

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2017



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

By the time you all will receive this newsletter it would already be 2018 and therefore let me begin by wishing you all a very Happy New Year.

When I look back at 2017, I am filled with a sense of gratitude for being able to reach out to approximately 15,000 children in 19 states by creating nearly 300 Toy Libraries which involved sending out nearly 500 Toy Kits. This was only possible with the help of our ever enthusiastic team at the Sorting Centre and our partner organizations who have helped us reach out to the hinterlands of India.

I also take this opportunity to extend my thanks to the railways for having played an important role in helping us reach out to remote villages and districts. Transportation of all our Toy Kits is heavily dependent on the railways, and I thank them for being extremely reliable.

Just like 2017, in the New Year 2018, I am hoping The Toy Bank continues to grow with these support systems in place and also make new associations.

We are hoping to reach out to 50,000 children in the coming year and have our presence all across India. This is only possible with the support of you all.

Once again wishing you all a very Happy New Year!

Vidyun Goel
Director
The Toy Bank



46 Toy Libraries in Balwadis in North Shahdara, Delhi

We created 46 Toy Libraries in partnership with Pratham impacting 1012 children. As a part of evaluating and understanding the kind of impact that toys have on children, we visited the Balwadis in Seelampur. Interaction with the children helped us gain knowledge on how kids are benefitting with the use of toys.

The teachers told us that the children were extremely happy with the toys. In fact, all of them have one selected one favourite toy. Some have also named their dolls.

We are often asked how dolls and teddy bears come under the umbrella of educative toys. Role playing is also an important aspect in the growth of children. When children do role plays, they naturally become someone or something else. Role play stimulates their imagination and enhances their social development, encourages friendship through cooperation, listening and turn taking". Therefore, role play is a really vital activity for our children. It is no surprise that child therapists use play therapy to help children process and cope with difficult situations and experiences



Creation of 21 Toy Libraries for 1159 children in Rayagada District, Odisha

In our attempt to reach out to the hinterlands of India, we were able to create 21 Toy Libraries for 1159 underprivileged children in Rayagada District.

This was done in collaboration with a grassroots NGO working towards education of children especially adivasi girls. Since we at The Toy Bank also aim at reaching out to as many underprivileged children as we can, we decided to intervene with the adivasi children in Rayagada District.



25 Toy Libraries in Thakurganj, Bihar for 1859 children

Striving to uphold our vision and mission, we try and reach out to every underprivileged child to ensure they get their Right to Play. Thakurganj Panchayat of Kishanganj District boasts of Literacy Rate at 76% which happens to be more than the state average of a dismal 61%.

Yuman, Executive Director, says, “Before the intervention of The Toy Bank, the children would come to the centre for an hour and then start making excuses to go back home. There is all of a sudden such a drastic change in the behavior of the children especially boys.”

Continuing on how the setting up of Toy Libraries impacted, Yuman said that as a strategy they allowed the children to play with toys only once the classes get over. In order to play with the toys, the children are willing to sit through the entire duration of the classes. In fact, the children have also shown a great increase in their attention span.

She also told us that the children in these villages have hardly had the luxury of playing with toys. The toys that they received have made even the parents happy that their children are able to play with toys.

This project was done in collaboration with Azad India Foundation.



Two Toy Libraries for 89 Children in Centres in Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh

Two Toy Libraries were created in Anantpur, Andhra Pradesh in centres run by The Timbaktu Collective.

Mani, who looks after the project, wrote to us saying “In November 2017, the Nature School received two toy kits. Each of the 55 students have been given a toy and an hour-long play session has been introduced into their daily schedule. The residential students are also taking pride in keeping their toys next to their beds when they sleep.

When they saw teddy bears from the first time, a group of children asked “akka, what are these?” In a couple of days, the bears had been given local names such as ‘Bujamma’ and ‘Kodipetta’”

Role playing has its own benefits, which are often ignored by most people. Teddy bears, dolls etc. are necessary for children of certain age, where giving names to their dolls and playing with them helps in enhancing their creativity and boosting their imagination. Toys shouldn't be seen merely as means of leisure but also as educational aids at every age for a child.



Play Session in Mobile Toy Library in Sohna, Gurgaon



As a part of evaluating and understanding the kind of impact that toys have on children, we visited the Mobile Toy Library in Sohna, Gurgaon. As a part of the curriculum, we do an action song which loosely translates into “I’m alive, awake, alert and enthusiastic”. The children were extremely eager and excited to learn the song and the actions. They mastered the whole song within few minutes! This Toy Library was done in collaboration with UPAY.



Creation of a Toy Library in Bhuriakhop, Sikkim for 54 children

We created a Toy Library in an educational centre in Buriakhop in Sikkim in collaboration with Sikkim Himalaya Academy.. Puja, Vision Director, told us that the children loved the toys and were very excited to receive them.

She said, “Usually, we have always received books and story books for children. We received toys for the first time which got the children really excited!”

Puja realized that the setting up of Toy Libraries has in fact paved a way for enhancing the team work among the children. Earlier, they would just sit and watch TV. However, with the coming in of toys, they spend their time playing instead of wasting time watching TV.



Creation of Toy Library for 132 Children in a Shelter Home in Delhi on International Girl

International Day of the Girl Child (Day of the Girl) is celebrated annually on October 11 to highlight issues concerning the gender inequality facing young girls. This year's theme is "The Power of the Adolescent Girl: Vision for 2030"

There are nearly 600 million girls aged 10 to 19 in the world today, each with limitless individual potential, however they are disappearing from public awareness and the international development agenda. Between inequities in secondary education to protection issues, adolescent girls are uniquely impacted and should benefit from targeted investments and programmes that address their distinct needs. Investing in adolescent girls can have a formidable ripple effect to create a better world by 2030.

In collaboration with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and Department of Women and Child Development (WCD), we have created a Toy Library in a girl's Shelter Home in Delhi.

Rupa, Member of NCPCR says, "NCPCR works on the lines of Right To Recreation for children. For the same, we decided to use toys to help the children. Since, NCPCR works with children and tries to provide them with a friendly and stress free environment, we thought that a toy library would work wonderfully! In fact, we want to scale it up across Delhi now and make sure more toy libraries can be created"



Creation of 10 Toy Libraries for 900 Children in Anganwadis in Uttarakhand



We were able to create 10 Toy Libraries for 900 children in 10 Anganwadis in Uttarakhand in collaboration with Ekal Sanstha.

The 10 Toy Libraries were created in Nanakmatta District.



Creation of a Mobile Toy Library in Lucknow for 150 children

We initiated a Mobile Toy Library in Lucknow for underprivileged children in partnership with Project Khel. Angana, a senior core member wrote to us saying, “At Project KHEL we use the concept of play to engage with the children and deliver Life Skills Education. However, we cater to children aged 8-19 years. Now, with both parents working hard to make ends meet, our children often end up with the role of caregivers for their younger siblings, which obstructs their attendance in our session. So, thanks to the Toy Bank, we now have a mobile toy library which creates a creche sort of a set up during our sessions, so that while the older ones are engaged in our programme, the younger ones remain engaged with the toys. It is a win-win for both kids. Thank you Toy Bank!”

Toys can be used to engage children and channel their energies into a creative medium. We hope to reach out to more underprivileged children and help in enhancing their skills. The benefits of playing bowling are one too many and we are glad to be making an impact in the lives of these children. Exercise, including bowling, lowers your risk of stroke, heart attacks, increases bone density, improves circulation and helps your body utilize oxygen better.



Creation of 8 Toy Libraries for 320 rescued child labourers

The Toy Bank was successfully able to create eight Toy Libraries for children who were rescued as child labourers and school drop outs of the Banjara Community. The Toy Libraries were created for 320 children. Banjaras is a large nomadic community and usually their children also happen to be deprived of proper education.



We wanted to extend our work to this community because it also happens to have a lot of child labourers. Our partnership with Kailash Satyarthi Children's Foundation helped us to reach these children and also create toy libraries for them.

Adesh, Project Officer, told us that the children were extremely excited and jumping with joy once the Toy Kits were unboxed. Till now they have had only access to cricket bats and balls. However, with the range of toys that were sent by The Toy Bank, the younger kids also were involved in playing. The children started playing in groups a change along with few toys. He also added that the parents and the community were very happy with this concept. "The children in fact, told me that have started feeling homely", he added.

Creation of 4 Toy Libraries in NFE Centres for 165 Children in Noida



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Muhammad, who overlooks the project, expressed his happiness by penning down this beautiful poem for us.

"Bachpan ki baat hai,
Baccho ki Aas hai,
Ye Khilone sirf Khilone nahi, Khushiyo ki Saugaat hai..."



Creation of 4 Toy Libraries for 762 orphaned children

We created four Toy Libraries in Mumbai in partnership with Amcha Ghar for 762 children. We created the libraries for orphaned children in their educational centres in Mumbai.

Agatha, Founder, wrote to us, “We would like to thank the toy bank for donating toys to us. Usually it is always thought that toys are for small kids, but we never guessed how effective it would be for the students of higher standards. It was indeed surprising for the students as well as teachers to know how important role would toys play in their learning process. Amcha Ghar is ever grateful to you for providing us with toys. It's helping our students, enjoy studying & get engrossed more & more in learning something new daily.”

Very often, the fact that toys can be educative across all ages is ignored by people at large. This misconception usually happens because toys are seen only as medium of play. However, it develops cognitive skills as well as motor skills in the children.



19 schools pledge to be a part of our School Connect Initiative Delhi/NCR

In order to reach out to children in privileged schools of Delhi/NCR, The Toy Bank organized a networking event with 19 school principals from Delhi/NCR. At the event, they pledged that they will be a part of The Toy Bank by organizing toy collection drives in their schools.



One of the strategies of The Toy Bank is to connect the privileged with the underprivileged. When it comes to donating toys, children are the best resources to tap. And therefore, we believe in encouraging individuals especially children to imbibe in them qualities of sharing and empathy.



Fundraising and Toy Donations by British School

Few children from British School did a fundraising event for The Toy Bank. A lemonade stall was put up by the children and around Rs. 8000 was raised by selling these lemonades. The proceeds were then used to buy toys for children with psycho-social disabilities. This fundraising was done under the supervision of Vrinda, a teacher with the British School who encouraged the children to carry out this activity.

The Toy Bank had sent a curated list of toys to Vrinda which can be given to children with Autism, Down Syndrome etc. From the money that was raised, the British School sent us toys from the list which would be then packed along with other toys to be donated to an NGO called Tamanna.



Toy Collection Drives in Schools

We had organized collection drives in the schools across Delhi-NCR. One of the most encouraging aspects was that the children were delighted and showed extreme interest in donating their favourite toys to the underprivileged children in need.

The Toy Bank had also conducted sessions with few schools wherein the children were encouraged to donate one new toy along with their old toy.

Each child was given a Certificate of Appreciation for their contribution. The section which conducted the maximum number of toys was also given a trophy. Here is the list of schools that collaborated with us in the last quarter:

Modern School,
Faridabad

Indian Heights
School, Dwarka

ASN School,
Mayur Vihar

Hansraj Model
School, Punjabi
Bagh

Mother's Global
School, Preet Vihar

Apeejay School,
Saket



Participation in a Panel Discussion on Education

The Toy Bank Director, Vidyun Goel, participated in a panel discussion which was organized by BD Foundation. The panel involved the members of BD Foundation along with few other noted social change makers. The discussions revolved around the idea of how education happens to be a sure shot way of empowerment especially among the girls.

Vidyun argued that it is important that with proper access to education, we have good teachers for the children, proper facilities to help the girl child continue education in the school and also empower our girl children enough that they do have the courage to fight for their rights at every stage.



She concluded by saying that we need to keep education locally relevant. Instead of making elite schools and colleges the ultimate dream goal for girls from poor and rural areas, we need to stop and question what we can learn from these girls themselves, and how we can improve the overall concept of formal schooling. As more and more “top” schools focus on churning out students solely focused on degrees and careers rather than learning, we must re-evaluate our definition of education and not just emulate blindly.

Children's Day Celebration at PHD Chamber of Commerce

'Sparsha' - an event by Confluence Foundation at PHD Chamber of Commerce was organized on 14th November, to celebrate and acknowledge Children's Day. Other NGOs like Tathastu, Donate an Hour, Divya Trust etc. participated in the event along with the children the respective organizations work with.



As the Chief Guest for the event, Vidyun, tried to encourage the children to try and pursue their dreams which they have set for themselves. She urged the children to not give in to the pressures of the society or their parents. Recalling how she had decided to do an MBA because her friends were doing the same, she told the crowd, that it was after that she realized her calling was for something other than the regular job.

Encouraging the crowd to follow their passion, Vidyun, asked each one of them to be true to their calling and not just blindly follow the crowd. She ended the speech by reminding everyone that it is only hard work that is going to guarantee them success.

Participation in the event – Toy Fair – by Apeejay School, Saket



Apeejay School (Saket), celebrated Children's Day on 18th November by organizing a fair called Toy Land. The Toy Bank team along with Vidyun (Director) visited the fair. The event was very well organised with various stalls of handmade toys set up by the children. Each stall had a different kind of toy displayed along with a board on how these toys can be used for educative purposes as well as how they help in the development of motor skills and cognitive skills in a child. There were separate games for the parents of the children as well. Those games were specifically aimed at helping the parents relive their childhood.

We were extremely happy to be a part of this wonderful initiative by Apeejay School. We thank the teachers and especially the Principal, Ms. Anita Paul for giving us the opportunity to be a part of this.

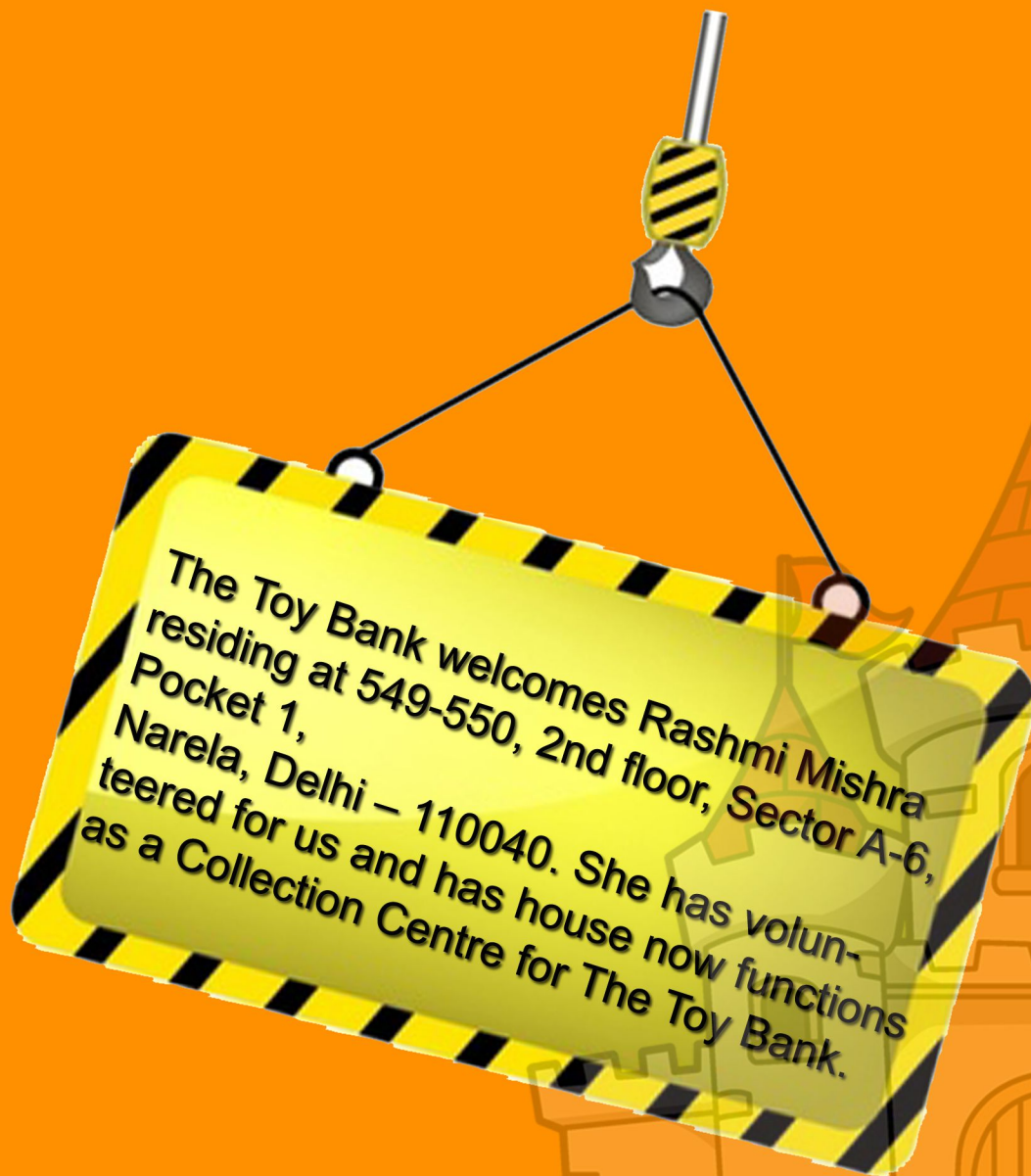


Interaction with children at Manav Sthali School

The Toy Bank team interacted with the school children at Manav Sthali School. The children were extremely excited to be a part of this toy collection drive. They in fact gift wrapped the toys to be given to the underprivileged children. We were very happy to see the enthusiastic children and the eagerness with which they want to be a part of a noble cause.



OPENING OF A NEW COLLECTION CENTRE



UPCOMING PROJECTS

The following projects will be taken up in the coming months:

1. One Toy Library in Delhi for children with psycho-social disabilities in Delhi
2. Ten Toy Libraries will be created for children of construction site workers in NCR
3. Twenty Four Toy Libraries will be created in Anganwadis in South Shahadra.
4. One Toy Library in Chennai
5. Three Toy Libraries in Gadag district in Karnataka
6. Eight Toy Libraries in Goa
7. One Toy Library in Kerala
8. Eighty one Toy Libraries in Anganwadis in Delhi
9. We are also partnering with Teach for India in creating Toy Libraries in few selected schools in the first phase.

Number Of Children Impacted

5590

Number of Toy Libraries

77

Number of Organisations partnered with

10

Number of Schools Partnered With

26

Number of Toy Kits

198