

SAVING LIVES AND SERVING OUR FAMILIES

SAFE TRANSPORT FOR CHILDREN TO COURTS

Over the last few decades there has been increase in numbers of children in need of external care with placements in 488 voluntary residential care institutions and 22 State-run residential institutions, including remand homes, certified schools and receiving homes directed through court orders. A key concern noted early on in our work was that children attending court hearings were travelling with adult prisoners. With the assistance of the Central Remand Prison and in collaboration with the Institute of Human Rights, CHA since 2007 provided a transport service for juveniles from Ranmutugala and Makola Certified School; transport to and from the Magistrate Courts (MC); newly admitted children to the health clinics in the General Hospital for medical check-ups; weekends from homes to the remand prison for children who are from outside of Colombo. All children are provided with snacks and tea. The programme is now suspended for want of resources.

RE-INTEGRATION OF WOMEN INMATES IN INSTITUTIONS

Women particularly those in custody under the Vagrance Ordinance need considerable assistance with avenues for a new start in life. They need be-friending and counselling with the help of professional counsellors and a regular team that tracks the improvements of the inmates; monthly events combined with motivational talks by speakers; maximizing/capacitating in their skills; combining monthly recreational activities to create more enthusiasm among the inmates; personal development programmes and life skills training. The vision is to create an environment for women to confidently be a part of a society where her contribution to the community and family will be rewarding and worthwhile.

PROMOTING ACTIVE AGEING

Interventions include advocacy, sensitization and development of linkages. The outcomes envisaged include promotion and facilitating development of accessible, appropriate and affordable health and social services that provides cost-effective, equitable and dignified care to elders; enable active participation of older people in all aspects of society; improve health and well-being and increase independence of older people and promotes Active Ageing through access to age-friendly care and creation of age-friendly environments. A hidden aspect is the experience, skills and capacity for those who are active while retiring to contribute back to society as an invaluable resource among for others through organised volunteer programmes.

LIFELINE

In 2004, there are close to 200,000 substance abusers in Sri Lanka. By 2009, the number of substance abusers had increased to 294,000, and is expected to rise to 300,000 in the next few years. Furthermore, many of the substance abusers in Sri Lanka are introduced to these substances when they are as young as 17 years old. In present times, substance abusers range from those addicted Heroin, Cocaine, Marijuana, Prescription Drugs, Performance Enhancers and Inhalants, which presents an image of the extent of substance abuse in Sri Lanka. Therefore, CHA has with “Lifeline focused on instilling hope and confidence in abusers who need help with rehabilitation, and awareness of the dangers of addiction and substances. The core of the project is the Call Center which will act as the first step to Rehabilitation. Intervention include establishing an Anti Substance Abuse helpline, manned by volunteers who will befriend users or family members of users of substances, provide information on Rehabilitation Homes, Spiritual Counselling, and Medical Assistance; conducting Anti-Substance programs in small communities and slums, with the Police; conducting Substance Awareness programs in schools; incentive based job finding for former substance abusers, who have undergone Rehabilitation ; creating a network of Medical, Professional and Public Corporations who will all be motivated by the common goal of minimizing substance abuse. The idea of serving citizens of our society so that any person with a substance related problem will be able to get swift assistance is what motivates this project. This project also hopes to mobilize the general public against the use and smuggling of illegal substance. Furthermore, we hope to give a new life to former abusers who have completed their rehabilitation process and thereby enable their contributions as productive citizens.

SUPPORTING AND INTEGRATING INMATES OF PRISONS INTO SOCIETY.

The day a citizen enters a prison is the day planning begins for the day he or she leaves prison. It calls for a total shift of emphasis from current thinking. Interventions involve developing partnership with prison staff, inventorying skills of inmates, obtaining family details, supporting family contact, exercising options to deploy skills during time as an inmate, psychosocial support, planning for release from and supporting 6 months post release former prisoners into society as productive citizens; prepares prisoners to develop and maintain an enterprise focus; executes practical steps that prepare prisoners for re-entry with partnership and cooperation among prison authorities, community organizations, prisoners and their families.

These projects require volunteers young and old, partners and invites younger CEO's and managers to join as drivers of these interventions.