

# Love of Learning

## Visions for an Educational Centre



*It is up to us.*

*It is hard work, and it needs doing.*

*If we do not do it, this will not be done.*

Plan First Steps

April 2023

## Early Reading Program

Impact: 50-100 children  
Started (1/2023)  
Budget: 0 €

- High school and college students visit street camp residents four times and reads to 1-3 year olds (age appropriate reading and narrating)
- Children get registered and ticked off whenever being read to so as to track their progress
- Goal: 10 minutes per child, at least 3 times a week
- Books: Hard board child books in Hindi, narrating in Hindi or local dialect, depending on volunteer

**WHY?** There is strong evidence that reading to children below the age of 3 has a tremendous effect on their literacy and language skills (Dunst et. al, 2012). This is even more true to children that suffer neglect and a lack of mental stimulation.

## Damini Learning Centre

Impact: 30 children  
1st batch starts 6/2023  
Budget: 17.500 €

- A learning centre in which each child can study according to its developmental stage and readiness, not age. Two pillars:
  - **Pre-school** offers full-day teaching including, but not limited to: Breakfast, fruit snack, lunch, practical hygiene, music, free and structured play, art activities, physical exercise and games
  - **Individualized on-the-street teaching** for older students that have dropped out (enrolling them at N.I.O.S. grade 5 or 8 level, tracking their progress as well as their offline





- activities activities digitally in order to always be up to date in regards to their studies, even if they would show up only once a month, teaching them individually with no judgment for absency or non-compliance)
- All students and their families get enrolled in our care program creating access to health care and support when it comes to nutrition needs
- Learning centre principles:
  - Montessori-oriented
  - Material and activity based teaching
  - Strict non-violence and non-discrimination policy
  - Instead of class levels, content modules – allow for more individualized learning
  - Teaching of language, both Hindi AND English, is phonemic based, with reading only taught after phonemic awareness is developed
  - Based of effectiveness studies (thus, focusing on collective teacher efficacy, strengthening executive functions, etc.)

## WHY?

Especially children with developmental delays because of trauma and malnourishment need individualized structures in order to bridge learning gaps.

In addition, any schooling efforts needs to supplement parental care in areas where it is not sufficient, e.g. hygiene awareness, food intake, or mental stimulation.

The high risk of street children dropping out needs to be countered with a program even more low-threshold then a learning centre. The teacher must go where the students live to motivate them to learn, even if it is only for a few hours each month. Statistically, each year of completed education counts (Chatterji, 2008).

Phonemic awareness is a prerequisite of reading and writing and needs to be taught well before the introduction of letters and number signs.



## Diya Teacher Training Program

- Facilitated by Kati face-to-face whenever in Varanasi, or online (less frequently) when abroad
- Building an online video-based teacher training course for teachers to self-study, resulting in a gamified mobile app (my thesis)
- Participating schools: Asha Deep (Narottampur), Sunbeam School (Mughalsarai), Badi Asha (Aurangabad), Donate an Hour (Gurgaon)

Impact: 500 children  
Started 11/2022  
Budget: 0 €



## WHY?

Collective teacher efficacy is the one of the most effective boosters of teaching-learning quality (Hattie, 2018). It means: Believing as a team in their ability to positively affect students. This belief needs to be built with the help of principals by:

- building instructional knowledge & skills
- enabling teachers to share
- Provide actionable feedback
- Involve teachers in decision-making



## Neha Boarding Home

Impact: 40 students  
Planned for 2025  
Budget: 25.000€

- Registering a boarding home (“Hostel”), with parents paying minimal fees. Simultaneously, they get supported by Damini Learning Centre's Nutrition program – they receive double the amount of food worth the fees they pay
- Child-caretaker ratio of 1:10 at all times
- Family-like atmosphere with separate families (1 staff per 10 children) that live together in a small apartment
- Extracurricular activities include, but are not limited to: Sexual abuse prevention, trauma therapy, coaching, personality and skill development, dance and yoga classes, gardening, ball games, chess
- Students finishing their four year course at Damini Learning Centre then transition to the Shivpur School (in collaboration with Asian Bridge NGO) and complete their Elementary education at our boarding home there.



## WHY?

Decade long experience shows that only the provision of a stable, family-like home enables children to overcome the multitude of obstacles they face by being born to alcohol-abusing, violent and illiterate parents on the street. If not admitted to a boarding home, students usually drop out after grade one.

## Future Education Program

Impact: 40 students  
Started 5/2021  
Budget: 29.000 €

- Fees for schooling, tuition and university or vocational training for 40 students
- Livelihood scholarships for former street children without familial support structures

## WHY?

Students that come from a marginalized background do not do well if they are only supported until the start of adulthood. There is no money or social capital in their families to help them find a way forward. Thus, we support our students until the end

