



# Bethel Student Centre®

## NURTURING THE DESIRE TO LEARN

Siddarthanagar, Jalahalli West, in Bangalore is a slum that houses over 1500 families from the lowest economic strata. Most households are headed by illiterate, labour-class, often alcoholic, men engaged in work such as driving or masonry. The women folk are forced to work as housemaids, helpers or contract labour to supplement family incomes. The meagre incomes of the households results in children being deprived of the opportunity to learn, even if they are school going. The net result is a vicious circle that puts the next generation in the same position as their parents.

## A RAY OF HOPE

Bethel Student Centre came into being to provide the children of slum-dwellers an opportunity to learn and make a better life for themselves. The Centre was started as a registered, non-profit society in 1997 and has been actively engaged in nurturing the desire to learn through:

- Daily after-school classes for children of all ages
- Syllabus focused and language tuition by trained teachers
- Personality development classes to enhance confidence and leadership qualities.
- Music classes for interested children
- Open general knowledge classes on Saturday

The children also undergo regular counselling sessions and are also taken on field trips and educational tours to broaden their horizons.

**Realizing that hunger for learning is often killed by hunger for food, the Centre provides children a balanced, nutritious meal every evening.**

Children also engage in sports, games and physical training every evening, so that the body is as active as the mind.



## PUTTING HEALTH INTO LIFE

The students of the Centre come from marginalized families and their living conditions can, at best, be considered basic. They are thus exposed to unhygienic conditions that can have a negative effect on their health. To promote, health and hygiene consciousness, the Centre offers:

- Personal hygiene items such as soaps, toothpaste, hair oil, brushes and talcum powder on a monthly basis
- Regular classes on health/hygiene awareness for children and parents
- Periodic medical check-ups and a free medical camp, every quarter
- Health screening and health awareness programmes on HIV, Child abuse, STD, etc., by professional resources persons, regularly.

## A WIDER LOOK AT WELFARE

While learning and health remain the core activity, The Centre looks at providing a sense of wellbeing to its students.

The initiatives taken in this direction include:

- Group games, cultural activities and sports competitions
- Counselling sessions for parents
- Educational films
- Career guidance
- Children's and family get togethers
- Medical assistances in emergencies
- Parental guidance & health awareness for parents
- Self-help groups
- House visits by members of the Centre

## PLANS IN THE PIPELINE

Even as the Bethel Student Centre continues its efforts to expand and strengthen its core activities, it has plans to take community welfare to the next level. Based on the needs of the community it serves, the Centre hopes to establish the following:

Day - Care Centre for infants	This will serve the needs of female daily wages labourers and also enable elder siblings to attend school by releasing them from the responsibility of taking care of infants.	Orphanage for deprived children	Orphans and children with single parents are exposed to a host of dangers such as child abuse, addictions etc. This facility will provide the protection, affection and guidance that is lacking in their lives.
Sports Resource Centre	This Centre will help children focus on fitness and help them develop sporting skills that could help them make a better life.	Healthcare Centre	The local community has limited access to healthcare and lacks emergency treatment facilities that could save lives.
Homes for the needy	As slum dwellers, the people of the community do not have even a proper roof over their heads. The homes, with all basic facilities would shelter them from the elements and be the base for building family bonds.	Vocational Training Centre	Being illiterate and unskilled, the members of the community eke out an existence from petty jobs. The Vocational Training Centre would provide skills that would give them better earning opportunities.



You are requested to kindly extend your loving and compassionate support generously to Bethel Student Centre:

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