

**BREADS**Bangalore Rural Educational
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Slice

Director's Message

The contribution of the Don Bosco Institutions in India, towards the welfare of the poor and needy, especially children, youth and women, are noteworthy. In India, the Don Bosco network reaches out through its eleven provinces. The Province of Bangalore consisting of Kerala and a major chunk of Karnataka, has historically been at the forefront of interventions for the young at risk, through pro-child-friendly initiatives for children on the streets, in enforced labour, and other difficult situations.

Since 2017, the National Don Bosco Forum for the Young at Risk recognises special contributions in the field of social work from across India. I am extremely happy to state that, in 2023, **six** out of the 13 awardees were from the Province of Bangalore; attesting to the passion for the children/young at risk in these two states. In this edition of Slice, we focus on these awardees, to highlight the inspiring causes and institutions that call forth and foster such commitment in people, transforming them into powerful catalysts for change in their communities. BREADS is proud to have partnered with these causes and institutions.



Fr George PS
Executive Director, BREADS

And the Award goes to...



- * **Ms Sathya A** (below 18 years) - YaR Children's Award for Unique Achievements
- * **Ms Arpitha K** (above 18 years) - YaR Children's Award for Outstanding Services
- * **Mr Mariyappa V** - YaR Alumni Award for YaR Alumni with Outstanding Achievements
- * **Mrs Padmakshi N T** - YaR Award for Outstanding work with the Young at Risk
- * **Mr Ramaswamy** - YaR Award for Outstanding work with the Young at Risk
- * **BOSCO, Bangalore** – Best Homelink Node Award

Sathya and Mariappa were children at risk when they were rescued and brought into the Don Bosco shelter homes. Their progress and success over various obstacles in their lives, bears testament to the impact of the enabling environment and support provided by the Don Bosco staff in our childcare institutions. Mariappa's choices of lifepath to lead, teach, and enable other people in need, is proof that these learnings and values can be imbibed and transferred, giving us hope for the next generation of changemakers in our society.

Arpitha is a vision realised—of children becoming ambassadors and spokespersons of their own rights, in their own communities, and with other agencies including the Government. Arpitha is the embodiment of the vision fostered by BREADS' Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM), and other child rights-based programmes over the years. A cause for celebration!

Padmakshi is a shining example of what the empowerment of a woman looks like, especially financially; and the enormous ripple effects it has on her immediate family and community. Her life is a testament to resilience, and a model for other women in her community.

Ramaswamy is the successful social worker, who gets to see the fruit of his dedicated labour on the field, through projects that make a difference to the lives of children in need of care and protection as well as children in conflict with the law.

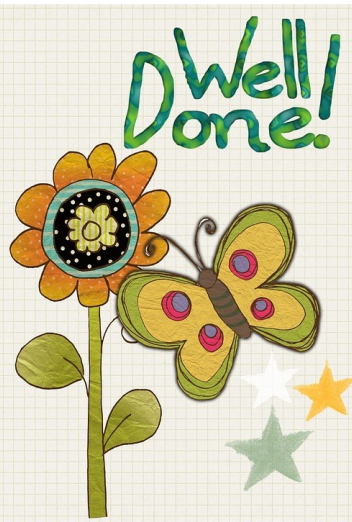
BOSCO Homelink Node is an example of the diligent and impactful use of technology and information systems, providing vital links to the ChildMISS search engine that help children get back where they belong—at home with their families.

About the Catalysts

Sathya A

Sathya, 17 years old, is a student of Grade 11. She had been rescued by BOSCO's Child Rescue Team from KR Market, where she used to assist her mother in selling vegetables. She was admitted to the BOSCO Rainbow Home, which is a shelter home for girls in vulnerable situations and in need of care and protection run by BOSCO Bangalore.

Sathya displays much talent: she is a topper in her class, she is good at sports as well as cultural activities. Sathya has participated in several programmes within and outside BOSCO. Every year, she gets selected to participate in state-level Kabaddi and Kho-Kho interschool competitions. She won the gold medal at the National Rope Skipping Competition in Delhi in October 2022. Sathya then went on to win the gold medal at the South Asian Rope Skipping Championship 2022 in Nepal as well.



BOSCO develops and nurtures the potential and talents of the children in its care, through its Talent Enhancement programmes, in the strong belief that every child is gifted, irrespective of his/her backgrounds.

Recognising all her accomplishments, the DB YaR Forum awarded Sathya, the Children's Award for Unique Achievements. The award encourages children originating from situations of risk, to aim high and strive to make their lives remarkable. Provided the support they need, the sky is the limit for children like Sathya, who display the will and grit to succeed. From the grime of the market to the glitter of gold medals, there is no looking back for Sathya now as she continues her climb to the top.

Arpitha K



A 20 year-old, high-scoring, student of Commerce from Belaghatta village in Chitradurga, Arpitha is a product of the government education system. However, the big difference was that her school was part of the CREAM programme, exposing her to the concept of child rights in Grade 9. She became member of the school child rights club (CRC), going on to become the President of the Nisarga Child Rights Clubs Federation at the district level. Arpitha took part in the Inclusive National Children's Parliament in Delhi in 2019. On the ground, she and her companions used the children's helpline to prevent child marriages, child labour, and children from begging. Arpitha helped single parents access pensions, and raised funds for drought relief, earning recognition from her mentor, CHITHRA Don Bosco.



As a young adult, Arpitha continues to promote child rights in 30 surrounding villages—preventing 6 child marriages, promoting education and awareness, bringing 19 child labourers back to school. After a survey of differently-abled children, she facilitated their literacy, and the receipt of Unique Disability IDs (to receive government benefits).

A child who was neither privileged nor at risk, Arpitha learned to empathise with children in dire situations and take action to protect their rights. She epitomises the good citizen in a democracy, who knows her rights, protects the rights of her fellow citizens, upholds the law, and calls the State to account. We are proud of you Arpitha! BREADS extends to you, full support and collaboration in all your endeavours towards making a better society.

Congratulations

Mariappa V

Mariappa's early life was full of twists and turns. Orphaned at an early age, he ran away from an abusive environment, and was found by BOSCO in Bangalore. There were starts and stops to his education and stay in BOSCO, as he went through his own journey. Despite the changing situations in his life, he was able to rely on BOSCO as a safe space for advice or a helping hand. In fact, Mariappa considers BOSCO as his family. He fondly states that his achievements in life are because of the constant support and guidance that he received from the staff members and volunteers of BOSCO.

He discovered his thirst for learning at a later age and worked his way through his Class 12 and college education. He did his Masters in Social Work, specialising in Human Resources; while also volunteering at BOSCO Mane in the evenings. His career in Human Resources has led him through different roles in various NGOs, including the Don Bosco institutions. He has earned many certificates along the way. Mariappa loves to learn, and from his first-hand experiences, he was well-equipped to start his own organisation. He registered **Mitratva Trust** in 2021 with the aim to change the lives of disadvantaged children, youth, women, and the elderly.

Mariappa, in his journey of learning, has imbibed from his BOSCO family and his education, beautiful values of service and empathy towards those people struggling to overcome unfortunate situations in life. He is the best kind of student, all set to teach others as well!



Padmakshi N T



Another person who learned from adversity, Padmakshi is now a self-made woman. She was widowed after four years of marriage, and left with two daughters and no means of income. She painstakingly reconstructed her life with the help of the Self-Help Group (SHG) fostered by

CHITHRA Don Bosco. She learned to use her cooking skills while picking up new entrepreneurial skills from trainings, to power herself forward, making and selling various eatables made from local ingredients. Starting from scratch, she now runs **Pranathi Sridhanya Ahara**, a food production unit that also employs four other women like herself.

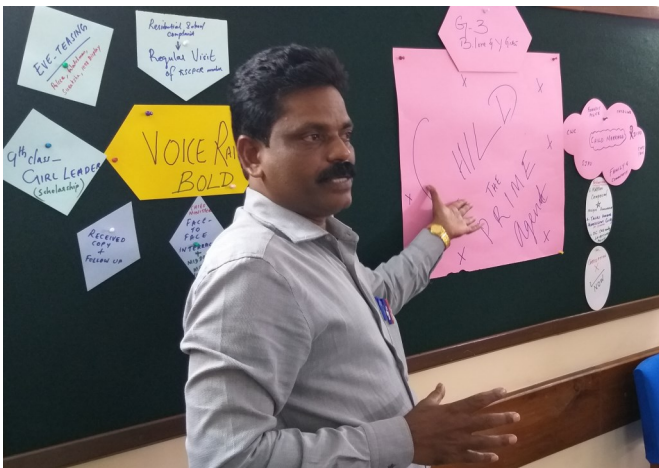


In 2019, through the intervention of CHITHRA Don Bosco, Padmakshi received a solar-powered roti-making machine from Mr Harish Hande of SELCO India, which boosted her production of Bajra rotis (pearl millet bread) to 500 per day, about 1500 kgs of it per annum. Her outfit markets their products across Karnataka.



Padmakshi of D.S Halli in Chitradurga taluk is a powerhouse and an inspiration to other women. Her two daughters are pursuing educations in Engineering. In 2023, Padmakshi and her group were appreciated by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for their contribution to women's empowerment. Prajavani, a popular Kannada newspaper, also honoured her with an Achiever's Award. Let's applaud Padmakshi for her path-breaking journey and be motivated by her determination and hard work.

Ramaswamy



Ramaswamy, a long-standing staff member of BOSCO, has been associated with BREADS' Child Rights Education and Action Movement (CREAM) programme as the District Coordinator in Bangalore, since many years. He worked closely with children, educating and empowering them to speak up for their rights, through the formation of child rights clubs (CRCs) in schools and local communities.

With the CRCs, Ramaswamy, was instrumental in re-enrolling out-of-school children and child labourers, and addressing other violations of child rights. He was an active advocate with the Government Departments and other agencies, including the public, creating a synergy for the protection and promotion of child rights.



The government Education and Labour Departments nominated him to the Viveka Chethana Charitable Trust in 2022 for the Seva Chethana Award. The award honours those teachers and the guides who shape the future of children, and obviously, Ramaswamy was a very deserving candidate.

Ramaswamy and hundreds of social workers like him, dedicate their lives to the service of children at risk, and thereby, to society. For them, the best interest of the child is not just a principle, it becomes a way of life. We owe such activists a huge debt of gratitude.

Ramaswamy truly deserves the YaR Award for Outstanding work with the Young at Risk.

BOSCO HomeLink Node

The Homelink Network is an initiative of the DB YaR Forum since 2002, to ensure appropriate, real-time responses to the needs of the young at risk, and to establish a culture of data-led management and intervention planning supported by technology. The network across India has 8 hubs, multiple nodes, and 93 member organisations, connected through the ChildMISS (Management Information System and Services) web app, that currently holds the data of 346,242 children. The tool has facilitated the home placement of 121,220 children so far.



The DB YaR Forum recognised BOSCO Bangalore as the best Homelink node for its effective use of the network, ChildMISS and related tools, for documentation and research that impacted its services. 16169 snippets of data were entered during 2022-23. The BOSCO Homelink node shared information with the Karnataka State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights (KSCPCR), about missing children from Bihar, which was then communicated to the Bihar state government. Similarly, information about missing children from Assam were shared with the government. The BOSCO Homelink node also supports the maintenance and renewal of its documents and applications related to the government.

Documentation is often a sidelined activity and rather unglamorous, as a form of activism. But, it is quite the hero when it helps to track precious lives by creating missing links with technology, like Homelink does. A really commendable service to children at risk by BOSCO Bangalore! Kudos!



Calendar

September 2023

- Write for Good—Project proposal writing workshop for project staff of the INK province
- BREADS' monitoring visits to project locations
- Executive Director meetings with funding partners

October 2023

- Observation of International Girl Child Day
- Volunteers arrive from the Czech Republic
- Observation of World Mental Health Day
- Orientation visits to BREADS by students of Social Work

BREADS NEWS



At the Forefront of YaR Interventions

The Salesian Province of Bangalore (INK), of which, BREADS is the central planning and development organisation (PDO), has always been recognised and appreciated for its various interventions for the young at risk [...more...](#)



Parents' Meeting at Ganajalkhed, Kalaburagi district

On 20 September 2023, Don Bosco PYaR organised a parents' meeting at the Government Higher Primary School, Ganajalkhed in Kalaburagi. Sixty-eight parents of children from three activity centres in the village, gathered [...more...](#)



Write for the Good-2023

The Bangalore Rural Educational and Development Society (BREADS), in collaboration with Bosconet-SA, successfully conducted a four-day training programme titled "Write for the Good-2023" [...more...](#)



DB BEST Academy: Empowering Futures, Nurturing Excellence

DB BEST Academy (BREADS' Skill Training Centre in Bangalore) started its 22nd training course on 28 August 2023. The current batch comprises 72 students who are receiving comprehensive training [...more...](#)

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