



Helping Alleviate Poverty in south India
Registered UK Charity No. 1122876

Newsletter Summer 2022

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 is now housing over 40 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, when the present site was purchased.

Over 200 children have had the Awake experience over the years from 2015 - 2021 giving them a brighter future. Many coming from low caste, are semi or full orphans, or are from broken families.

This would not have happened without your loyal support

High-Flying with the return to the Awake

All schools in the area were opened on February 1 this year, after the fall in Covid-19 infections, so the children returned to the home at the end of January for formal teaching in schools. 10th and 12th standard children had examinations but all other years were not assessed by the government.

The rise in the cost of living increases steadily in Tamil Nadu as it does here. This affects the ability to buy all groceries and energy such as gas for cooking and fuel for vehicles. The rate of increase is approximately 20%. This severely harms those in the poorest areas and their children's health.



The Awake Mercy Mission



Krishna and Elsie have taken it as a priority to improve the life chances of all Awake children, but especially the so-called 'dalits' - those from Scheduled Castes and Tribes who live in villages with no amenities and have little or no schooling. It is so difficult to change a child's attitude to education when past

generations have no school experience, and their home environment acts as a major influence in degrading and limiting their choice of a future.

It is therefore very challenging to give the necessary care and education to children who have suffered long absences from school due to the coronavirus. Most have had limited access to mobile phones but the exposure to social media has created many issues and the children have lost their respect for elders, parents and teachers, who they often treat as enemies. Although distance learning has been taking place for some schools in the Dindigul area, there has been virtually no learning taking place in the hill villages whilst the pandemic has caused the closure of schools. In Awake the trend in these problems is being reduced by continual daily counselling.

The children of Awake have been better served through the care and expertise of committed staff who have themselves passed through the home as children. Individual and group counselling has been a very important feature of the work, increasing the confidence of the children through the development of skills, but perhaps more importantly giving them the opportunity to share their personal feelings and problems. There is plenty of group work which enables them to mingle freely and learn to accept their weaknesses, but also use their strengths for the good of all. Individual and team activities help in producing respect, trust and loyalty. Many Awake children have been prominent in successful school teams and individual activities of the area.

New Appointment

Elsie has recently been appointed as a full member of the Dindigul District Child Welfare Committee. From an interview list of nearly 100 applicants she was chosen to be one of five members whose duty it is to monitor and address the issues of children up to the age of eighteen in the Dindigul area. This is a great honour and also raises the profile of the Awake home. As has been reported before, the Awake Mercy Home is in the top three best children's homes in that area and it has been at the forefront in helping children who have had little or no schooling in their village environments.



The Residential Special Training Centre (RSTC) scheme was initiated by the Indian Government in 2015 and enabled funding to be provided for selected establishments to take in educationally needy children to be cared for and given schooling. The project was withdrawn last year but it could be reintroduced for the coming school year beginning in June and only Awake and one other NGO in the area would be asked to participate. Elsie will have a great influence in its activities if this happens. She will also oversee the living conditions, education and welfare of many other homes in the area.

Book Day at Awake



World Book Day has been celebrated since April 23 1995, and India loves a reason for celebration so it happens there, as in many other countries worldwide, every year on this day. It has the aim of fostering a respect and love for the contributions books give to our lives, and is being used in the Awake home for the enjoyment of reading and the enhancement of imagination as well as a great way of improving vocabulary.

College Professor Mr Ragnunath and Mr Vadivel Murugan led the day and they were ably assisted by Awake student Prabhakaran. The event was introduced to the children using simple games, but quickly progressed to patriotic and sporting tales, and later with the religious stories of Indian gods. It was a joyous occasion for all and marked the beginning of a change for many.



Awake Medicals



Eye testing, teeth inspection and skin monitoring all took place in the Awake home recently, together with a check on tonsils and the possibility of tuberculosis. Children were prescribed various medicines and multivitamin tablets to help them recover from illness, where necessary. During the pandemic needy families were given medicines, clothes, educational materials and food during several trips around the hill



HAPSI needs your help to spread the word that the charity is essential to underwrite the superb way that Krishna and Elsie are devoting their lives to making the most significant changes in the life choices of so many needy children. **We badly need to increase the supporter base** so that we can guarantee the continued success of the home, an establishment that has deservedly been recognised so many times for its excellence by the Indian authorities in the area.

Please consider giving monthly to ensure we can continue to provide the love and care to the children through the work of the Awake Mercy Home. They do have some local Indian support but at present rely on HAPSI for the bulk of the finance.

Details are given below, but you could also sponsor the treasurer in his efforts to conquer Ditchling Beacon at the end of the London to Brighton bike ride this September; a 55 mile ride on a veteran hand-made bike by an exceedingly veteran badly-maintained rider.

Donations can be made on the HAPSI Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=hapsicharity>

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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Send donations, cheques to **HAPSI**, or ask for bank details to create a standing order by contacting HAPSI at

Treasurer, HAPSI, 23 Onslow Gardens, Wimborne BH21 2QG

or donate on the website at www.hapsi.co.uk

You can make contact by email at hapsi@btinternet.com

The names of individual children have been changed to protect them.



Christmas decorations



Girl Protection Day
(Boys in girls' dresses)



Girl Protection Day talk by Krishna



Christmas prayers



Dance on Girl Protection Day



Ready for school



Breakfast



Boys' House, new stage and roof



Rangoli creation for Pongal festival



Thirukarthikai festival, light celebration