



BHARATIYA SAMAJ SEVA KENDRA

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2024



**Strengthening families and
making a difference in the lives of
children... Since 1979**

Dear Wellwisher,

Time truly flies at BSSK! This year has been a whirlwind of activities, marked by significant achievements and a wide range of volunteer-led initiatives. The launch of our daycare in Sangli, signifies a crucial shift towards family-centered care, empowering families to create nurturing environments for their children. Significant effort was invested in collaborating with Child care institutions (CCI) to enhance their staff capacity and facilitate the permanent rehabilitation of children residing within their care. We successfully digitized close to 3500 adoption records in Pune, a monumental undertaking made possible by the dedication of 277 corporate volunteers. We went through an impact study conducted by one of our supporters, which provided valuable insights into our data management practices and enabled us to better track and measure our progress. Successfully conducted a National Adoption Month campaign, reaching over 3104 community members through a street play focused on safe surrender and legal adoption awareness.

The education support program continued to thrive with BSSK spreading into a new community in Wagholi, Pune. Our first-ever alumni meet, a platform for networking, sharing experiences, and inspiring current students was held in Pune. A unique spoken English program, pairing students with volunteer mentors, was successfully launched, providing valuable support for their academic and personal development.

We are immensely grateful for your continued support. It plays a vital role in enabling us to expand our reach and provide care and protection to a larger number of children in need.

Thank you,

Naganandhini.S



Day Care Inauguration



Alumni Meet



Street Play



Awards



**Adoptee
Performance**



Volunteering

Birth Parent Child Admission (BPCA)



BSSK supports birth families in different ways. It involves addressing medical needs during pregnancy, supporting them with a challenging decision regarding the child including reuniting them with their child.

Stories of Hope:

- A young married educated couple approached BSSK, Pune as the sonography of their 29-week-old baby was showing signs of disability and was unsure of the future. The options available to them were explained and they were guided on looking after a child with a disability. They finally decided to take on the responsibility and even called to share that they were blessed with a baby boy
- The first prenatal screening of a 20-year-old woman showed that the child was at high risk for Down syndrome. The mother was helped with further tests of amniocentesis which revealed that the baby was normal
- One lady was helped with immediate medical attention when she was found to be HIV positive in the last stages of her pregnancy
- Two single mothers in Aurangabad and Chiplun were reunited with their 6-year-old children and are being helped with the child's schooling needs

BSSK reunited 18 children with their birth families

Child Care:



- A three-year-old girl with severe malnutrition and a ventricular septal defect (VSD) was admitted to BSSK, Pune. She received comprehensive care, including nutritional interventions and cardiac evaluation. Prior to corrective heart surgery, she required prolonged oxygen support. Following the surgery, she has demonstrated significant improvement in all aspects
- A newborn girl, just four days old, was hospitalized at Aurangabad, requiring a blood transfusion. By two months, she exhibited poor weight gain and feeding difficulties. Subsequent investigations revealed congenital airway abnormalities necessitating complex surgery. Finding a suitable hospital for pre-and postoperative care proved challenging. Despite successful surgery, she experienced significant postoperative complications, requiring prolonged hospitalization. Additionally, she suffers from a serious eye condition and is currently undergoing physiotherapy to support her development
- A 4-year-old boy was admitted into BSSK, Chiplun with significant development delays including poor hygiene, malnutrition, and behavioral issues. He was diagnosed with a neurological disorder which resulted in frequent seizures and difficulty in controlling his movements. Despite these challenges, with consistent care and therapy, he improved his motor skills, communication abilities, and social interactions. After extensive efforts to reunite him with his biological family, the decision was made to place him in a specialized institution for disabled children.

BSSK cared for 142 children this year



Christmas



Music Therapy



Sports Day



Ganpati Visarjan



Rangoli Making



Holi

57

babies cared for in
the Neonatal ICU

19

children provided
with physiotherapy

6

children provided
with speech therapy

19

children went
through formal
schooling

45

children given
special care

3

children required
surgeries

27

Celebrations done
this year

Adoption:



BSSK witnessed a steady increase in the number of domestic families seeking adoption especially in this decade. Currently, there are 36,000 parents in India awaiting the adoption of a child. In 2024, BSSK conducted 276 home studies of prospective adoptive families.

Some Observations:

- One child with minor special needs from BSSK, Aurangabad could be placed into a domestic family. Two children with special needs from Pune are currently in the process of going home
- Six children aged 3-6 have been placed in domestic adoptive families this year. BSSK put in significant effort to prepare both families and children for the transition
- Two families withdrew their adoption applications at the final stages, citing a lack of readiness. These decisions were made following in-depth counseling provided by BSSK
- The team underwent a valuable learning experience when a gay couple approached regarding adoption. This interaction provided the team with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of diverse family dynamics and to explore the evolving legal and ethical landscape of LGBTQ+ adoption

BSSK placed 61 children in adoption this year

Adoption Support:



BSSK recognizes that adoption is a lifelong journey for both adoptive and birth families. The organization strives to stand as a pillar of support throughout this process. The activities undertaken this year reflect this commitment:

Prospective Adoptive Parents:

- 6 parent preparation workshops, 4 in Pune one each in Chiplun and Aurangabad
- 6 families were counseled extensively before older children were placed with them

Post-adoption support:

- Seven parenting sessions were conducted, covering topics such as adoption of older children, discipline methods, disclosing adoption (2 sessions), understanding adolescence, motor skill development, and single-parent parenting
- 17 families were counseled with adoption-related matters such as sharing the fact of adoption, behavior-related issues, adolescent behaviors



Adoptees:

- BSSK received 10 root search requests this year. One contact was made with the birth family
- There were 10 homecoming visits where adoptees came to see their first home
- There were 17 connects with adoptees wanting to understand their origin

BSSK supported 282 individuals on various post-adoption-related matters

Daycare:



Children thrive best in a safe, loving and caring environment especially in their respective birth families. BSSK, Sangli through this new initiative is dedicated to ensuring that every child flourishes within their family environment and provides:

- Safe space for the children during the day
- Hygienic environment
- Physical and emotional wellness
- Social Skills development
- Parenting sessions

Some highlights of the year are given below:

25-29

Children in attendance
every day

7

Single-Parent
Families

16

Celebrations

1

Picnic

7

Parenting Sessions

Stories of hope:

- Shivam, a two-year-old, was the first to join our daycare. His father, recently widowed and living with his 80-year-old mother, was juggling his factory job and childcare was a constant struggle. The opening of the BSSK daycare provided Shivam with crucial support, ensuring his safety and well-being
- Moksh's mother struggles with mental illness, leaving his father as the sole caregiver. When Moksh first joined the daycare, he was withdrawn, hesitant to engage, and kept to himself. Eight months later, his transformation is truly inspiring. He has become cheerful, and outgoing and is always talking about his eventful day at home. His father is extremely grateful for the support, care and love shown to Moksh at the centre

BSSK supported 60 families this year

Education Support and Community services



Science Camp



Material Distribution



Palavi



Martial Art Workshop



Health Camp



Educational Visit

Our shining stars:

Pune :

- Sayli Jagtap (Std 10) scored 94% while Ritesh Gavhne (Std 12, Science) scored 84%
- Pranit Dawdikar (Std 8) clinched gold at the Schooling Picks Boxing Championship
- Shrushti Lagashetti (Std 10) won the first prize and Rs.5,000 in Kalarang 2024, an art competition
- Ruturaj Nikam (Std 10) was selected to represent India at the International Wall Climbing Championship

Aurangabad:

- Krushna Kamble (Std 10) scored 84.80% while Gautami Tupsamudre (Std 12, Science) scored 83%
- Kalyan cleared the central government exams to become a Tradesman after his 12th std and is now undergoing training at Jakli Centre in Srinagar

Sangli:

- Shivani Patil (Std 10) scored 91.2% while Gayatri Rupnar (Std 12 MCVC) scored 78%
- Aayan Mujawar (Std 2) scored 2nd rank in the State Board Talent Search Exam
- Uday Chavan (Std 3) and Saloni Budhur (Std 8) have been awarded the Shatabdi Scholarship by the Sangli Shikshan Sanstha. They will receive monthly stipends of Rs. 300 and Rs. 800, respectively, for an entire year
- Pranav Revade, a Std 9 student, secured the 6th rank at the District level and has been awarded the NMMS Scholarship. He will receive a monthly stipend of Rs. 1000 until he completes Std 10

Chiplun:

- Riya Chavan (Std 10) scored 87.80% and Amisha Kadam (Std 12, Science) scored 74%
- Veer Pandurang Metkar, an 8th-grader, won second place in the 1500-meter race at the Sahyadri Krida Sangram 24.
- Daksh a 7th std student visited NASA, USA this year after acing an international science exam. A local TV channel interviewed him to inspire other young learners.

BSSK supported 2310 children for education

Basic Literacy:



The basic literacy program emphasizes foundational literacy and numeracy skills for children in Std 1-4 through engaging teaching methods. Teachers developed an annual timetable, designed evaluation papers, established monthly learning objectives, and created an activity book for the year. Positive changes in children's learning are evident after their participation in the program. The key activities include:

- Students showcased their educational activities to their parents on Balak Palak day. Students and parents together took part in fun games and drawing sessions
- Nagapanchami, Holi, Children's Day, Diwali were celebrated with themed activities like diya and lantern making and colours. Children learnt the significance of these festivals through the activities
- Recreated a jungle with wild animals made of clay, trees

Stories of hope:

- Ahira Mastan was initially reluctant to speak and would struggle to read. With support from the teachers she is now reading fluently and even expressing her opinions freely
- Avni Bhalerao, a second-grader, initially displayed shyness and disinterest in learning. However, consistent attendance has led to significant progress. She now actively participates in class, enjoys coming to school, and even assists the teacher

BSSK worked with 376 children to develop their foundational skills

Library:



Engaging activities offered at the library such as book discussions, meetings with creators are captivating children's imaginations, drawing them into the wonderful world of books and fostering a love of reading. Pritee from BSSK, Aurangabad has explored 262 books during reading time and has borrowed 175 books to read at home.

Key activities include:

- Children interacted with writers, poets, illustrators and publishers at the summer camp and during the National Book Week. Events included book talks, creative activities and discussions on short films.
- Visits to District Public Library in Aurangabad and Sangli, Bhavarth in Pune where children interacted with authors
- Outreach activities were conducted in all the centres. In Pune, 115 children from the community got to read a book and enjoy a story
- A group of 37 children from BSSK Aurangabad library program visited a blind school, and read out books to them via pair and group reading
- Training and mentorship for mentors and facilitators to enhance their skills and foster a love of reading in children

240 children were part of this program

Higher Education:



This program empowers students after 10th/12th std to achieve independence through education or skill development. Key program activities include...

- The alumni meet features a lively panel discussion where 22 program graduates shared their experiences, challenges, and successes with current students
- Three girls were successfully selected for an 18-month residential program at Navgurukul, Pune, focusing on programming, business skills to empower young women towards financial independence

Stories of hope:

- Kaveri Rathod from BSSK, Chiplun was in her second year of college when she decided to get married against her parent's wishes. The social worker convinced her to continue with her education. She is now pursuing her education and part of the spoken English program
- Devi Rathod, a recent graduate, lost her mother and now shoulders the responsibility of raising her three younger siblings. Despite facing immense challenges, Devi remains resilient and maintains a strong connection with her social worker, sharing both her struggles and triumphs
- Saloni Kamble, facing low self-esteem, received crucial support from our social worker. BSSK intervened to prevent an early marriage, encouraged her to continue her education and build her skills.

BSSK supported 242 this year

72 students graduated with 38 students finding full-time jobs

109 students are working part-time

Child Nutrition Program:



The program works with the mothers of children between 0-6 years to ensure holistic development and age-appropriate growth of the child. The mothers attend various sessions on nutrition, hygiene and brain development twice a week for 6 months. The mothers and their young ones also undergo health screening and interventions are done if needed.

Stories of hope:

- Recognizing the need for support and guidance in raising her children, including one son with disabilities, Nisha Prasad sought out the CNP sessions. Her husband started helping with child care, ensuring her participation. Her commitment to improving her parenting skills demonstrate her dedication to her family's well-being
- Inspired by the discussions and motivated to contribute more to her family's well-being, Amruta Hanavte has taken a significant step towards her own empowerment. She has applied for the government's "pink-auto" campaign, a program that will provide her with driver training, assistance in obtaining a license, and a 50% subsidy towards purchasing an auto-rickshaw. This initiative will not only enhance her financial independence but also contribute to her family's overall well-being.

BSSK supported 94 families this year

Some Challenges:

The adoption legalization process for children in Maharashtra has been stalled for over two years, causing significant delays in court proceedings and prolonged stays of children in care centers. The lack of timely second police reports in cases of found children has further added to these delays. The permanent rehabilitation of children in CCIs is not happening as planned. Additionally, the decline in admissions raises concerns about the future of these facilities and the support they can provide.

Looking Forward:



BSSK has a long and proud history of supporting adoptive families. For decades, the organization has been a leader in providing essential resources, including parent preparation workshops, adoptive family meets, and parenting sessions to adoptive families. Looking ahead, BSSK is committed to further enhancing its support systems and exploring innovative ways to better serve children, families and the community.



Website



Facebook



Instagram



LinkedIn



Youtube