

MUMBAI MOBILE CRECHES

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR
CHILDHOOD ON CONSTRUCTION SITES



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**MUMBAI
MOBILE CRECHES**
FUTURES UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Introduction

Mumbai Mobile Creches (MMC) was founded with the belief that every child has the fundamental right to security, education, health care and protection. Running day care centres on construction sites in Mumbai since 1972, MMC at present runs 23 centres in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane. Our focus is on holistic development of children of all ages. We run a crèche for children under three, a pre-primary (balwadi) for children in age group of 3-5 years and after school support classes for children who are already studying in municipal schools. Our model of comprehensive child care and work is in close partnership with parents, the construction industry, labour communities, government agencies and concerned NGOs to promote child rights. Over the last forty two years, we have developed and pioneered a model that supports the development of the very young child, frees young children from the burden of child care and supports children to get into and stay in school. In the last forty years, Mumbai Mobile Creches has reached over 100,000 children, and has run over 270 centres in Mumbai, Navi Mumbai and Thane.

Institutional background



The construction industry is the largest employer of migrant labourers. These labourers are usually the poorest of the poor. Millions of migrant labourers are employed on construction sites in India. They are largely unorganized and move wherever they can earn an income. Most migrant labourers are illiterate and speak only their native language. Their lives are characterized by insecurity of wages, dangerous working conditions, and lack of access to any kind of welfare. The children of these workers – estimated to be over 3 million – are even more vulnerable. Because of the extreme poverty of their families and since their parents are constantly working these children are left to fend for themselves. They suffer from malnutrition, undernourishment, accidents, and innumerable health problems and are marginalized from formal schooling, day-care centres or any sort of support

system. The dangerous construction site is their only playground.

EDUCATION

MMC has different programmes for children of different age groups.

- Children from birth to three years of age are part of the crèche programme, where emphasis is placed on creating a stimulating environment that nurtures motor, cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth.
- Children from three to six years of age are part of the pre-primary programme that includes school preparedness.
- Children above six are part of our education programme that aims to mainstream 'out of school' children to get enrolled and after school support for their retention in school.

MMC follows a fun and interactive methodology of art, song, puppetry, theatre, leadership training and a monthly project for its pre-primary and after school support programmes. The curriculum is planned yearly and teachers meet every other month for feedback and support. Financial assistance is provided to children who are enrolled in school but require support for materials, travel and tuition.





HEALTH, HYGIENE AND NUTRITION

All children attending the centres are given breakfast, lunch, snacks, fruits and eggs, and receive curative, preventative and rehabilitative care, monitored by weekly doctor's visits. This is a critical intervention since a significant number of children are malnourished and suffer from various deficiencies. It ensures that all health problems are immediately identified and addressed. In addition to this, financial assistance is also provided for serious illnesses or ailments, and health and hygiene awareness workshops are taken with the children in the centre and in their communities too.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

MMC sees the community as the central focus for creating awareness and sustainability of the intervention. Through workshops, training, monthly community meetings and street theatre, various issues such as child care, child labour, hygiene, nutrition, health care, family planning, AIDS, substance abuse, and many other issues are discussed. MMC also trains community women to manage the crèche and pre-primary programme and to serve as teachers after a year-long training programme. Currently over 30% of the teachers are from construction sites!

EARLY CHILDHOOD CARE AND EDUCATION TRAINING

MMC has been providing early childhood care and education (ECCE) training to many child care professionals for the past 30 years to promote the importance of early childhood care and to take this concept forward through other organisations. These trainings include a year-long course called Balpalika as well as an extension course for people already working in child care. Some of our unique courses include theatre and puppet workshops to aid in community advocacy efforts. In the last five years alone, the organization has trained 4,000 people from NGOs, government agencies, colleges, schools and other organizations people in a range of educational programmes. Over the past thirty years, MMC has gathered a tremendous amount of knowledge, skills and experience and developed an enormous resource base as one of its core competencies. .

Mumbai Mobile Creches has worked hard to address the health, nutritional and educational needs of children living on construction sites over the last four decades. Through customized day care programmes, intensive teacher training, and community advocacy work, MMC continues to strive to ensure that each child should have a happy and nurturing childhood.

