*- An active Member, school support group
- **“3 Mango pieces for five rupees. Come and get.”** – a young 12 years orphan, industrious, is yelling at the top of his voice to sell as many mango pieces as possible in an Industrial Exhibition in Vijayawada, AP. *“I did not show interest in the joy rides surrounding me, as I am involved in my busy work of selling mango pieces and earn INR 50 per day.”*- A child volunteer in school support group.
- **“What book do you need sir? Is it Telugu medium or English medium book?”** – A child working in a second hand bookstore and is able to earn his living and expressed in a pathetic manner, **“there are so many books surrounding me but I do not have time to read as I am a focused sales boy. I always think that my earnings will clear the debts as both my parents are sick.”** - Future orphan
- **“This school is very good, please join your child in this school”** a young girl, 17 years, is canvassing for a school education campaign (door to door) and she is being paid INR 50 per day. She is able to fulfill her long cherished dream by buying silver anklets, proud of her purchase- *adolescent CAA*
- **“During the work as a cable connection maintainer I was electrocuted many a times, but we get used to it.”** Srinu, 13 years, expressed like the hero of his choice. He earns INR 20 per day if he checks on the cable connections in a given area. He paid the long pending house rent and relieved his mother of some burden.
- **“I saw Kolkata, Bhuvaneswar and many more places in Andhra Pradesh while working as a cleaner in the truck and I earned a good amount of money. It is exciting to go to places and it is challenging to take the load in time.”** This is the experience of 14-year-old boy during summer. He wants to learn driving later in life so that he can have a chance to visit other places also.

So many children affected by HIV/AIDS are spending their time during summer holidays by getting engaged in a productive work. Even though the parents are happy that their young ones are helping them, VMM and implementing NGOs are very much concerned about the future of these children. Our concerns are,

- The means of livelihood may be more attractive for the child than the education.
- The excitement and the necessity of sharing the responsibility of the family may divert their minds from education.
- Becoming an earning member at an early age can lead to high-risk behavior, which is seen in children living on the streets.
- Exploitation by the elders in the community.

[Source : A study on “The Role of Children in HCBCS” conducted by a team of VMM lead by Dr P Deeksha, Medical Director]

PUBLICATIONS



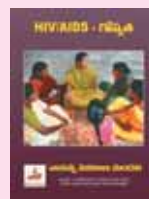
Psychosocial support to children (CAA) (Telugu)



HIV/AIDS- counselling (Telugu)



Stay Fit and feel good- a health guide for caregivers &volunteers (Telugu)



HIV/AIDS- Confidentiality (Telugu)



Good food for good health- Nutrition education with 100 recipes (Telugu)



Moving Forward, a report on pioneering responses to CAA in Andhra Pradesh

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