

## SKCV FACTSHEET 7 Girls' Shelter



Street Kids' Community Villages

### SKCV Girls' Shelter Bala Prema—Children's Love



Life is especially hard for girls who find themselves alone, living on the streets. Many have run away to escape from mental, physical or sexual abuse, while others have often escaped from service where their positions as housemaids or cleaners can have impossibly heavy workloads. Once homeless, girls as young as six can be forced into prostitution by unscrupulous pimps, and no street child is ever far from violence. It is difficult to estimate the number of street girls in the whole of India, but in the city of Vijayawada alone, over 3000 girls regularly sleep on the streets and the numbers are growing. Street girls have often endured appalling situations and can be emotionally scarred by their experiences. SKCV is committed to helping these young girls.

#### SKCV serving street girls

The girls' night shelter, Bala Prema, is in the centre of Vijayawada. New premises were purchased in April 2002, and the shelter now has sleeping accommodation, classrooms, counselling rooms and recreation areas. They also have medical care and counselling provided by the SKCV hospital, and may attend school or training at one of the other SKCV centres. There is space for 60 vulnerable girls to stay overnight at the shelter, and it provides day centre care for many others. Girls at Bala Prema are divided into groups, containing girls of different ages. In these groups, it is hoped that the girls will find the stability and support which they have lost along with their families. Bala Prema also provides education and vocational training in order that the girls can learn to support themselves and their families in later life. SKCV programmes for girls include training to be tailors and chauffeurs.



#### Outreach

The outreach programs of Bala Prema aim to bring food, education and other support to as many street girls as possible. Several girls receive help with obtaining food for their families from the SKCV, and still more are helped by the SKCV hospital at Bala Prema. SKCV also helps children whose whole families are homeless and so spend most of the day alone and vulnerable while their parents work. A number of parents have been invited to send their daughters to Bala Prema during the day to receive education and food. Some parents have even asked SKCV to let their children become residents in order to escape the danger of sleeping on the streets at night.

***SKCV is currently raising funds to improve our long term provision for girls by building them a residential village similar to that already provided for boys.  
Contact us for more information.***

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SKCV Children's Trust is a registered charity, number 1038063

Head Office, Treasurer and Trustees  
SKCV Children's Trust  
265 Brooklands Road, Manchester, M13 9HF  
Tel & Fax 0161 973 5042  
headoffice@skcv.org