



A sewing student at PCI's Vocational Training Center proudly shows her handiwork

A CAUSE FOR CONCERN

India is the second most populated country in the world, home to over one billion people. More than 400 million live on less than \$1 a day. Caught in a vicious cycle of poverty, many families face dire situations, and children are often forced to leave home and work instead of attending school. In India, estimates of

street and working children vary from 10-25 million, with an estimated 100,000 in Delhi alone. Similar to the street and working children throughout the world, those in India are also at high-risk for disease and abuse. Once they are on the streets, they are off the radar screen for governments, schools, and public safety nets.

PCI recognizes the many struggles that these vulnerable children and youth face and has committed itself to providing education, life and vocational skills to improve their livelihood opportunities.

Program Overview

For over a decade, PCI's Vulnerable Children and Youth Program has provided a range of empowering interventions and support to address the educational, vocational, emotional, intellectual and physical needs of at-risk and underserved children and youth in Delhi. Through a network of outreach workers, PCI targets street and working children and youth affected by unsafe living conditions that leave them vulnerable to increased exploitation, disease, and physical and sexual abuse.

PCI has established 'drop-in centers' in two communities -- Red Fort and Nizamuddin Railway Station – and a vocational training center in New Seemapuri. These centers have kept countless children off the streets with a daily menu of educational and recreational activities and skills development. Long-term stay is also being provided to boys in the Mewat District of Haryana, just outside Delhi, where PCI operates a shelter home.

Through daily remedial education classes at the drop-in centers, children are taught basic literacy and math skills. In addition, PCI provides children with a life-skills education session and linkages to the National Institutes of Open Schooling. So far, approximately half of the illiterate children that have attended classes at the drop-in centers have reached working levels of reading and writing, and approximately 200 children and youth each year are able to pass examinations to enroll in government schools.

IMPACT: Through two drop-in centers, a vocational training center, and a shelter home, PCI provides shelter, education and employment opportunities for about 900 vulnerable children and youth each year.



ASPIANI'S STORY

Aspiani used to start each morning at 5:00 am rummaging through garbage bins in search of recyclable waste, while only earning about a dollar a day. The garbage bins reeked from rotten and decayed food and she often had to fight off dogs roaming around the garbage bins. Discarded syringes, glass, and chemicals would often leave Aspiani with wounds on her hands and feet. Aspiani never felt clean and truly abhorred her job, but did not know of any good alternatives. Introduced to PCI's vocational training center, Aspiani received important life skills mentorship, basic education, and dress designing skills that allowed her to leave her garbage sorting work behind. She now works at home as a dress designer and helps support her family.



Children having their lunch at shelter home

In order to sustain a life off the streets, these children must acquire marketable skills that eventually enable them to get jobs. PCI offers vocational training in dress making/tailoring, cosmetology, art and traditional henna painting, and computer skills. PCI seeks to not only train young people in employable skills, but to help place them with employers as well. PCI assists the older youth in securing apprenticeships and sometimes brings potential employers to the vocational training center to interview students for potential jobs.

Recognizing the importance of family, PCI seeks to reunite with family members those children who may have run away from home, been trafficked, or accidentally separated from their parents. This is an extensive and difficult process involving family tracing and assessment, counseling of the family and of the



Children doing their homework at the drop-in-center

child, and follow-up to ensure the child's continued well-being. Since the start of PCI's Vulnerable Children and Youth Program, over 1,100 children have been re-united with their families.

About PCI

PCI is a San Diego-based international non-profit health and development organization whose mission is to prevent disease, improve community health, and promote sustainable development. Since the organization was founded in 1961, PCI has grown to reach over 4.5 million people annually through programs based in 16 countries spanning the Americas, Asia and Africa. PCI established its presence in India in 1997 and since then has worked to address the needs of India's impoverished and most vulnerable populations. In 2000, PCI expanded this effort to include the estimated 100,000 street and working children in Delhi.



Children at Red Fort drop-in Center, Delhi

India's Vulnerable Children and Youth Program is a PCI Legacy Program. These programs have unique importance for PCI, and are chosen because they represent some of our fundamental areas of focus – maternal and child health and nutrition – whose roots go back to the inception of PCI. These programs have strong track records of saving lives in the most vulnerable communities worldwide, and providing measurable solutions for preventable complications.

PCI is committed to these programs, as our signature strategies to serve communities in need. "Legacy" for PCI means continuity, compassion, consistency, and commitment. Partner with us on our Legacy programs, and start making your own impact today.



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