

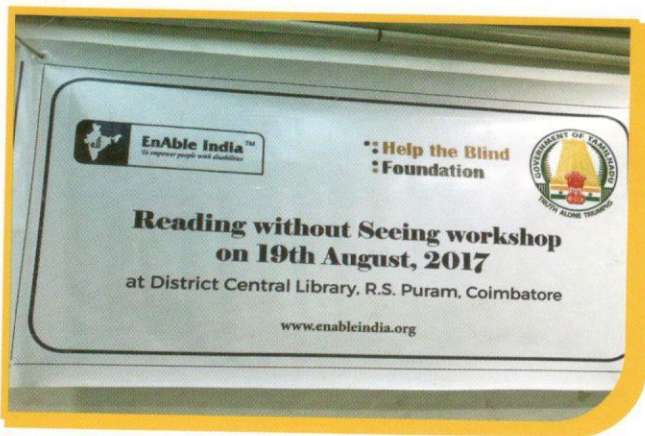
Help the Blind Foundation

VISION FOR LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

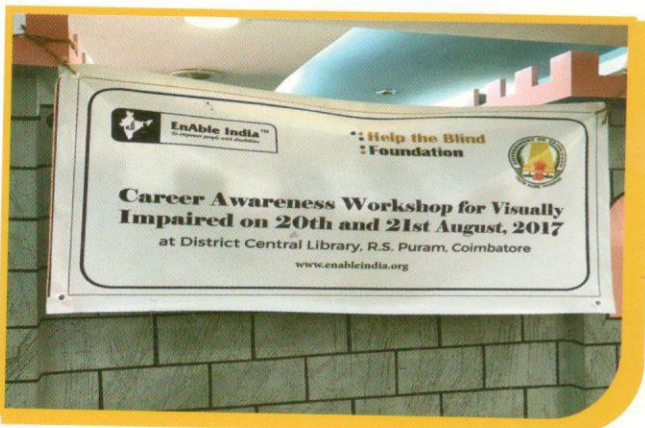
Vol I Issue 2
July-Sep 2017

Workshops for the Visually Impaired (V I) Students.

Help The Blind Foundation partners with Enable India Bangalore and Central Library Coimbatore and The Government of Tamil Nadu to conduct "Reading without Seeing" workshop at Coimbatore on the 19th August 2017.



This workshop is designed for the VI students as well as the larger community to create a belief system that they can lead an independent life and gain access to a rewarding livelihood by using the latest tech and other solutions.



The programmes were coordinated among the three agencies by the HTBF volunteer in Coimbatore **Mrs. PonMeenakshi**.

Some of the participants in the Workshop for the Visually Impaired Students in Coimbatore.



HTBF is pleased to announce the remarkable growth in our student numbers in the current academic year. Compared to 1065 students in 2016-17, we had received 2355 applications out of which 1735 students were awarded scholarships for an aggregate amount of Rs 1.64 Cr.

Some applications are still under process and we estimate that the final figure will be around 1800 students with a disbursement of around 1.75 Crores as against Rs 1.16 Crores disbursed last year, thus clocking a growth of around 50%

Thanks to All the Volunteers
for the hard work !

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VISUAL IMPAIRMENT IN CHILDREN CAN WE DO ANYTHING AT ALL ?

The reasons for visual impairment in children are plenty but chief among them – particularly among the poorer sections are malnutrition, non-examination of the child at birth for physical abnormalities and congenital. Our Trustee, Ms. Mallika discusses one of the main reasons for this congenital effect on the visual conditions of the children.

One of the disturbing trends I found when I interviewed the Visually Impaired children, was that many of them had Visually Impaired siblings. On closer inspection, I found that most of their parents were closely related. When I did my search on the Internet, I found the following viz., the problem of the consanguineous marriage

A **consanguineous** marriage is one in which two individuals related by blood, such as cousins, get married and have children. Around the globe, consanguineous marriages have been practiced by many societies from time immemorial. In India, this practice is highly prevalent in rural areas among people with low literacy and socioeconomic status. The reason is primarily they believe this will build stronger family ties and help reduce the financial uncertainties.

Though most consanguineous couples can have normal healthy children, consanguinity has been reported as an important factor in the development of congenital anomalies. The risk of birth defects is higher because there is a greater chance of two related individuals sharing a common harmful gene and both passing it on to the child. Of course, the risk and type of birth defects vary depending on how closely the couple is related and also based on the defective gene.

To prevent the prevalence of birth defects, Public health programs with a multi-approach strategy involving educating people, increasing awareness about genetic consequences of consanguineous marriages, prenatal diagnosis and neonatal screening. Also, couples with consanguineous marriages may be advised to go for prenatal genetic counseling in order to understand the risks for the fetus and also get prompt medical help at earlier stages. For example, conditions like congenital Cataract and Glaucoma can be surgically corrected if diagnosed and treated early on in life. Early intervention, low vision aids, and other rehabilitative measures, can aid in improving quality of vision in visually impaired children, thereby greatly improving their quality of life.

Ms. Mallika Ravi

HTBF is delighted to announce granting of scholarship to Mr Anoop Kumar, who performed phenomenally by scoring 93.40% in the Senior Secondary Board examinations and has got admission to study a 5 year integrated program to study Law at the prestigious National Law University Delhi

He has thanked HTBF profusely for the help. He feels “ in the current scenario when technology has penetrated deep in to the lives, disability becomes immaterial in one's way to success”

Another notable student is Deepak in Mumbai who has secured the HTBF scholarship for studying for Master's Degree in the prestigious Tata Institute of Social Sciences. Deepak has also thanked HTBF “ from the core of the heart”. He feels that the HTBF scholarship encourages the visually challenged to “attain a position in the society based on merit and empathy, rather than sympathy”.

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VISION FOR LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION
INTERVIEWS

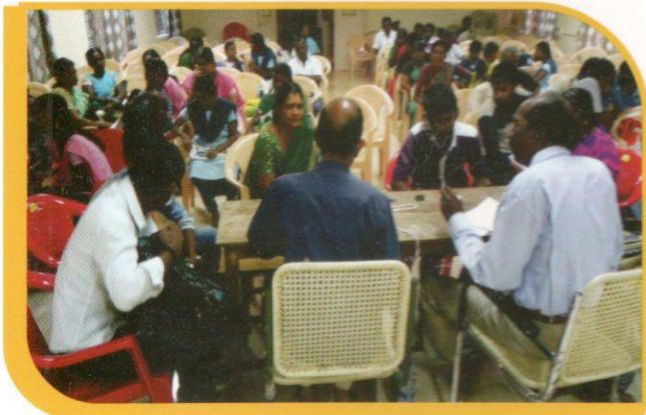
IAB, Madurai



Fergusson College, Pune



Rani Anna College, Trichy



IIP College, Delhi



Hindu College, Delhi



Old GDC College, Indore



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From Mother of a Visually Handicapped Child to A Volunteer of Help The Blind Foundation

As the parents of a blessed child, Chandana, we have gone through a lot of ups and downs but by Gods' grace, we, as a family overcame all the challenges and stood along with our kid to make her the person we see her today. Our experiences, challenging as they may be, have made us strong human beings.

Thanks to our dear daughter, we met amazing people and learnt a lot on the values of compassion. What if our kid has no vision, she has had guiding lamps in her life that made her path fun-filled and brighter. Those lamps are none other than Mr. Paul D'Souza, a renowned techie working on remaking of refreshable Braille and Madam Merlyn D'Souza, his mother. With their motivating spirit and compassion, they re-energised us not only in making our kid a successful executive in a large Accountancy firm but also extend our hand to other needy children. Our registered trust 'Envision Trust', is meeting the needs of a few special children in a simple but effective way.

Then, we met a person striving to "improve the lives of blind students by providing them access to Higher education and enabling them to get jobs", Mr. Sivaji Rao and through him, we became a part of Help The Blind Foundation (HTBF) as a volunteer. This gave us an opportunity to meet a lot of specially blessed children and interact with them closely regarding their life and aspirations and as a person with a similarly placed child, we could empathise their situations much better.

As a volunteer of HTBF, we were also thrilled to meet another inspiring person Dr. Lalithamba, of Vijayanagar First Grade College and who is fully dedicated to the welfare of these students. Her experiences with these special kids made me richer with a better appreciation of the lives of these kids.

We thank Help the Blind Foundation for giving us an opportunity in their project and of course, our daughter, Chandana but for whom we would not have had all these rich and valuable experiences in life.

Latha Chandrasekhar
Volunteer HTBF Bangalore

After the Interviews, Scholarship Disbursement

**Ms Induben Merchant, a donor of our
Foundation and an alumnus handing over the
scholarship to a student of Wilson College, Mumbai**



**Our Trustee Mr Ramani handing over the
scholarship to a student
at Ram Narain Ruia College Mumbai**



We request you to let us know your views on the contents as well as presentation of this newsletter. As one of the new entrants in this field, we need your inputs and guidance to make this newsletter presentable and newsworthy and serve the cause of the visually impaired students.

**Please send your comments to
info@helptheblind.in**