

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT



## Dear Wellwisher,

I am excited to present the 2023 edition of the Annual Newsletter, a retrospective look at the incredible journey we have undertaken together.

With heavy hearts, we bid adieu to our Sangli childcare after 26 years of service, taken care of 865 orphan destitute children and having placed 608 children in adoption.

Exciting milestones unfolded in our education support and community services programs in 2023! We expanded to a new community in Wagholi, launched “Kahaniyon ki Duniya” library program for children in Classes 5-9 and introduced the community child nutrition program in Aurangabad. The milestones achieved this year reaffirm BSSK’s commitment to continuous evolution and staying true to our vision and mission.

The long-pending renovation of the Childcare play area finally became a reality this year.

The year ended on a high note with BSSK being conferred the ‘Bal Snehi Puraskar’ by the Women and Child Ministry and NCPCR recognizing our exceptional contribution in the area of child welfare. Being one of the two specialized adoption agencies in Maharashtra to receive this award is a testament to our unwavering dedication to the wellbeing of children.

Thank you for being a part of our journey towards excellence. In closing I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our wellwishers, donors and volunteers. Your support is very crucial to our mission and empowers the positive change we strive for.

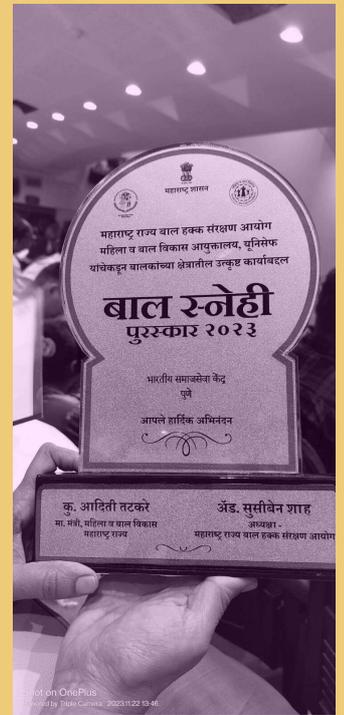
Together we make a difference.

With deepest appreciation,  
Naganandini S. (Executive Director)

*Naganandhini S.*



# 2023 DEFINING MOMENTS:



# BIRTH PARENT CHILD ADMISSION

The team along with ensuring the well-being of birth families also ensures that children are rehabilitated at the earliest.



In fact, our work in this area is being widely recognized and children are being transferred accordingly. A few examples that highlight our passion are:

- In 2018, a 11-month-old baby was placed in private adoption in a neighboring state. The adoption was disrupted and child taken into a local institution with the adults jailed briefly. Child Welfare Committee (CWC) Pune was contacted for further investigations as the birth family was from around Pune who further directed the case to BSSK. Fortunately, with a mix of patience, ingenuity and luck the family could be traced and further process could be done and child today is in his own loving adoptive family at the age of 6 years
- A 4year old child found abandoned was transferred to BSSK after living in another centre for almost four months. The team started their investigations from the police station where the child was found. One lead to the other and he is now happily restored with his birth family.

**Working on 14 such children to ensure their rehabilitation at the earliest**

# CHILDCARE

Some of the work done this year inspires us to believe in ourselves and the meaningful difference we continue to make in the world.

- Two premature babies, weighing barely 800g and 1300g were given a new lease of life through dedicated love and care. Remarkably one has already found a loving adoptive home
- Two baby girls discovered in dire circumstances with animal bites are thriving today due to our timely intervention
- A four-year-old was admitted in severe shock after losing his family in a car accident. The grief manifested in different ways, both physically and emotionally which was well handled and he is now in a loving family



**86** babies cared for in the Neonatal ICU

**11** children provided physiotherapy

**6** children provided with speech therapy

**21** children were in formal schooling

**31** children given special care

**2** children required surgeries

**28** Celebrations done this year

**6** children in foster care

**BSSK cared for 177 children this year.**

# ADOPTION



In a surprising turn beginning of the year, the adoption procedures in Maharashtra underwent yet another twist. The amendment to shift to the District Magistrate (DM) was withdrawn. The process was redirected back to the District Court until further notice, adding a layer of uncertainty to the legalization process. Some cases where BSSK went the extra mile to support adoptive families are:

- BSSK intervened after a family lost their child referral due to technical issues with the CARA portal and secured the same child referral
- One family whose home study had been done by BSSK got a referral from another agency in Maharashtra. The referral disappeared from their portal because of inefficiency of the referral agency. BSSK intervened and ensured the same child referral for the family
- One child whose decision was pending for almost two years because of her foreign status could be successfully rehabilitated into a loving domestic family
- BSSK provided unwavering support to a family facing a child referral challenge due to a parent's life-threatening illness. Through the family's determination and BSSK's assistance, the baby was successfully brought home

**BSSK placed 79 children in adoption this year.**

# POST- ADOPTION SUPPORT

BSSK distinguishes itself by standing alongside children and families throughout the adoption journey offering support as per their needs.

This commitment aligns seamlessly with our vision of being a leader in child wellbeing by upholding best practices. The support given this year was:



## PARENTS STARTING THEIR JOURNEY

- 4 parent preparation workshops held for prospective Parents
- Special online Parent Preparation Workshop on the recent Adoption Regulation changes for families who were close to getting a referral
- Sharing session by one recent adoptive family on reducing the long waiting period through a better understanding of the CARA portal

## PARENTS ALREADY ON THE JOURNEY

- 06 Parenting sessions conducted - Communication, Positive Disciplining, understanding ADHD, Brain development of children, Sharing the fact of Adoption
- Nearly 15 families counseled to help with sharing the fact of adoption, behavioral issues in their children, parenting etc.

## ADOPTTEES

- Summer camp organized on “Self-Awareness” for children between 7-12 years
- 7 root searches were done this year. 4 were successful and looking forward to reunions early 2024. One root search was done for a person living in a Child care institution. It was a happy reunion
- 20 homecoming visits
- There were invitations from 10 adoptees to partake in their happiness
- One young adoptee made a significant donation from his first salary, while another has made some long term fundraising plans

# EDUCATION SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES:

Children supported by BSSK for education hail from underprivileged communities with parents employed as casual/farm labor, housekeeping staff, auto-rickshaw drivers, maids, cooks and vendors.

## ANNUAL ACTIVITIES:



SCIENCE CAMP



SEXUALITY EDUCATION



FIELD TRIP



UPCYCLING WORKSHOP



PICKLE MAKING WORKSHOP



HEALTH CAMP



PARENTING WORKSHOP

BSSK supported **2325** children with education

# OUR SHINING STARS

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## PUNE

- Pranay 91.2% (10th), Maheshwari 72.83% (12th, Commerce)
  - Afiya (6th) nominated National Player in the **66th National Shooting Championship**
  - Neha (10th) won best actress award in a drama competition
  - Ruturaj (9th), bagged 1st position in National Youth Climbing Cup.
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## AURANGABAD

- Swamini 97.4% (10th), Sakshi 83.3% (12th, Science)
  - Anand got admission into **MBBS Medical with NEET score of 535/720**
  - Sonal (7th) won a **gold medal** in the National Karate Championship
  - 8 girls who passed their 10th grade, got selected for a corporate scholarship (**Udayan Shalini Fellowship**).
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## SANGLI

- Varad 93.8% (10th), Anisa 87.4% (12th, Commerce)
  - Vaishnavi (5th) was awarded **best student award** in 4th
  - Aditya (9th) **acted in a Marathi movie as a child-villain**
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## CHIPLUN

- Sanket 91% (10th), Sanket 76% (12th, Science)
  - Aarya (3th) secured **69%** in the Brain Development Scholarship
  - Daksh (7th) was selected to **go to NASA** through the जाणू विज्ञान, अनुभवू विज्ञान ' (Know Science, experience science) initiative. Last year, he visited ISRO
  - Trupti (9th) **cleared the Navodaya entrance exam and secured admission**
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# BASIC LITERACY

This program is in line with the National Initiative for proficiency in Reading with understanding and Numeracy (NIPUN BHARAT).

Phonetic awareness, letter recognition, print awareness (sight reading), counting skills, one-on-one activities are taught in a fun way and a lot of progress seem to be seen in children. The team had a Balak Palak Shala where parents were invited to the centre and children demonstrated how and what they were learning at BSSK.



Some interesting observations:

- Parents share that children are showing better language skills, increased interest in school activities and completing homework
- Teachers are noticing children participate more actively in class and are more regular in school
- Two boys stood first in a school competition by solving the maximum number of addition and subtraction problems within 15 minutes.

**250 children attended basic literacy classes this year.**

**LIBRARY** The main objective is to provide a non-judgemental space to the children to enable them to discover their inner creativity and foster imagination

This is done through story telling and reflections, book talks, group discussions, games and fun activities.

*Sakshi and Mujmel created an impressive record by reading 116 and 150 books this year.*



Some interesting observations:

- Interest in books and thinking capability has increased
- Children previously scared to express their opinions are opening up
- Parents feedback that children are not only sharing the stories but reduced time on gadgets
- Boys who would initially while away time with friends are now regularly attendees at the library
- Parents seem to be borrowing books along with the children

**160 people regulary attended the library this year.**

# HIGHER EDUCATION

BSSK handholds students in their transition from children to young responsible adults and becoming independent.

They are supported with the right career choice, college education, job readiness, retaining their jobs etc. Some interesting observations:

- BSSK alumni were on the selection panel of the new entrants into the higher education program
- Girls who were forced into early marriages are still keen on completing their graduation. Three such girls are fighting all odds, convincing their spouse and family members, putting in extra effort to help with the household chores alongside studying. One of them graduated this year
- Support to a student in his gap year resulted in him securing admission into COEP (Production engineering)

## ***Our Shining Stars:***

- Aakash, completed his Diploma in Mechanical Engineering and is working at Mahindra
- Sushil (3rd Year DIP CS) participated in a Coding Hackathon conducted by TATA Power. His team won the runner up prize of Rs.75,000 and he got selected to intern at ISRO on one of their new rocket missions
- Suraj who started selling vada pav (Street food-potato stuffing between two slices of bread) during his college days graduated this year. His business is flourishing and he has even added more items to his menu



**249 students supported**

**30 students graduated**

**35 students working full time while pursuing graduation**

**2 people with part time jobs**

# CHILD NUTRITION PROGRAM

The program focuses on holistic development of children in the age group of 0-6 years by working with their mothers.

Sessions on de-addiction, communication and self-care were introduced based on the need of the group. The sessions struck a chord with the women. It brought to surface their inner feelings, the hardships they were facing because of early marriages/babies, abusive spouses etc. One could witness the space transforming into a listening space where the participants seem to lean on one another for support, share their feelings, knowing that they would be heard and understood in the true spirit of kinship.



**98 mothers** attended regular sessions on brain development, health and hygiene and nutrition towards holistic early childhood care

# SOME CHALLENGES

BSSK has always believed in the premise that family is the best place for a child to grow. Most of the BSSK foster families, except 2 dropped out during COVID. Several attempts were made to reignite this program- contacted various community leaders, old families etc but with little success. Navigating the continuous changes in adoption regulations, dealing with families through their long waiting period in their parenting journey was quite difficult.

# LOOKING FORWARD...

To exploring new avenues to see how BSSK Sangli can continue to serve young children between 0-6. Hoping to realize our dream of reaching out to older children in childcare institutions and help with their permanent rehabilitation.

