



Registered UK Charity No. 1122876

Newsletter Winter 2016

The Awake Mercy Home was founded in 2002 to provide family-style care and support for a small number of children in need. The home now houses 63 children and is run by a husband and wife team (Krishnamoorthi and Elsie), with the support of a local committee of trustees. HAPSI has supplied funds to this registered Indian charity since 2008.

Velanganni's life in Awake and his dreams

My name is A. Velanganni. I am a 21 year old young man, who came to the Awake Home 8 years ago from a small village called Kallathupatti. I have both parents and two sisters, one older and one younger. My mother is a housemaid and introduced me to Elsie and Krishna, showing her support for me to join the home and improve my life chances. My own father had no interest in sending us to school and Elsie helped look after my mother and my sisters.

I was at Awake home from my 9th standard to the end of my Polytechnic course. I was able to score 406 marks in my 10th Standard Public exams. After completing 12th standard, I joined the 'Tool and Die' diploma course and successfully completed it a year ago. Now, I am working in a company in Chennai, named Renault- Nippon Automative India Private Limited, which is a car manufacturing company.

I was very fortunate to spend the 7 years from 2007-2014 at the Awake Home. I have learnt a lot from my time there and feel that all those times and experiences were like seeds for the rest of my future life.

When I joined the home, I was always afraid and anxious without any reason, because of my own family's strength. Now, I am a courageous man, able to tolerate all my problems much better. I am currently working and staying in Chennai through my own efforts. I come and visit Awake Home whenever I come to my native village, so that I can spend more time with the children. They are also very affectionate towards me. I see the children as my family members, so I try to help them in what I am able to.

My personal dream now is to start a small scale industry in due course, where I would like to give opportunities to our own children who are interested in industrial training, to work in it, with the guidance of our Krishna and Elsie. I would like to strengthen my thinking in this area.

Thank you, A. Velanganni



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Welcome New Friend and Teacher

In July a newly qualified British teacher, Lucy Neuberger, left her cosy, well ordered life in UK to taste the hectic, joyous, colourful, aromatic, inspiring and loving community that is the Awake family. What follows are a few recollections.

This summer, I had the privilege of spending time at the Awake Mercy Home. I had originally heard about the home from Stephen Scoffham on a trip to India earlier in the year and was keen to visit and learn more.



AMH is a vibrant, busy place that rises with the sun and only sleeps when the energy runs out. I spent most of my days teaching the younger children English through simple nursery rhymes, games and pictures. Lessons were often chaotic as the children were more keen to play rather than settle down and learn.

AMH is one large family that you can't help but become part of, the children's laughter is infectious and you'll never be allowed to just sit in a corner quietly!

What I enjoyed the most was the fact that everything is collective and communal, from the jobs children carry out in the morning to prayers in the evening. The sense of togetherness is wonderful to see and I look forward to returning again next summer.

The Standard II children have become pretty good at 'One, Two, Buckle My Shoe' and can now recite it almost perfectly (with a little help). Today, I decided to teach them animals with a different action for each one (watching them imitate monkeys was particularly entertaining).



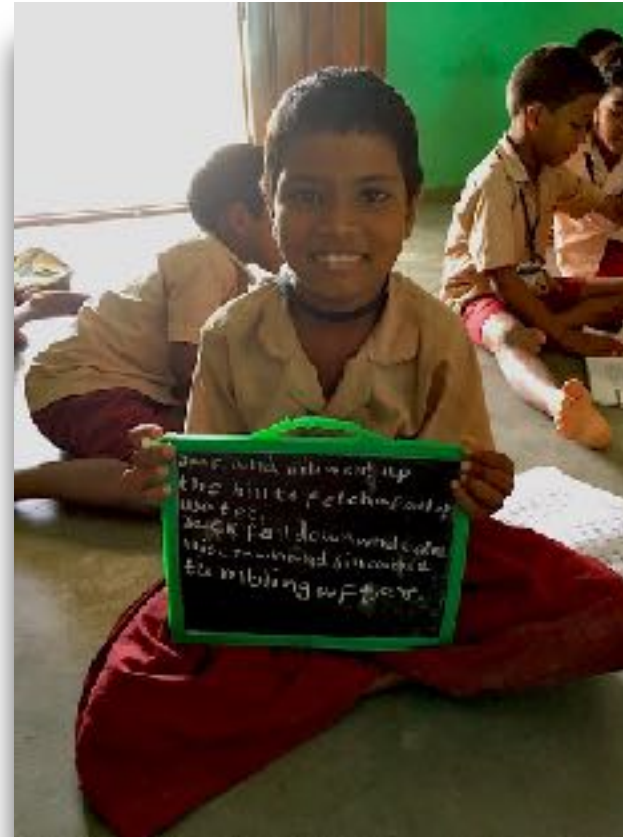
On Saturday, the children do their weekly test (a combination of Tamil, English and Mathematics) The more studious children seemed absorbed in their work, while others seemed more distracted. Soon the children began to play. One little boy (who became affectionately known as 'Mini Monkey') demonstrated his ability to shimmy up a tree without any apparent fear of heights at all!



The rest of the morning passed through playing games, reading and drawing. Some of the children challenged me to a thumb war, which quickly became very competitive.



Lucy's Visit to Awake (cont.)



I tried to teach 'A Sailor Went to Sea' as it became one of the children's favourite rhymes/clapping games.... It definitely needs a little more work! As usual, the afternoon and early evening was spent horsing around, mostly with the smaller children, who are always so willing to participate in any game I initiate. I taught them a few gym balances and exercises, which they loved. It is wonderful to be silly and run around outside without any complaints of boredom from the children!

After school on Monday, the children busied themselves with different activities. Coconut seedlings were being planted, frisbee and chase games were being played and some of the girls sat quietly making jasmine flower garlands. I was lucky enough to be given one of the garlands to clip into my hair. For the rest of the evening, each time I moved my head, the scent of the flowers would waft into my nose...

Today, one of the younger girls showed me a game played with stones. One stone is thrown in the air and whilst it is in the air, you pick up another stone off the ground and then catch the one that was thrown. This took far more hand-eye coordination than I possess! Needless to say, being shown up by a six year old was more than a little embarrassing!

RSTC School in Awake



This is P Rajalakshmi. She is from a local village where her father tends cattle and her mother is so unwell she cannot work. Raja has two older brothers. The eldest is seventeen and helps his father in the fields and the other is at polytechnic.

Raja has had a break in her schooling and is behind in her studies. She is eleven years old and in the sixth standard. She tries very hard to improve her school performance and is very interested in helping others. She is part of the RSTC

group of children who are taught within the Awake home in order to give them more confidence in their abilities so they can be re-introduced into the state school system and have a good chance of success.

The RSTC children with their customary smiles - school is over for the day.



Deepavali (Diwali)

It costs £260 a year to keep a child at the Awake Mercy Home. The government's RSTC (Residential Special Training Centre) scheme pays according to the number of children and local sponsors cover a further 10% of the total. This means that over 50% of the cost of the new scheme is covered by HAPsi. Without our loyal supporters it would be impossible

HAPsi has no administration costs.

All funds received are used to help needy children in south India. Remember that if you pay tax HAPsi can claim Gift Aid. Please ask for a form to

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The names of individual children have been changed to protect