

**Special Issue of Learning to Fly** March & April 2020

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## Stories of Hope, Dedication and Resilience during Covid

### **Dear Friends,**

*These times are the most precarious times, children are seeing in India and around the world. Neither they nor their parents have seen anything like this.*

*The most affected population struggling to survive due to the sudden announcement of lockdown are the people and children living on street & street like situations. These are more prone to catch the deadly virus as they do not have space to lock themselves. The most vulnerable are the children who are living on the pavement, under flyovers, in front of shops in the market and on the terrace roofs of the shops. Children working in tea stalls, wayside eateries, textile shops, motor parts shops and the daily wage earners and rag pickers. These children could not move back to their distant villages and the sudden lock down gave them an unpredictable future. The lockdown has also restricted the movement of our Child Rights Advocates (CRA) who have been always the best mentors in the lives of children. Many of the parents were dependent on our CRAs for advice and support during any challenge in their day to day lives.*

*In these times, it is important to keep the children living alone and those that live with their families engaged so that their daily habit of studying and focus built up over the years is not lost in this lockdown. So that they do not fall into despair and bad habits. Our CRAs are in constant touch with the children, both living alone and those living with their parents, motivating them, encouraging them to study, make paintings, asking parents to narrate their childhood stories and utilize this time properly. The key is to keep both children and their parents engaged and positive, as a positive household or environment gives rise to a positive outlook and a resilient spirit.*

*Ever since the lockdown began, Butterflies has also been serving cooked food to close than 1500 people everyday and gradually shifted to dry rations and sanitation items as advised by the police. Once the lockdown ends, our thrust areas would be mental and psycho-social support, especially to children and parents who have lost their savings, support parents to get necessary legal documents, to help them access government welfare and reassure them that the worst is behind them and their best years are yet to come.*

*We share below some experiences of our frontline warriors, Bhawan Singh, Rishi, Pappu, Chand, Oli, Thomas and many others who went beyond the call of duty to serve the hungry and the forgotten. We share stories of hope, stories of new bonding, stories of dreams told by our children to our CRAs, their bhaiyya, didi. I hope reading their positivity, their worries and their hopes will help us become more concerned and give them hope for the future.*

**Stay safe, stay positive.**

**Rita Panicker**



### **A call beyond duty....Bhawan Singh, Chef, BSCC**

"I know what is hunger, I myself was a street child once. The lockdown had begun and I had almost reached my



### **Driving to give hope... Rishi, Driver, Food Van, BSCC**

"I have been driving the food van to our catering events often. But this time it was different... [read more](#)



### **Staying back to serve... Pappu, Chand and our kids at BSCC**

" We at BSCC were also planning to go back to our homes when we decided to stay back and help in the meal preparation and distribution...[read more](#)

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*Sana, Alam, Shareef, Hassan, Satish, Richa, Barun and Meenakshi, our child rights advocates narrate their experiences with children and their families*



### Going beyond studies...

“In order to meet this huge hunger crisis, the government announced free ration distribution. In okhla mandi area, five families did not have the ration card, due to which they could not get the ration. The children were very worried and called me and asked my help...[read more](#)



### Staying Connected...

#### Social media for good

“Some schools have started online classes for students but without books, there's little they can achieve. When the lockdown began, we had informed all the children and also formed a WhatsApp group with children who have smart phones. Some children call us directly to ...[read more](#)

### Stories of New Bonding...

“Some children with families are relatively happy as they are spending quality time with their families after a very long time. For them, this is the first time when everybody is at home. Some children said...[read more](#)



### Stories of Hope...

“When will we meet you, our school teacher hasn't called us even once”, said some children from Hathi Park. One child called us and asked me to make a curfew pass and come and meet them. Another said that their studies also come under essential service and that our centre should be opened....[read more](#)



### Stories of Dreams yet to come true...

“Will we be able to continue our studies, will we be able to go to college?” These are the common worries among older adolescents as there are high chances of reverse migration of families along with their children. ....[read more](#)

### Critical challenges...

“Children in Jama Masjid live alone, with friends and relatives. Most of them call me, worried about their future, their jobs, their families' safety, their wages etc. We helped them get their last month's wages from their employers and directed them to the Butterflies food van. ....[read more](#)



### From Didi and Bhaiyya...

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"I've never been out of office for so long. I am frequently in touch with the children. I am also trying spend quality time with my family. Who could

even have imagined that the whole world will come to a standstill. I though we are spending time at home with our family and trying to remain happy but there is always...[read more](#)



### Rescue, Relief, Rehabilitation

Ever since the lockdown began Butterflies had been serving close to 1500 cooked meals to homeless children, adults and families. Due to police advisory, we are now serving relief material packets consisting of dry food rations (food grains, pulses, cooking oil and spices) and sanitation items. Cooking utensils are also provided to those who need it.

Acting on the request of Railway Protection Force (RPF), South district CHILDLINE also provided dry food rations to people living near Safdarjung railway station and face masks with hand sanitisers for 600 children living in the adjacent areas of the Safdarjung Railway station and Hazrat Nizamuddin Railway station. Food and medicines were organised for 12 girls in collaboration with the Delhi Commission of Protection of Child Rights (DCPCR) at a Madrasa in Mehrauli. CHILDLINE has been receiving calls to support children stuck due to the lockdown (in educational hostels, relative's home, friend's home) to reach back to their home. With the help of National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD) one child from Gurugram was restored to his parents.



### CHILD HEALTH AND SPORTS COOPERATIVE Partner Stories

Shreyas in Kerala and Hamara Foundation in Mumbai have been holding medical camps for people from nearby areas. Shreyas has also organised activities for children on poetry writing, online drawing and mobile photography while at home during the lockdown. Pratigya has undertaken massive relief efforts in collaboration with district administration.

Butterflies Child Health & Sports Cooperative prepared leaflets on myths and facts of COVID-19 for CHSC members. CDK has also geared itself to help members with advances and withdrawals to help children who are leaving the city.

**We are serving more and more everyday.  
Can you help us?**

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Donate Now (Foreign Citizens/Organisations)

Watch a short movie on our intervention during Covid.  
*Serving the hungry, the homeless...and the forgotten.*



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