



## **HANDS TO HEARTS INTERNATIONAL**

Empowering Women ~ Nurturing Children

### **2006 Review and 2007 Annual Report**

Hands to Hearts International (HHI) was founded in the fall of 2004 as a non-profit organization dedicated to improving of the health and well-being of orphaned and other vulnerable children through improved early childhood care.

#### **2006**

HHI began work in the tsunami struck area of South India in February 2006. In that year we trained local HHI Trainers in the States of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The local HHI Trainers provided 22 trainings for 247 women who were caretakers for 1,180 young children. Four months after the caregivers were trained, the astounding effects of HHI's curriculum of nurturing early childhood development could still be seen: two orphanage directors reported that "children haven't died since your [HHI] training"; and all the directors reported that their children were sick less often, got healthier faster when ill, and therefore needed less medicine; the children also gained more weight, were easier to soothe and began to answer to their names. (When I inquired why this was new, they replied that "no one ever called them by their names before"). The care-givers were observed to be more nurturing, they didn't "carry babies like logs of wood", they practiced better hygiene, took greater pride in their work and overall appeared happier with their jobs.

In 2006, HHI's Director Laura Peterson won the "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Outcomes Award" from Wisdom University for her impact on global humanitarian issues. HHI was generously supported with funding from the James R. Greenbaum Jr. Family Foundation and the So Hum Foundation, was independently chosen as the winner of an "Emerging Futures" grant from the Omidyar Network and had over 200 individual donors.

#### **2007**

In 2007, HHI expanded its work in India. Our local HHI Trainers provided 46 trainings to 562 women, who in turn are providing more nurturing care for 6,088 orphaned and vulnerable children. (This was double our projections for impact and was accomplished with ½ the projected budget.) In the summer of 2007, HHI trained a new local HHI Trainer in the Indian State of Orissa, and we began a joint project with India's Integrated Child Development Services (the world's largest early childhood development program, sponsored by UNICEF and the World Bank), training their teachers in Kerala and Orissa. HHI also had an interesting request by more than 20 village mothers to train them in HHI's child care model; they showed up to their special training with 29 children in tow!

HHI collected outcome data from every program served, and obtained feedback from every woman trained. These evaluations consistently showed that the women wanted to expand the training to learn about child development up to the age of five (at that time our training only covered ages zero to three). In 2007, HHI began to add new information to improve and expand the training program. Christine Chaille, PhD, and Frank Mahler, MS, of Portland State Univ., both of whom are recognized experts in early childhood development, were hired as HHI's professional curriculum designers.

In October, Chaille and Mahler brought their creation of HHI's newly designed curriculum to India to get direct feedback from HHI's local trainers, and to gain a deeper understanding of the environment in which HHI works. This allowed the designers to mold the curriculum to be as culturally neutral as possible. Every single word was reviewed and approved for its ability to translate smoothly into different languages.

HHI has designed a curriculum that is revolutionary in its focus on what caregivers, regardless of resources, can do on a day-to-day basis to support the healthy development of the children in their care. For example, when we talk about building language skills, we don't focus exclusively on books; we focus on stories and songs that are a part of every family, community and culture, because the communities HHI wishes to serve often do not have books, and in some cases the women have never been taught to read.

In the last fiscal year (10/06 - 9/07) HHI received 37% of our budget from foundations, mostly from the James R. Greenbaum Jr. Family Foundation; 29% from individuals and corporate support; 23% from fundraising events; and 11% was earned revenue. In this fiscal year (10/07 - 9/08), HHI will be able to significantly increase our impact again by certifying new trainers within two outside agencies, thus training approximately 945 women and bettering life for 9,450 children, all while operating on a budget of \$193,468. This budget will be funded by private donors and fundraising events; foundations (of which the Good Works Institute, the Huston Foundation and the So Hum Foundation have already designated funding); as well as a growing earned income stream from HHI's paying partner agencies, this is projected to be approximately 25% of the budget.

In 2008 we are laying our groundwork thoughtfully, expanding our reach via smart collaborations. Our goal is to begin two paid contracts with highly reputable partner groups that will use HHI's services to strengthen their child health programming. Our projections are that by "building out instead of up", our costs will remain low and our impact will be maximized, allowing us to move beyond foundation funding within the next four years. CARE India, Catholic Relief Services, Family Health International, Sustainable Harvest and Firefly Kids have already had initial meetings with HHI and have expressed interest in applying HHI's model within their own programs. These organizations understand that HHI's training and support would strengthen and streamline their own operations. HHI has invitations to work with the government of Cameroon and small NGOs in Russia, Kenya, Uganda and Bangladesh.

Hands to Hearts International has quickly proven itself to be a simple, cost effective, replicable, and sustainable model for social change: HHI was featured in the Skoll Foundation's 2007 report, "Growing Opportunity: Entrepreneurial Solutions to Insoluble Problems". It has quickly become apparent that HHI's training and support has tremendous potential to expand far beyond orphanages to directly improve the lives of millions of the world's neediest children at their most important developmental time, age zero to five-years old. HHI is innovative and high impact, working with local resources to effect social change by building the local capacity of partners and caregivers to improve early childhood development in orphaned and other vulnerable child populations, in both community and institutional settings. Through HHI's practical support and training, caregivers, teachers and parents improve their capacity to nurture a child's language, social, cognitive and physical skills, as well as enhance attachment and bonding.

*"Ensuring optimal conditions for a child's early years is one of the best investments that a country can make if it is to compete in a global economy based on the strength of its human capital."* (UNICEF)

**Thank you believing in HHI!** Your gifts of time, talents and resources into the creation of Hands to Hearts International have been invested wisely, and the benefits will be felt around the globe in ways which directly impact children, women, communities and entire social systems. We hope that you recognize how valuable you have been to bringing all of this about for thousands, and soon tens-of-thousands, and we hope that HHI continues to be your (non-traditional) charity of choice for the next few years while we build for our sustainable future of global greatness!

In deep appreciation,



Laura Peterson, Founder & Executive Director  
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