



Photo by Neil Brander – Used with permission

Namaste, India Calling

January 2010

I sit beside Aaftab's hospital bed. He is, perhaps, 13 years old. He has spent almost a third of his life on the streets of India. We play math and English games to pass the time as he waits for morning when he will have surgery on an arm he injured badly in a fall. He seems like any other boy, with a wonderful smile that hints of mischief. He laughs loudly when he catches me making a math mistake. I try to picture him sleeping on the dirty concrete floor of a railroad station, or begging for a few rupees so he can eat that day. But Aaftab has a different life now as he is a part of Udayan, the children's home run by Vatsalya. This kind of expensive surgery is nowhere in Vatsalya's budget. Thankfully, at the last minute, the hospital and surgeon graciously agreed to donate their services. I feel blessed to spend such sacred time with Aaftab and our communication and connection is deep even though words in a shared language are few. I am proud that NICF raises money on behalf of Vatsalya as I've seen firsthand the incredible difference being made in the lives of these children.

Delta Donohue



A New Program

America India Foundation has begun funding Vatsalya's Slum Youth Internship program. This incredible program, Uparjan, provides training for youth to prepare them for jobs. Each quarter 120 students undergo three months of intensive training and preparation. The first group of 120 kids just graduated and all of them have secured employment!! Vatsalya is working to expand this program into rural areas. This organization truly is making a difference in the lives of thousands of children and young people in India. *If you aren't yet a donor, we urge you to become a Friend of Vatsalya and join the \$100 Campaign and take part in this change.* For more information, please see our websites at www.NICFund.org and www.Vatsalya.org. For your ease and convenience, NICF now accepts PayPal through our website.



Uparjan's first graduation ceremony

Every child comes with
the message that God is
not yet discouraged of
men.

Tagore





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Message from the President

The past year proved challenging but rewarding. Giving to NICF was good with nearly \$38,000 being received to support Udayan - Vatsalya's Children's Home. Thanks to the many donors that contributed so generously.

Delta Donohue and I traveled to India in November to spend some time with the children at Udayan. There are about 55 children and it was a thrill to be on the campus and to see them once again. In traveling through India and seeing the desperate situations many children live in; it's a joy to know the Udayan children are in a safe and nurturing place.

The work to staff, feed and clothe the children is an ongoing effort. Much higher food costs have made it necessary for the staff to be extremely frugal. Some have donated time, and some positions are on hold at this time, but the children still receive three good meals per day, adequate clothing, K-12 schooling, and opportunities for social activities. Older children are receiving vocational training to prepare them to be self-supporting once they leave Udayan.

The New Year has the promise of hope for these children and with your support they will continue to thrive. Thank you for your thoughts, prayers and financial support.

Dan Eigsti

Thanks to all Seeds of Exchange Donors who gave so generously to support Udayan!



Have you heard about Good Search? (www.goodsearch.com). This is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. It works just like Google or other search engines, and is powered by Yahoo. Simply enter **Namaste India Children's Fund** as the charity you want to designate and start searching. It's an easy way to help us raise money.

Through a generous grant provided by Nadia Wikborg and her tireless work fundraising in Norway, Udayan's boundary fence is going to be completed and they have been able to buy a flour mill. They will now be able to grind their own flour, instead of sending it out to market. This will help reduce their food costs. Vatsalya continually looks for ways to reduce expenses while maintaining top notch care for the children and ensuring that every dollar donated is used wisely.

NICF, partnering with Seeds of Exchange (www.seedsofexchange) and Vatsalya, has begun an exchange program with Stanley British Primary School in Denver, Colorado. Over the course of the school year, multiple "exchanges" have been planned, using Skype, videos and correspondence. Students will share holiday celebrations, fashion, current events, customs, favorite sports, etc. and get to know each other in a real and lasting way. We hope this program is the first of many that will build a bridge of friendship and awareness between students.

Thanks to Salaam Garage - their generous donation purchased a WATER BUFFALO for Udayan!!!
Check out their website at www.salaamgarage.com.