

LEAP OF TRANSFORMATION

Success stories of our students...



Empowerment of Children and Human Rights Organization
An NGO working for the betterment of unprivileged children
Convent Road, Kammanahalli, St. Thomas Town P.O, Bangalore – 84

PREFACE

First of all let me congratulate the ECHO team for the successful completion of twenty years of its fruitful existence. The Touchstone of the success of its existence can best be demonstrated by articulating the changes that it has brought about in the lives of children. It gives me great pleasure to pen down the preface for the publication on the success stories in the last 20 years. 20 success stories articulated in this book is the story of hope, it is the story of transformation and it is the story of fulfillment of each one in the ECHO team and others who joined the journey at some point. I am, for that matter, one of those people who journeyed with ECHO and I cherish my experience of the journey with ECHO as the best and better than that in a University. ECHO taught me the basics of rehabilitation and Restoration for children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with law.

The effort made to conceal the Identity of the children by changing their names is note worthy. That ECHO has brought experiences of both girls and boys in this book shows beyond doubt that given an opportunity girls and boys grow out of limitations imposed through exclusion

and behaviours that may not be accepted by the community to blossoming into adulthood as contributing members of the society. The case studies have woven experiences of preventive intervention; reaching out to children in urban slums and other situations wherein continuing education had become a challenge and bringing those children into learning processes that were transformative and empowering.

Rehabilitation and Reintegration are the main objectives of the Juvenile justice system in India. The vision of the founder of ECHO Dr. Antony Sebastian can best be understood in these stories of transformation that rekindles our minds with the message of hope that reverberates today. The narratives of the 20 children demonstrate that children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with the law, given a chance and right opportunities grow into their full potential. Reading these life stories once again reinforced my belief in the Juvenile justice system and the potential of rehabilitation and restorative services for children who need it the most.

8 case studies are experiences of children who were in conflict with the law and have

demonstrated that change is possible, given the right kind of rehabilitative interventions. This book brings alive interventions required for bringing the best out of those children who were neglected and exploited. These include counselling and behaviour modification support, education support, Legal Aid, opportunities to showcase their intrinsic skills and talents of dance and music including theatre, medical rehabilitation and above all rehabilitation through life skill education and vocational skill development leading to decent and gainful employment. The 20 case studies given in the book reinforces the belief that change is possible and the best in the children can be brought out if they are provided with the above combination of rehabilitation services.

Ensuring second chance education and providing the opportunities for education in the best of Institutions possible is an excellent strategy to ensure rehabilitation of children who need support to rebuild their lives. The life story of Nagaraj is a living example for this.

The life of Rajnish and Pushpa demonstrates, the critical aspect of ensuring the care of siblings and ensuring that the family ties are maintained as part of the rehabilitation process. Every rehabilitation should strive to ensure

permanency in the care and retaining the family ties to the extent possible, if it is not detrimental to the interest of the child. ECHO's focus on retaining and strengthening family ties is a practice that need to guides everyone who works with care for children.

Ramya's life story tells us beyond doubt, the importance of preventive intervention at community level to support children and their families to cope with the challenges in the ecosystem where they are. The intervention in the communities were the result of the analysis of the number of cases of children in conflict with law from that locality. The preventive intervention by ECHO in addition to bringing the rate of crime down in this community, enabled many children like Ramya were to realise their potential of meaningful and gainful employment for themselves.

Nagaraj, Adarsh and many others have been actively engaged in dance, music and theatre and tells us the importance of these in rehabilitation. The rigour of preparation for stage performance and the opportunities given to the children to perform in public seems to have impacted their self image positively and tremendously supported them in improving their self image and confidence. This is an important dimension of the rehabilitation process

followed by ECHO (I have been lucky to have seen many of these performances by the children) and an effective one in what I have seen.

If I do not make a specific mention of the importance given to skill development and focus on vocational education in the rehabilitation programme, that would be a disservice to ECHO. The Traffic Police Assistance programme, has helped children to discipline themselves and also do service to the society while making it a career for themselves. As the experience of Ravi demonstrates, using the TPA as a stepping stone to build their confidence and moving on to acquiring new skills and competencies like driving shows that the trajectory of growth is defined by children and they march ahead in life. Innovative options in Hotel Management and opportunities for international exposure and employability is also a novel intervention. Going through the life of Suresh who has ended up running a restaurant and providing employment to others as well, one feels confident of the rehabilitation process followed by ECHO.

I wish every reader feels proud of the achievements of these children who had to go through a lot more challenges in life than many of us. The fact that this is just a glimpse of the achievements of ECHO, tells us the change that ECHO has

brought about in the lives of children. May the children whose case studies are here and all others move ahead in life inspiring others and living life to its fullness.

Congratulation ECHO team for successful twenty years, may many more come your way making lives of children who need support reach their full potential.



Sonykuttu George
Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF

NAGARAJ (CICL)

“Had it not been for ECHO, I would have been just another boy of my community, smoking cigarettes, wasting time with my peers and ending up as a murderer or a dacoit” says Nagaraj.

Nagaraj 13 years, a child from Hebbagodi Bangalore came under conflict with law, when in the year 2005 he was admitted to Government Observation Home in Madiwala Bangalore. He got detained there for 6 months, nobody came forward to release him, as he hails from a very poor family background. His father is an alcoholic and he lost his mother at a very young age, he has an elder brother who is doing construction work and the family literally disowned him, that is when ECHO took the initiative in releasing the child. ECHO social workers conducted case study, home visit and a thorough counseling was provided to the family. ECHO also provided free Legal Aid and released the boy who was sent home along with the family.

Subsequently as the home

environment was not found good for the child to live, it was felt that by leaving him there, he would get back to crime, hence was brought to ECHO-Center for Juvenile Justice at Kammanahalli.

Nagaraj was admitted to ECHO Center on 11th November 2005. During the transition period, it was seen that he was a 3rd std school dropout and not attending school for the last 4 years. ECHO provided informal education and tuitions and in the following academic year Nagaraj was admitted in class 6 of mainstream schooling. Initially he struggled to cope with studies, but held on. Slowly he performed better and eventually scored 1st class in PUC.

He joined Christ University, a prestigious university in Bangalore for his higher studies. In 2015, he became a B.Com graduate and emerged with flying colors. Nagaraj aspires to become an IAS officer. He is currently working for a renowned marketing company “Hindustan Global Solutions Bangalore”. During his transitional period,

he had actively participated in extracurricular activities and played a major role in Parivarthan, (Transformation) a Dance drama programme organized by ECHO which was inaugurated by His Excellency Shri. Bharadwaj, Governor of Karnataka in 2009. The drama was performed in various places of the Southern States of India. One of the highlights is that he received his graduation on the same stage where he once performed theatre. According to him, all the activities in Sparsha helped him to lead a dignified life in society.

“Whatever I am today is due to the education I received at ECHO. I am

very grateful to ECHO. I don't have enough words for the institution”, says the young and confident Nagaraj.



NITIN (CICL)

Nitin belongs to a poor family. He lived with his parents and elder brother. His father being an alcoholic did not take care of his children. His mother worked as a domestic servant and took care of the family. After finishing the 8th standard Nitin lost interest in going to school and started loitering in the

neighborhoods accompanied by his friend Charles. He behaved arrogantly with his parents and sometimes refused to go home staying back with his friend on the street.

One fine day Nitin along with his friend Charles planned to steal money from a Mobile Shop. They

attempted to steal money and mobile phones but were caught and arrested by the Police. Nitin was categorized as a child in conflict with the law. Both Nitin and Charles (his friend) were brought before the JJB. The Juvenile Justice Board ordered the boys be sent to the Observation Home. ECHO provided free legal aid to Nitin in the Madiwala O.H. He was given bail and was released from the Observation Home and sent to ECHO where he was admitted to ECHO-Sparsha for rehabilitation. It wasn't easy to control Nitin. ECHO provided him regular counseling along with a behavior modification program and also motivated him to continue studies. He successfully completed the 10th Std after

which he registered for a one year Diploma Course in Hotel Management which he completed successfully.

Currently Nitin is working in a Star Hotel in Andhra and his family is very happy to see him so transformed.



RAVI (CICL)

Ravi is native of Mandya, the only child of the family. His mother passed away when he was one year old and his father remarried. Ravi was brought up by his grandmother. When the boy was in 9th Standard he discontinued studies and started working as a helper in road-side eateries.

In 2012 Ravi was apprehended by the Police in an offence. He was kept in police custody for a couple of days during which he was physically abused and tortured for the offence committed. When the police produced him before the Juvenile Justice Board, the Board moved him to the Observation

Home for 3 months. Later JJB decided to send him to ECHO-Special Home for 6 months. During this period Ravi underwent intense behavior modification programs like counseling, moral education, life-skill programs etc.

After this phase, he came to ECHO-Sparsha along with his grandmother and requested Fr. Antony for help for his future life. With ECHO's help Ravi was offered a job in the Traffic Police Assistance Program. He received training from the Traffic Police Department, Bangalore and was awarded a certificate from DGP, Karnataka. At present he has successfully completed six years in the program and has also got his driving license from RTO Bangalore, thanks to

ECHO.

Ravi says "I am proud to say that from my savings I have purchased a plot for constructing a house and I am planning to build a house for my grandmother"



SHEKAR (CICL)

Shekar hails from Hongasandra in Bangalore. He is the only child of his father who runs a printing press and his mother is a homemaker. The family's economic and social condition is quite good. Shekar used to give a helping hand to support his father in the Printing Press.

However, Shekar failed in the 10th Std and was not interested to reappear for the subjects in which he had failed. He was friendly with three boys who were involved in robberies together with substance abuse. In 2018, when he was 17 years old in an incident he was

categorized as Child in Conflict with Law.

He spent three days in the Police Station and later was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board which ordered his retention at the Observation Home, Madiwala for a month. His friend Krishna was also in the same Government Observation Home.

While residing in the Observation Home, ECHO provided him regular counseling. The boy accepted his mistakes and with positive influence and encouragement from his Counselor desired for a renewed way of life. He could foresee a better future for himself. This is when he learnt about ECHO's Hotel Management course which is affiliated to the TATA Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) and R.O.C Mondriaan, Netherlands.

After his release, keeping up his interest he joined ECHO's Hotel Management Course for rehabilitation which was also his parents' wish. The boy received further counseling and was placed under a strict discipline providing for grooming and motivation towards personality development. He was sent for exposure to Star

Hotels with the other students as part of the program. In adapting to the new environment he was filled with zeal for a higher status in life. ECHO also observed a civility in his behavior.

Shekar received a Diploma in Hotel Management and at present he is an employee in Tata Chai, Cunningham Road, Bangalore, earning a decent salary. His progress and career growth has brought tremendous satisfaction to his parents.



THIRTHARAJ (CICL)

Thirtharaj belongs to a poor agricultural family. His father worked as a tractor driver and his mother worked as a coolie as their agricultural yield was insufficient to maintain themselves. He has an elder brother who works in a hotel. While Thirtharaj was studying in the 9th standard he had been for a swim in a river accompanied by 3 friends and a cousin.

His cousin drowned in the river and died. As Thirtharaj's uncle was on bad terms with the family, he filed a complaint against the family for having plotted to kill his son. Thirtharaj was apprehended and kept in an Observation Home from where he was bailed out. He changed his school and completed SSLC and PUC. In the year 2011, while Thirtharaj now who was 20 years old, was pursuing 2nd year BA degree, the case was reopened and Thirtharaj, by order of the JJB was placed in the Special Home for a month.

During his stay at ECHO - Special Home his counselor found that he was well behaved and well

mannered, mature and also was confident while speaking. He was released from Special Home when the term was over.

Thirtharaj attended the follow-up programme organized by ECHO in February 2015 accompanied by his parents. He completed the Chartered Accountant (CA) course. Now he has his own business of making Pan cards, license for two wheelers and four wheelers and is earning Rs. 50,000/- per month. He has bought a tractor for his father and two cows for his mother who sells milk yielded from the cows. The strict discipline and counseling in the Special home gave direction to his life. He is living a happy life with his parents.



PRABHU (CICP)

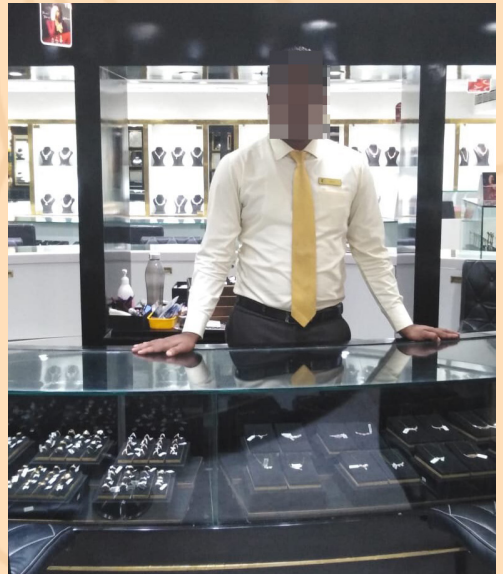
Early days of Prabhu : Prabhu hails from Chikkamangalur district, Karnataka. His family members comprise his father, mother and elder sister. Sadly, his father is an alcoholic and quarrels with his mother daily. Often the quarrels ended in physical abuse towards his mother and Prabhu was also beaten up by his father.

One day his mother approached one of the Priests in N.R.Pura town and so Prabhu was referred to ECHO. The boy was admitted to ECHO-Sparsha for rehabilitation. ECHO provided him regular counseling and motivated him to continue his studies. Though at times he seemed disobedient he completed 10th Std and 1st year PUC.

After that ECHO got him a job placement in Joyalukkas, a jewellery showroom in Marathahalli, Bangalore. He was sincere in his work. He worked hard and started to earn his livelihood. He helped his sister financially for her marriage. Being a salesman in a Jewelers showroom he developed a good personality. After a few

years he thought that if he was with his family he could be close to his parents and look after them well.

He left his job and began to drive an Auto Rickshaw. But after a year he realized that a regular salary is better for his future. He now works at Bhima Jewellery with a good salary. He is proud of himself and his parents are also proud of their son. This was all possible because of ECHO's intervention in his life and Prabhu's own determination and perseverance to have a decent family life.



ARUN (CICP)

Arun, 23 years old, is a native of Chikkamagalur District. He was the only child to his parents, but when just one year old he lost his father. Arun's mother worked as a coolie and they survived on very little earnings. She couldn't even afford the cost of raising her only child.

Few years later, she admitted Arun in a hostel at N.R. Pura and he was sent to a nearby Government School. He got into bad habits in the hostel where he was studying. However in the passage of time a well-wisher intervened and knowing about ECHO's good work in transforming children referred Arun to ECHO-Sparsha for education. His mother had confidence in the guidance of this kind-hearted person. ECHO provided the boy all the facilities like food, accommodation and education.

Seeing his outstanding talent in dance he was sent for a classical dance course at N.B.C.L.C., Bangalore, and thus began a passion which he decided to develop for the future. He has since performed on many occasions on

many stages and won first prizes in competitions. Arun passed 10th Std with a First Class and secured 73% in the 2nd PUC. His main ambition was to finish his studies, take up a job and support his mother.

He finished the M.Com in one of the prestigious colleges in Bangalore and graduated with flying colors. He is delighted to have got the offer to teach in the same college. Everyone who comes into contact with him appreciates his humility, gentleness, peacefulness, and joyfulness. He has disciplined his life with all the guidance he received from ECHO. His mother says "What my Son is today is because of Fr. Antony's & Mr. George's timely help. They are as God for me."



VEENA (CICP)

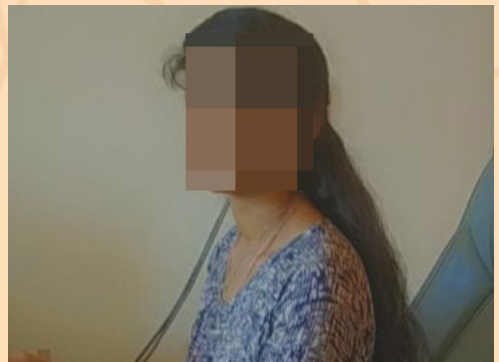
Veena is a 19 year old from Murugappa Gardens. She is basically from Delhi but the family has settled in Bangalore since 25 years. Veena's father is a daily wage worker for Packers and Movers. She has 2 younger sisters and a younger brother.

Verbal quarrels between her parents had become a daily routine. Being a girl child she faced many problems and her parents too neglected her. They used to beat her often as they didn't have much affection for their daughter. Veena was unhappy with her parents because her basic necessity of food was not taken care of. Later on her mother left the family due to various reasons. She was unable to concentrate on her studies and her neighbors used to feed her.

One day the neighbor called the Child Help – Line and they referred Veena to the Child Welfare Committee. CWC made an investigation and sent her to ECHO for rehabilitation. Veena was admitted at ECHO-Navodaya for education and rehabilitation. She performed well in her academics and as a result she secured first class

in her PU examination and joined the degree course. She completed the B.com in S.S.R. College, Bairathi, Bangalore.

Now she is a girl full of confidence and courage and much better off than when she was at home. Her Parents who are living together at present wished to take back their daughter. As per the CWC order ECHO sent her back to her parent's custody. Now she is working for "Master Cable network" as a Front Office Manager and earning a good salary. Both the parents and Veena are thankful to ECHO for the timely help she received in her life.



ADARSH (CNCP)

Adarsh hails from Bangalore. At a very young age he lost his father and his mother married again. He lived under the protection of his grandmother. He has an elder brother and a sister. As his Grandmother was unable to take care of him and his brother, they were brought to the Government Children's home in Bangalore when they were kids. Adarsh was not interested in his studies. ECHO staff were in contact with him and counseling him.

After four years of his life in the Children's home, he and his elder brother were admitted in ECHO. He followed the discipline of ECHO and was moulded through the rehabilitation program. Adarsh was jovial, always with a smile while relating to the staff and other children in the Centre. He was admitted to Jyothi School and completed his 10th and 12th and came out successfully.

He participated in the cultural programs very actively and was a member of ECHO's Musical Drama performance called "PARIVARTHAN" which was inaugurated by the Governor of

Karnataka in Christ University.

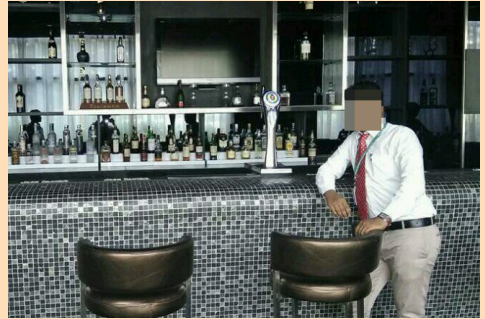
He also won a few prizes for dance at the district level. He has been proud about this transformation too. Later Adarsh realized that he had to earn a living and take care of his family. He was given an opportunity by Fr. Antony to study Hotel Management, where he did his Diploma in Hotel Management in ECHO.

Adarsh developed a great interest in the Hotel industry and completed 3 years B.Voc (Bachelor of Hotel Management) in the "Front Edge Academy", Bangalore which is also affiliated to the TATA Institute of Social Sciences (TISS).

During his studies he also worked part time. Adarsh says, "These days no one who is from a poor background gets an opportunity to build their life. But I have got that. Now my aim is to become a General Manager in the Hotel Industry. I am now a confident person and willing to work hard because of the support I received from ECHO.

I thank ECHO from the bottom of my heart for taking care of me

and my future.” After gaining work experience in Bangalore he left for Muscat Oman on 25th Feb 2020 to take up a Supervisor’s job in the “Hilton” Hotel.



RAJNISH (CNCP)

Rajnish was 11 years old when he left his native place Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, with his mother and sister looking for a way to survive and not end up taking their own lives. The family could no longer bear the torture from the father who was a drunkard. They were a middle-class family and their grandmother took care of them often when they were in trouble.

They had reached the Bangalore City railway station empty handed and the rescue team of BOSCO came to their help. They took them to “Navajeevana” in Chamrajpet, a home that takes care of street children. After a period of counseling for the mother and children, the mother Pushpa was

taken on by the organization as a cook and the daughter was admitted as a boarder in “Navajeevana”.

Sr. Lucy, who was the Director of the organization, brought Rajnish to ECHO in 2004 and requested Fr. Antony’s help. He was admitted to the ECHO Transitional home but took a little time to get adjusted to the new situation and to the other inmates of ECHO.

The disciplinary timetable at the transitional home and the counseling sessions helped to motivate Rajnish to change his life. The boy was interested in continuing his studies and he was admitted into the 6th Std in Jyothi High School. He continued his

education till the 10th Std in the same school and also completed the 2nd year PUC in Jyothi College. He had a very important role in “Parivarthan” the musical drama. He also won many trophies and medals in cultural programs and in his studies. He is a soft spoken boy.

Rajnish was very interested to do his degree. He got admission for B com in “Kristu Jayanti College” a prestigious college in Narayanapura, Bangalore. While studying for his degree he wished to be with his mother who was staying in a rented house and his mother started to work as a cook with ECHO for few years.

Rajnish was financially helped for his education by ECHO. After

finishing his studies he underwent marine training. For the last five years he has been sailing with a company that operates in the gulf countries. He gained courage to sail in the troubled waters of the sea as he lived through the stormy waters of life. Rajnish and his family are very grateful to ECHO for his success and present status.



SANJAY (CNCP)

Sanjay hails from Kanakapura, Bangalore. He has an elder sister and a younger sister. His mother, who is the first wife of his father, works as a coolie. Sanjay’s father married a second time while the first wife was still alive. From the 2nd marriage he got three sons. He lived with the second wife close to the first wife’s house.

But he never cared for his first wife or for the children from the first marriage. The mother looked after the children with her meager wages.

When Fr. Antony visited their village to meet some youth, his mother requested him to take her son to ECHO for education. Though he was already going to school he was very irregular due to

poverty. In 2003 he was admitted to ECHO and sent to a school close by.

The ECHO staff had a hard time with him as he was a disobedient and naughty child. It was not easy to manage him and he was given many sessions of counseling. Slowly the disciplined life in ECHO resulted in some behavior modification in him.

He participated in many of the cultural programs of ECHO and got the courage to stand on the stage without any fear. Somehow he completed his 10th Std but hesitated to continue his studies.

When he completed 18 years he was sent to work in various places like an Ice cream parlor, the Bata showroom, Anugraha Food products and finally ECHO recommended him for an interview at “Joyalukkas” a well-known Jewelry shop and he was selected as an Office boy. He worked in different branches of “Joyalukkas”. After 3 years he got promoted to a higher position.

He has worked in Hassan and Gujarat and now he is working at the Bangalore branch and stays in the staff quarters of “Joyallukas”

which has all the facilities.

Saving his salary he managed to get his two sisters married. He also built a new house and is now living very responsibly. He comes to ECHO often to see Fr. Antony and to get his guidance in life. Sanjay is very grateful to ECHO for helping him lead life in the right way.

He says “If ECHO had not taken me under its wings, what would have been the situation of my family, and my future?” Now he does not have that worry.



LOKESH (CNCP)

Lokesh's parents were rag pickers. All that Lokesh remembers is that he has a younger brother and a younger sister. He ran away from his family and came to the Bangalore City bus stand.

While on rescue duty in the City railway station and Bus stand, one of ECHO's staff came in contact with him and he was brought to ECHO. With Lokesh's help the ECHO staff managed to locate his old father.

For two years the father visited ECHO to see his son. After that he just disappeared. All the attempts to trace his family went in vain and Lokesh never saw any of his family members again.

He was admitted to the 3rd Std at St. Joseph's school, Sumanahalli. From the 6th to the 8th Std he was sent to Govt. schools. From ECHO-Balagrama, Sumanahalli, subsequently he was transferred to ECHO-Sparsha and was admitted in a reputed school close by from where he finished the 10th Std and later PUC.

Lokesh got admission for the one year Diploma Course in Hotel management at EURINDIAN Academy at ECHO premises and completed the course successfully.

As an adolescent he had some behavioral disorders for which the boy was given regular counseling. After three months of a strict disciplined life he joined 'Joyalukkas' jewelry. He worked for 3 years there and earned a good salary.

He was warned about his indiscipline many times and finally they dismissed him from the job. He was sent to ECHO's Special home for counseling and reformation for three months after which he went for an interview with 'Bhima Jewelry' and he was employed at one of the branches in Bangalore. Now he is a counter staff at 'Bhima Jewelry' and earns a good salary.

Knowing his spendthrift habits, Fr. Antony advised him to open a Bank account and save money for his future, which he is doing.

Lokesh stays in the staff quarters of

'Bhima Jewelry' which has all the facilities. Now he wishes to marry a girl of his choice.



VARUN (CNCP)

Varun is from Hassan. He was in the 6th Std. (English medium) when he ran away from his aunt's house in 2005. Varun did not want to speak about his family, in fact he was afraid that ECHO will contact his family and that he would be sent back home.

Varun mentioned that his parents were in Ramnagar and that he has a younger brother. He was staying in his aunt's house in Hassan where he studied in 6th std in an English medium school. On one Sunday, while he was playing, his uncle asked him to go to the shop but he ran away.

Varun was found in the Bangalore railway station by BOSCO, an NGO that helps the street children. He was taken to BOSCO and he gave the phone number of his aunt to one of the staff members. When he heard that the staff were talking to his aunt, he suddenly ran away from BOSCO because he was afraid that his uncle would beat him.

Varun found refuge in Majestic bus stand and ECHO staff invited him to the organization and he happily came to ECHO. The boy was provided with counseling and felt that this place was home. Regular counseling, games and cultural programs gave him an opportunity

to be happy. He changed his character and his behavior. He was interested to continue his schooling but the language efficiency in Kannada was poor because he had studied in an English Medium School. However, he was admitted to 6th Std. After 4 years he gave his father's number to Fr. Antony and his parents were informed about their son's whereabouts.

Next day morning his parents came to ECHO to see their son. Both son and parents were in tears and his parents asked him to return home. Varun has agreed to go back to his parents and by evening he packed his things and said bye to ECHO in tears.

Varun continued his studies at home. Fr. Antony visited his family

and saw that he was from a middle class family and doing well at home. They have a good house and a farm in Ramnagar. After PUC he joined engineering. Currently, he is working in a reputed company and earns a good salary. He visits ECHO for different follow up programs and gratefully remembers ECHO, Fr. Antony and all staff. He married in 2020 and is living a happy life with his family. We wish him all success in his life.



PAVAN (CNCP)

Pavan hails from Mysore. His father was married twice and Pavan is from his first marriage. His mother died when he was very young. Pavan has an older sister. Krishnappa, his father worked as a watchman in Bangalore and this was the only income that took care of his family.

The father could not look after the boy well. When Pavan was going to school nobody was there to accompany him and often he came back as late as 8 p.m or 10 p.m from school. He used bad language with his father and other family members. Finally his father brought the child to ECHO when

the boy was 8 years old. ECHO got him admitted to the 2nd std in a renowned school close by. In ECHO he used only filthy words, picked up fights with other boys and at times was uncontrollable. The regular timetables, discipline and small punishments slowly changed him.

His father often visited him in ECHO and gave him advice. The boy participated in all the activities and cultural programs of ECHO. He also performed skits and dances and won many prizes. He was good in studies and finished the 2nd PUC while still with ECHO.

Through ECHO he got free admission for a degree course in Christ University, Bangalore, with accommodation. He finished his

Masters in Development studies. At present he is holding a job with an insurance company. After his father's death, with his earnings he helped his sister to get married. Both Pavan and his family are very grateful to ECHO for their present status.



RAMYA

Ramya is the youngest child of Mr. & Mrs. Basavaraj. Her father is an alcoholic, he spends all his earnings on drinking. Her mother works as a house maid. Ramya has an elder brother doing his 2nd year PUC. While she was in 3rd standard she dropped out from the school and

accompanied her mother helping her in her job as a maid. During a survey the field staff noticed her and brought her to Happy Kids. During interactions it was noticed that the little girl had also been very upset about her father's alcoholism. Most of the time, there had been no food for them to eat and the family

were leading a very miserable life. After counseling and guidance she developed determination to study well.

“My dream of going to school got fulfilled, when the ‘Happy Kids’ staff helped me. They taught me the alphabet and how to read and write. I was very happy. But my mother became very impatient and wanted to send me to work and stopped me from going to school. She started beating me whenever I was getting ready to go to Happy Kids.”

Recounting her experience, she said, “The staff of ‘Happy Kids’ convinced my mother about the importance of education. Finally they enrolled me in Maria Niketan Kannada Medium School in the 4th standard. I received good support for my studies and I was provided with meals and tuitions every day and received medicines whenever I was sick. To my surprise, I improved a lot. This is all because of the staff from ECHO-Happy kids. They encouraged me with lots of love and appreciation”.

She was fortunate to study and

went regularly to school. In the 10th standard, she became the school head – girl. In addition, she is a very good dancer. During 2014-2015 she passed 10th with a 1st class and secured 61% marks. During her studies ECHO provided financial and educational assistance through the CBR (Community Based Rehabilitation) program. Now she is pursuing her B.com in a reputed college. We wish her God’s blessings for a bright future.



AJITH (CICL)

Ajith, aged 22 years is a native of KGF. He currently resides at Kengeri in Bangalore with his parents and an elder brother. His parents are daily wage laborers. Ajith had completed the second year PUC and couldn't study further due to his family's poor financial condition.

In an incident, Ajith was apprehended and by the order of JJB was sent to Special Home as one of the accused in a criminal case. He was there for 7 months. The case was closed where Ajith was proved innocent and his friends were convicted. During his stay at Special Home, along with his involvement in various activities, he received counseling & guidance which enabled him to choose the right path and lead a dignified life.

At present, Ajith works for Kent

Water purifier as the Head of the Senior Circle and is earning a salary of Rs. 30000/- plus incentives. He has given training to several eligible candidates and been successful in providing them jobs.

He is now happily married and is leading a happy and peaceful life with his parents, brother, sister-in-law, wife and his child. Sometimes he goes to Singapore for official visits.



AFFAN (CICL)

Affan, aged 16 years, is a native of Mandya district. His family consists of his parents, two elder sisters and an elder brother.

Affan's father is jobless. His mother rolled beedis and was the sole breadwinner of the family. One of his sisters is married and his

brother stays in Chennai. The family owns a house and a part of it has been rented out but they are financially unstable.

The boy Affan is a 6th standard school dropout. He discontinued schooling half way through the 6th standard and started working as a two-wheeler mechanic which earned him Rs. 2000/- monthly. He got into bad company and was involved in a serious offence with his friends. Hence, he was admitted to Special Home for a period of five months.

During his stay at Special Home, Affan abided by the rules and regulations. He actively took part in yoga, meditation, basic computer training, vocational training and other activities and was well

disciplined throughout his stay. With continuous counseling and direction provided at Special Home, Affan chose the right path.

Currently, Affan stays at Yelahanka in Bangalore and owns a small restaurant. He has employed eight people to work at his restaurant and earns about Rs. 30,000/- to Rs. 40,000/- monthly. He understood the importance of life values and is leading a life of dignity.



SURESH (CICL)

Suresh, 16 years old, has studied only up to the 8th Std. His family hails from Tumkur District. His parents migrated to Bangalore with their children – Suresh and his younger sister. His father is a factory worker and mother is a homemaker. His younger sister studied up to the 2nd PUC. But Suresh was not

interested in going to school and only went because of pressure from his parents. Most of the time he roamed around the area and behaved arrogantly with the family.

Suresh started to work in Bharath Garments as an ironing worker. He committed a crime for which he was apprehended by the police

in the year 2014. He was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board which ordered that he be sent to an Observation Home.

After further proceedings, the JJB (Urban) convicted him of his crime and ordered that he be sent to a Special Home to serve a three-year term. During this time Suresh underwent regular counseling sessions which helped him to realize his mistake. Three years of strict time table, Yoga, meditation, value education classes, physical exercises, dance classes etc, at the ECHO-Special home has helped him to change his life.

After his release, he was placed in ECHO's Hotel Management

Programme for rehabilitation. He behaved well in the class, followed the discipline and did well in the course. He completed the course and is currently working for a Five star Hotel Bella vista in Jigani, Bangalore and earning Rs.15,000/- per month.



SRINIVAS (CNCP)

Master Srinivas joined ECHO-Sparsha, Kammanahalli, under care and protection. His parents are daily wage workers in North Karnataka. He has two elder brothers who are also daily wage laborers in the nearby farms. Srinivas dropped out from school in the 3rd Std. He was seen wandering in the streets by one of the neighbors, Ms. Sandhya who

got him admitted to ECHO for a better future.

Srinivas was provided tuitions and readmitted to school. He completed his middle school at ECHO-Spandana, Mysore. Later he was brought to ECHO-Sparsha, Kammanahalli, Bangalore for his high school in the year 2011.

During his stay at ECHO-

Spandana, he had a sudden attack of severe joint pain and during the check-up it was diagnosed at Narayana Hrudayalaya as Rheumatic heart disease, dilated Aortic Root with severe prolapsing AV valves.

ECHO was informed that this was a problem which he carried by birth and he needed an open heart surgery and a Valve change. During this period the house father Mr. Renny and the staff of ECHO extended extra care and medication to little Srinivas and boosted his confidence for the surgery.

With the support of our well-wishers, donors and the support of Doctors, staff and management of Narayana Hrudayalaya hospital, a successful open-heart surgery was performed by Dr. Praveen Kumar on 21st January 2016 and replacement of Pulmonary valve to St. Jude's valve was done.

With prayers and God's blessing the recovery was much faster than expected. He was discharged on 27th January 2016. He was advised rest and exercise and routine follow up tests. He has overcome all the post-surgical difficulties and started his 2nd PUC at Jyothi Pre-

University College and he is ready to face life ahead. His ambition is to become an advocate like Fr. Antony Sebastian. Now he is pursuing BA LLB in Kristu Jayanti College, Bangalore.



MAHADEVA (CNCP)

Eighteen year old Mahadeva was forced to move away from his native village due to losses in agriculture and severe drought. One of the NGO's referred him to ECHO. He travelled about 500 Kilometers to reach Bangalore. It was the point of transformation in his life. He joined ECHO-Sparsha and soon adapted to its conditions, following all the rules of ECHO.

He was soon given training in the Traffic Police Assistant Program initiated by ECHO. After the training, he joined the team and worked in BDA, BBMP and such other establishments. He started earning a sum of Rs.6000/- per month through TPAP. With his earnings, Mahadeva repaid all his loans at home. He was able to dig a bore well in his ancestral land and irrigate the land. He helped the family to grow crops in the land.

His behavior was appreciated by everyone. During his work in Bishop Cotton Girls School as part of TPAP for 6 months, the Principal noticed his sincerity and good behavior. He was offered a permanent job as Attender in the school. He was made eligible to

join the school staff on their picnic after serving six months of service, something that usually took one year to achieve. It was an honor for him. He got married to his sister's daughter. Now Mahadeva is the father of two children and settled in Hennur Road, Bangalore in an outhouse of a Telugu Speaking family. The family accidentally met him and found him sincere and subsequently asked him to look after their house. They offered him Rs.4000/- per month to look after the house and their pet dog.

He has got the outhouse free of cost to stay. He earns a good salary in the school and the daughter is studying in the same school. He comes to ECHO once in a while and shares some moments with the children of ECHO. He is well respected in his village.



