



Children of Light Educare Trust

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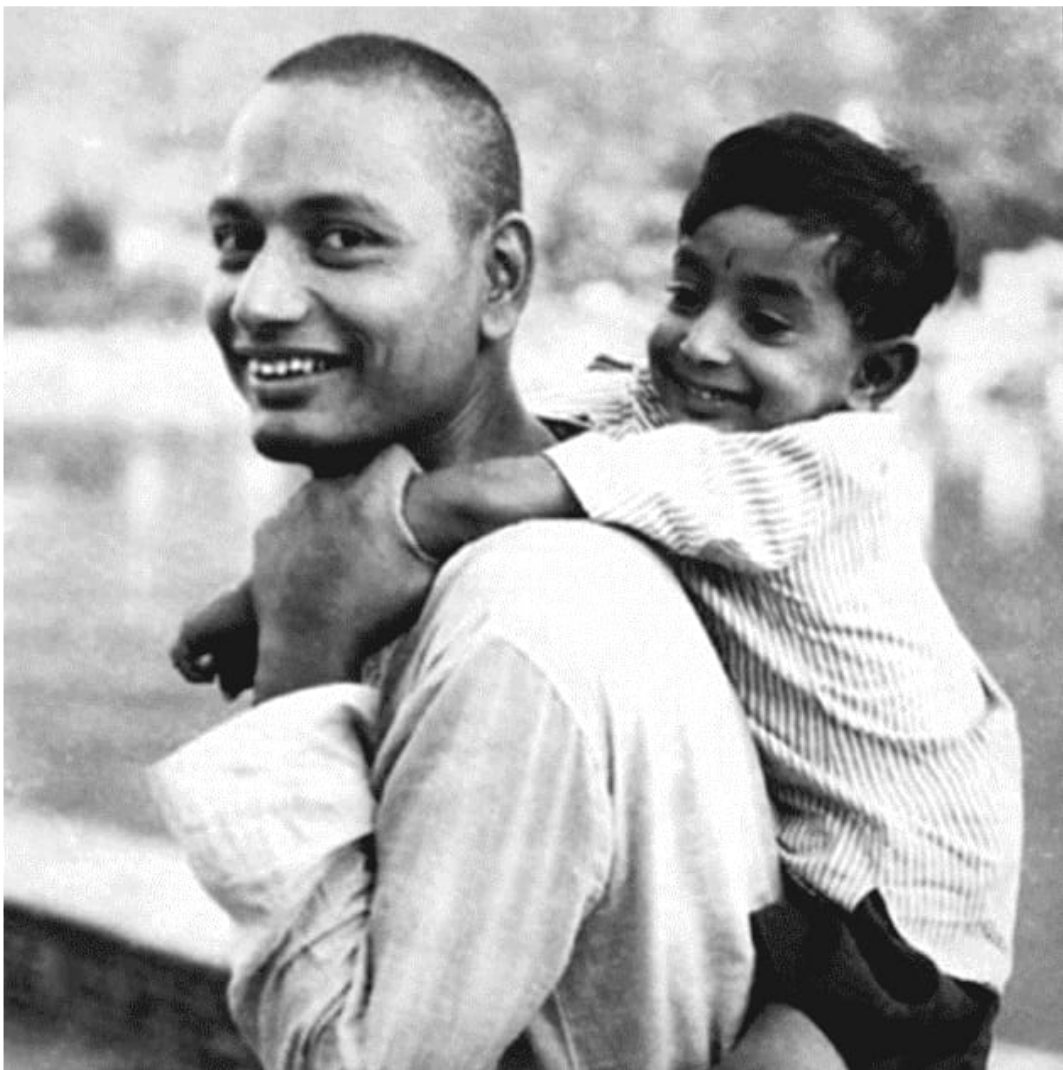
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Children of Light Educare Trust Annual Report

Prepared for Ananda Kutir Ashrama's AGM held on 24 May 2025

1 March 2024 – 28 February 2025



The Children of Light Educare
is a Project of the Children of Light Educare Trust
Established: 10 December 2020 (IT20863/2014)
NPO No: 149-100 PBO No: 930080014



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Executive Summary

This annual report contains a high-level summary of the many activities we were blessed to be engaged in over the last year at the Children of Light Educare (COLT). For the many opportunities to serve, we give thanks to Gurudev Sri Swami Sivanandaji and Swami Venkatesanandaji.

In 2024, COLT celebrated our 7th year in operation and served a total of 61 children (20 current and 41 past) and the communities in which they live. We had 5 full time staff members and are grateful for the efforts of various volunteers, sponsors and donors which complemented the permanent staff contingent. We have 20 children split into 2 classes, Daisy Class headed by Teacher Juliet and Teacher Ntombie with 6 children ages 3 to 4 years. The Sunflower Class headed by Teacher Nushfeekah has 14 children ages 4 to 6 years. A highlight of the year was our Youth Yoga Camp to Durban where 10 youth(past children) and 5 staff visited Sarva Dharam Ashram in Durban for a 5 day youth camp.

Progress Report

1. Educare Activities

- Children's birthdays are celebrated with a story about their qualities, their growth and connection to nature, a cake is made, a gift is given and songs are sung, a touching and emotional moment for the child.
- Gardening formed part of the core curriculum with the children planting and nurturing various vegetables and herbs over the year. Children are actively engaged with the soil, growing seasonal veg, watering the plants and feeding the compost heap. During the third term they were involved in propagating succulents and growing spinach and beetroot. Succulents were planted by each child and they took their plants home at the end of the year.
- Educare outings take place twice per term. This year we visited the Cape Town Gardens, Newlands Forest, The Playshed, Green Point Park, The Athlone swimming pool and safety places of interest.
- Recycling : This program is co-ordinated by Teacher Ntombie. Once per week materials are recycled and taken to Oasis Centre. Veg and fruit waste is placed in the work composting heap. Recycled materials are used for children's crafts such as Jungle Oats boxes, toilet roll and cardboard boxes. Children are indirectly involved in this project to bring about awareness.
- Prayers are sung before every meal, story time and end of the day. This brings about a feeling of gratitude and appreciation to themselves, their friends, the staff and God.
- Yoga: 8 children attend yoga class twice per week. This is conducted by Teacher Mala. The sessions are conducted in a fun and playful manner comprising of breathwork, movements to rhythm and animal movements, chanting and instruction to sun salutations. On the 24th April Swamis from the Sannyas Council visited and spent time



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with the children. The children sang songs, Swami Vedananda recited the Gayatri Mantra and sang the famous Barney song 'I love you' with the children. It was a special and uplifting time together.

- New admissions for 2025 were completed with our educare bus doubling up as a mobile admissions office. We have 20 children enrolled at COLT for 2025.
- Every end of term was celebrated with a special seasonal festival including food, art work and song.
- A graduation and advent festival was held in November to celebrate 10 graduating to Grade R, mainstream school.
- Our Children's Christmas party was held in December and included all 61 current and past COLT children. They all received Santa Shoeboxes, engaged in a fun activity with Kyla Norris and her team from Chand Consultants and gifted with a Christmas goodie bag. Our 10 youth who attended the Durban Youth Yoga Camp were gifted with bags and clothes which were lost when the trailer disappeared.
- A COLT Youth Yoga Camp that was held in June. Ten of our youth, between the ages 11 – 14 years were selected from a group of 41 past COLT learners to participate in the youth yoga camp. The reason for the camp was to visit Swami Ramkripānanda at the Sarva Dharma Ashram in Durban. The ashram is situated in a township in Welbedacht and Swami Ramkripānanda works with the vulnerable youth living in the area. He is currently working with a 4th generation of youth. The camp would be an enriching experience for our youth - living in an ashram in the presence of Swami Ramkripānanda and interacting with the local youth who participate in his programs at the ashram.

2. Social Care and Support: Parent Support

- We have built a great relationship with local primary schools over the year and continue to engage with them on matters pertaining to COLT past pupils. Where necessary, we purchase stationery, uniforms and other school supplies for the children. We purchased school bags and stationery for 9 children in 2024. We also intervene with the parents where there are attendance or behavioural concerns from the school.
- There were 10 active cases which required direct social work service.
- Assisted with the application and admission process for 10 graduating COLT children into suitable primary schools for Grade R. We keep a close relationship with the teachers and parents of all our past pupils. This included providing school uniforms and stationery supplies where required.
- 60 current and past children receive bread once per week. We also provided food parcels twice per month to the most vulnerable children and their families. Food parcels



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are given once per term to all 20 parents and our 6 community representative once per term.

- In kind donations received which include hygiene supplies, clothes and household supplies are sorted by teachers and distributed immediately to most needy families.
- Parent education interventions were held throughout the school year and included fire safety, basic first aid training and primary healthcare education by the Lansdowne Clinic Sister. Colt has entered into a partnership with the organisation Arise Family with a focus on family strengthening services, training and consulting services. Director, Daniella Moosajee and Social Worker, Alexa Matthews and agreed on mentoring all social work case management, facilitating the parent 10 week parent program, namely 'Roots to Resilience'.

The 'Roots to Resilience' training aims is to provide holistic support to existing families by providing family strengthening interventions, as we believe stronger families are the foundation for a stronger society. This was a 3 month training with 20 participants.

3. Staff Development

- 8 full time staff and 5 volunteers.
- Weekly Yoga Philosophy sessions were held at the ashram with Swami Vidyanandaji, the Spiritual Head of the Educare, conducting yoga philosophy talks. Our theme for the year was, Integral Yoga'. Swami Parvathiananda conducted classes on hatha yoga and ayurveda.
- A 3-day Staff Integral Yoga Retreat was held at the ashram in March and Yoga Days at the end of each term.
- Teacher Nushfeekah serves as both a Social Auxiliary Worker and Educare teacher.
- Teacher Juliet completed her Level 4 qualification at the Centre of Creative Education and is now continuing with her Level 5 studies.

4. Finance

At the time of writing, COLT's Annual Financial Results for the period are currently being compiled and audited. The total income for the year January to December 2024 was R847 614 and expenses R713 554. Surplus of R134 060.

We pray for the continued success of COLT so that we may continue to have the opportunity to purify our hearts and minds through this channel of service.

Yours in Service

Mala Maitri Makan

Managing Trustee