

www.careshareindia.org

Care&Share is an international NGO based in the city of Vijayawada, in the southern Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. Our person-to-person sponsorship program benefits over 6500 children living in the city's slums and nearby villages. **Care&Share** also runs a host of other programs serving street children, slum dwellers, sex workers, and those displaced in the wake of natural disasters.

Care&Share USA is a tax exempt organization under section 501(c)(3) of the US tax code. Any donation is tax deductible within the limits specified by the law.

About us



India

India is the world's largest democracy. It is home to over a billion people. Religion, caste, and language are the main sources of India's amazing diversity. The government has recognized 16 languages as official; Hindi is the most widely spoken. India's major religion, Hinduism, is practiced by approximately 80 percent of the population. Significant religious minorities include Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains. Almost 40 percent of the population is below 15 years of age. About 70 percent live in rural villages; the remainder in more than 200 towns and cities. Despite fast-paced economic growth, poverty remains widespread. Twenty-six percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

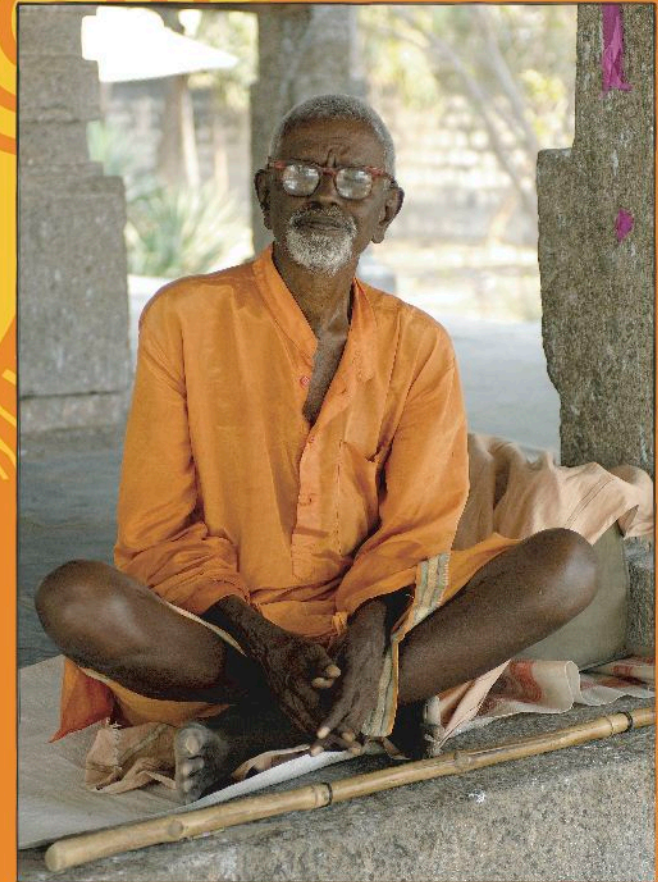
Care&Share USA, Inc.

223 Double Gate Way
Sugar Hill, GA 30518
info@careshareindia.org



Care & Share

Where We Work



Quick facts about India
and Andhra Pradesh



Andhra Pradesh

With a population of 76 million, Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest Indian state. Thanks to its massive agricultural production, it is often known as India's "rice bowl." Today, in spite of the campaign undertaken by the state government to transform it into the "number one state" through heavy investments in information technology, Andhra remains poor. As of 2004, its annual per capita income was about US\$503. Thirty-nine percent of its population is illiterate; 15 percent live below the poverty line. In addition, Andhra has the highest concentration of HIV infections in the entire Indian Union. One of every ten victims of HIV/AIDS in India lives in Andhra Pradesh.

Vijayawada

Vijayawada sits on the banks of the sacred river Krishna. It is Andhra's third largest city, after the capital Hyderabad and Vishakapatnam. It has an estimated population of 1.2 million. With more than 200 long-distance trains passing through every day, it is one of the nation's busiest railway junctions. Moreover, National Highways 5 and 9, which connect Delhi, Mumbai, and Calcutta with the south of India, bring a steady flow of trucks and buses. More than 40,000 people – among them, scores of street children – migrate to the city every year. Most of them come here from rural and coastal Andhra to escape underdevelopment, unemployment, water scarcity, or food shortages.

On the streets

A 1989 UNICEF report estimated that Vijayawada is home to 19,800 street children. The typical street kid is a boy between 8 and 13 years of age. The survey conducted by the Forum for Child Rights in May 2001 has counted 235 children – on average, 33 a day – who arrived at the Vijayawada railway station over the course of a single week. Vijayawada's "main attractions" – abundance of cheap, tasty food, availability of water to drink and bathe, ease of finding employment, and the presence of over 40 movie theaters (by far, the children's favorite pass-time) – render the city a particularly popular destination for runaway kids.

On the streets, they may be found working a variety of jobs: they clean train compartments; they collect plastic, aluminum, paper, and anything else they may be able to resell; they serve as paperboys, shoeshiners, dishwashers, or porters for hotels and local businesses; they play music, juggle, or simply beg. They can earn as little as 10 Rupees a day (25 cents), while their daily income rarely exceeds 100 Rupees (\$2.50). Their lifestyle exposes them to many grave risks. Sniffing toxic substances like glue and other solvents is commonplace. In addition, their lifestyle often puts them at high risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases like HIV/AIDS. According to a United Nations report, one-half of Vijayawada's street children have a sexually transmitted disease or infection.