



Classroom Activities

India: A New Life

Featured Video Clip: FRONTLINE/World: India: A New Life
<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/flwrc50.html?c=4qt>

VIDEO OVERVIEW

Hundreds of thousands of children live on the streets in India's cities. In the southeastern city of Vijayawada, one organization, Navajeevan Bala Bhavan, seeks to shelter and educate such children so they can transition to a life beyond the streets. In *India: A New Life*, students will see and hear what life is like for a child on the streets of Vijayawada and will meet the leaders in the shelter trying to help them. Note: This video clip includes three verbal descriptions of violent crimes witnessed or experienced by children.

GETTING STARTED

For classrooms studying geography, civics and health, FRONTLINE provides a set of video themes and discussion questions to help students analyze and understand key current events around the globe. Watch the video chapter and start a discussion about how organizations can strengthen communities by addressing social problems. Go further into this topic with the *India: A New Life Lesson Plan* that asks students to research and share information about local social service organizations that help youth in need.

VIDEO THEMES

- An estimated 3,000 children live on the streets of the Indian city of Vijayawada because of poverty and/or troubles at home.
- The organization Navajeevan Bala Bhavan, funded by government grants and private donations, provides shelter, a routine, a safe family environment and an education to street children so they will be prepared for life beyond the streets.
- Boys outnumber girls on the street 10-to-1 because girls are more vulnerable to crime or being trafficked into the commercial sex industry.
- Some children prefer life on the streets because of the freedom and the friendships they have there. To help lure them away from street life, the shelter hires former street kids to serve as role models and mentors and to encourage more children on the streets to come to the shelter for help.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What are some of the reasons that so many children live on the street in the Indian city of Vijayawada?
- Why is it sometimes difficult to pull children away from street life?
- What services are provided to youth at Father Koshy's shelter? How do these benefit those receiving the service as well as the community as a whole?
- Describe Father Koshy's peer educator program. How do youth leaders help the shelter achieve its goals?
- What could you do in your own community to help youth in need?

GO FURTHER

Featured Lesson Plan: "[Helping Youth in India and Around the Corner](#)"

Web-exclusive Resource: [Interview with Father Thomas Koshy](#)
http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/india_street_chint.html

Featured Lesson Plan: Helping Youth in India and Around the Corner

Overview:

In this lesson, the class will watch a video news story that features a shelter in India that aims to help children living in the street. Students will analyze how the services of this shelter benefit both the children and the community as a whole, and will discuss how youth at the shelter are tapped as leaders to serve other youth in need. The class will then research local social services for teens, organize this information in a directory, and share it with peers. For more background information on India and the shelter featured in the video, please see this lesson's [Related Resources](#).

Grade Levels: Grades 9-12

Note: The video clip used in this lesson includes three verbal descriptions of violent crimes witnessed or experienced by children.

Subject Areas:

Social Studies, Geography, Civics, World History, Health

Objectives:

The student will:

- Identify strategies used by a shelter to help children living on the streets of the Indian city of Vijayawada
- Explain the benefits that such social services provide to both the individual served and the community
- Collect, prepare and distribute information about local organizations that serve youth in need

Estimated Time Needed:

One 50-minute class period

Materials Needed:

- Internet access and equipment to show the class an online video clip and to conduct research
- The FRONTLINE/World film *India: A New Life* (length: 16:57)
- Map showing the location of India

Procedure:

1. Show students where India is on a map. Tell the class that hundreds of thousands of children in India are homeless and live on the street, where many receive no education and are vulnerable to abuse, exploitation by unregulated employers, abduction and hunger.
2. To see how this problem is being addressed in the southeastern Indian city of Vijayawada, show the FRONTLINE/World story *India: A New Life* (length: 16:57). Focus student viewing by having them take notes on the types of services provided by Father Koshy's shelter.
3. Discuss why so many children in Vijayawada live on the street and the services that Father Koshy's organization provides to help them. How might each type of service benefit the children at the shelter and the community as a whole? Also, examine the shelter itself. How is it funded and staffed? What are the organization's values? In what ways are youth at the shelter involved in serving other youth? How does this youth leadership meet the goals of the organization?
4. Have students find out what types of organizations and social services are available in your community for youth who need help with issues such as depression, substance abuse, teen pregnancy, hunger, abuse at home, rape and homelessness. Your school's guidance counselor, blue pages section in the telephone directory, government departments for health and social services, and city websites are good sources of such information.

5. Help the class create a social services directory that organizes this information clearly for youth and summarizes the services available for each type of problem. Such a directory could be presented in an online wiki, a flyer or some other format.

6. Have students distribute or publicize this information to as many youth as possible. Point out that in doing so, they are acting similarly to the peer educators in the video who connect youth in trouble to those who can help.

Credits:

This teacher's guide was developed and written by Cari Ladd. The section on using these materials with ESL students was written by Sally Bunch.

Extensions:

- Invite a guest speaker to your classroom who provides social services to youth in your community and can tell students about the most common problems faced by young people in your area. Have this speaker also share his or her background and talk about why he or she chose this profession. Compare the speaker's experience with that of Father Koshy, as described in an [FRONTLINE/World interview](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/india_street_chint.html)
http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/india_street_chint.html
- Learn more about "social entrepreneurs," who, like Father Koshy in the video, align their professions with addressing social needs in the community. Have students research the work of the [social entrepreneurs profiled by FRONTLINE/World](http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/socialentrepreneurs.html)
<http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/stories/socialentrepreneurs.html>. Identify a common pattern in how their work came about and is currently run. How could students follow that same pattern to address social needs in their community? Have students work in small groups to identify a local need and develop an action plan for a sustainable business or organization that could address it.

Related Resources:

India: Background Facts and Related Links

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/india_street_chlinks.html

This FRONTLINE/World page profiles India and explains how its politics and economy affect poverty and child homelessness.

Interview with Father Thomas Koshy

http://www.pbs.org/frontlineworld/rough/2007/06/india_street_chint.html

This FRONTLINE/World interview with the director of the organization featured in the film discusses the realities, setbacks and ultimate rewards of trying to help street children.

Navajeevan Bala Bhavan: New Life Children's Home

<http://njbb.org/>

The official website for the organization featured in the film provides detailed information on its history and services.

Related Standards:

These standards are drawn from "Content Knowledge," a compilation of content standards and benchmarks for K-12 curriculum by McRel (Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning) at

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>.

Behavioral Studies, Standard 4: Understands conflict, cooperation and interdependence among individuals, groups and institutions

Business Education, Standard 15: Knows unique characteristics of an entrepreneur

Civics, Standard 10: Understands the role of voluntarism and organized groups in American social and political life

Geography, Standard 10: Understands the nature and complexity of earth's cultural mosaics

Health, Standard 1: Knows the availability and effective use of health services, products and information

Language Arts, Standard 9: Uses viewing skills and strategies to understand and interpret visual media

Life Work, Standard 8: Operates effectively within organizations

World History, Standard 44: Understands the search for community, stability and peace in an interdependent world

World History, Standard 45: Understands major global trends since World War II