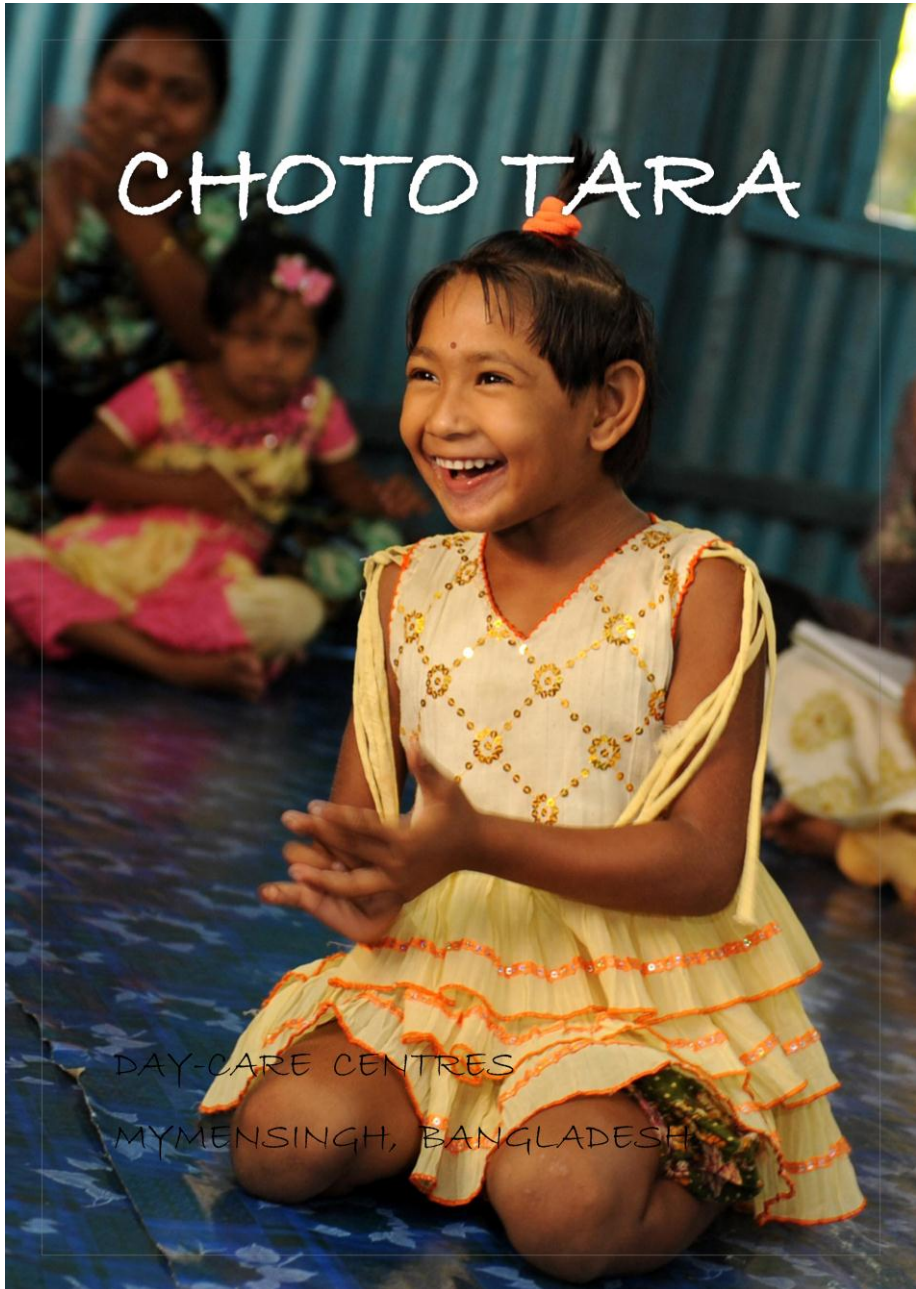


CHOTO TARA

DAY-CARE CENTRES
MYMENSINGH, BANGLADESH



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Overview:

There was no centre for the disabled people in Mymensingh. In 1997, 21st February, the Taizé Brothers started one Centre for disabled (C.C.H). Some volunteers started to work among the physically disabled people. Gradually, with training, a staff was built up. Visiting the areas of Mymensingh they discovered a large number of children and young people with an intellectual disability. Most were utterly neglected in their families and remained often hidden away.

In 2006 a small centre was started in a large slum area. People welcomed this initiative and gave much support. Soon it was too small. A new location was found nearby, in Bolaspur, next to a primary school for poor children that the Taizé Brothers started. 15 children and some of their mothers come to this centre 4 times a week, in the morning. A few mothers help in running this centre, young people too.

In 2008 a second, much larger centre, was started in a village area north of the city (Charkalibari Mill gate). Some 25 children join there, 4 days a week, for the whole day. As many come from villages at quite a distance the program is a full day one and a simple lunch is provided, prepared by a few mothers. Some mothers and children come on foot, where possible a micro bus goes to pick up the children.

In 2009 a third centre opened in another area of Mymensingh (Balughat).

Some 10 children are welcomed there. This centre is open 4 days a week. One more will start in January 2011 in Muktagacha, 15 km's from Mymensingh with about 10 children.

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Aim of a day-care centre:

Intellectually disabled children and young people and their parents must get respect in our society. We want to insure that they are respected as normal people everywhere by everyone. Therefore the families with an intellectually disabled child had (and still get) support and formation.



All together playing

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Introduction by Tina



There are many kind of disabilities in our society. But intellectually disabled people are most neglected in our society. Before there was any day-care centre opened, when we visited the houses of intellectually disabled children, the local people asked to us: “Are you going to visit the home of the mad child? Then we told them the boy/girl’s name and the people were very surprised.

Intellectually disabled children/young people and their parents did not know what day-care was, what we were doing there? “If we go to a day-care centre what is our benefit?”, they asked. Many parents said that nobody loved their child and started crying.

We visited the families often and in that way we made a good relationship with them.

We believe that intellectually disabled children also are a gift of God and with a very special blessing. They are also a big part of our society. Without them we can not do anything nice in our society.

When we work with them, not only do we help them but they also help us. They help us by their smiles and encourage us in our daily life. They help us to be silent.

In the day-care we want the children to feel happy so that they can be who they are. Joy and happiness are the most important things, so they can forget the problems they face at home or in the society. This is our main goal.

Of course we want the children to learn something when they are in the day-care. Many times parents think the child can't do anything, so it is very important that we teach them things and that the parents see some result. But always we look if the child is capable to learn.

Involving the family and the society is most important. So we try to inform them about the disability and tell them what they can do.



Mullah with his friend Joy

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My Name Is JOY



Joy is a physically and intellectually disabled boy. He is 13 years old. He lives with his family in a slum area of Mymensingh town. His family faces a lot of difficult problems. Mother is a houseworker and she earns a little money for the family.

Only the mother takes care of Joy and she brings him three times a week to the day-care. He has been coming to the day-care for three years. He has already improved a lot. He understands a lot of what we ask him to do. When Joy notices boys playing football, he wants to do it also and he tries to move with them but he can not move. We help him the best we can.

When the day-care is finished and all mothers and children are ready to go back to home then Joy does not want to go. He enjoys the day-care too much !

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And I Am BRISTY



Bristy is an autistic girl. She is twelve years old. She has been coming to the Bolaspur day-care for two years.

Her father lives with another woman. Her father does not help Bristy and her mother. Her mother is a housewife and works in other houses to earn money. Mother leaves the house from 6 am till 7 pm to work. All this time Bristy is alone in the house and her younger sister takes care of her.

She did not talk before coming to the day-care, nor did she try. But she has improved a lot now.

Before she was afraid of many things, but most of this fear is almost gone. She speaks a lot, almost normally and more clearly than before. She meets with all the people and replies if somebody questions her.

She is using a wheel chair. Everyday her sister brings her to the day-care and back. She is always happy in the day-care and understands that people love her very much.

Her mother is very happy for her because she also understands that disabled children are a great gift of Allah.

CHOTO TARA



Hello ! I Am SAIMA



Saima is a girl of the Bihari Camp. She is 12 years old. She has been coming to the day-care from the beginning. In her behavior she is slow and she doesn't speak clearly. She says "apa", "mama" if somebody asks her a question.

In the beginning it was very difficult for Saima to stay in the day-care centre without her mother. She cried a lot and tried to go back to her house. Now Saima feels so safe, that she never misses her mother and she enjoys outings. Saima likes the day-care so much that she is always a little bit angry when there is a holiday. She tells everyone that she is going to school.



Mothers sharing about their children

CHOTO TARA



Let Me Introduce Myself : SHOBNOM



Shobnom is an intellectually disabled girl. She lives at the Bihari Camp of Mymensingh town. Her father is a barber and mother is a houseworker. The Bihari Camp is an unhealthy and crowded place to live in. There is always quarreling, fighting and crying among the people, a place of chaos.

Nobody understands that Shobnom is an intellectually disabled girl. Everybody in the area calls her “mad”. When somebody loses something they say that Shobnom is the thief.

Her mother is an illiterate woman. She also does not understand Shobnom’s problem. Her mother very often abuses Shobnom. Her father can not manage his family with his little income.

There are some restaurants in the Bihari Camp and Shobnom often goes to the restaurants to beg for some food.

From the beginning she is coming to the day-care. She is changing slowly but has learned already a lot. We hope that we can teach Shobnom a job in the day-care, so that she can start working in our new workshop. Hopefully in the future she can earn some money.

She feels unhappy when the day-care is closed. She understands that everybody in the day-care is her friend and loves her very much.



Home visit



Tea - time in Shaymol Chaya

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Hi ! It's Me TONU !



Tonu lives in the Bihari Camp in Mymensingh town. His father died and his mother has a small business to manage the family. Tonu is an intellectually disabled boy and he has ADHD. Because of the ADHD and the environment of the Bihari Camp, Tonu faces a lot of problems.

He is always very active and he doesn't understand the social rules of the society. In the day-care Tonu also has problems with others, but it is easier to handle Tonu and give him directions.

He has been sent from school, because of his disability.

Because his parents did not understand his problem / disability and because of the environment he is living in, Tonu became uncontrollable. There are 500 hundred families living in the Bihari Camp, so people live in over-crowded conditions.

In 2005 by visiting his home we made a good relation with his family. Since then many times we discussed about Tonu. Slowly they started to understand his disability and the benefit of sending Tonu to the day-care. Since 2006 Tonu joins the Bolaspur day-care.



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They Call Me Flower but I Am SRIJONA



Srijona is a child with cerebral palsy and is intellectually disabled. She is 12 years old. She lives with her family in Bolaspur of Mymensingh town. Her father is a rickshaw puller and her mother is a houseworker. Her father often neglects her and does not care for her. He even says that Srijona will die soon. Her mother and sister love her very much. She has been coming to the Bolaspur day-care from the beginning. Her mother brings her to the day-care everyday with joy. She can understand everything that she needs, that is: going to the day-care,

toileting, eating, etc

She is severely disabled so she always needs the help from others. When we ask her to do something she tries and moves her body.

We give her physiotherapy and we made a special chair for her. For her epilepsy we give the family money for medication. She goes regularly to the C.R.P. in Savar, when there are physical problems.

She is really happy in the day-care with her friends, their mothers and volunteers. We are proud of her as she blooms like a flower.

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Call "NILUFA" And I Greet You



Nilufa is a sweet girl of the Balughat day-care centre. She lives near the Katgola bazaar of Mymensingh town. She is ten years old. Her father is a baby taxi driver and her mother is a maid servant. She has also a stepmother. She is a Down syndrome girl. She is physically very weak, she always has pains in her hands and legs.

When we first met her she was very unhappy because her family did not like her. If a bad event occurred, they faulted her for that. We visited her home once a week and discussed

many things. We talked about her but they did not give us a lot of time at first. Later we made a good relation through visiting them.

We organize a "Light Of Joy" programme once a month. It is a programme where intellectually disabled children and their families get invited. They came to the "Light Of Joy" programme and they saw other intellectually disabled children with their parents. During the first "Light Of Joy"- meeting, her mother cried a lot. They come to the "Light Of Joy" programme every month.

Now Nilufa is very happy in the day-care and always likes to laugh, dance and meet with people.



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I Am The Youngest Of All: MULLAH



Mullah is a physically and intellectually disabled child. He is four years old. He has been coming to our Shaymol Chaya day-care. He is the youngest of all. His father is a day laborer and his mother works in our day-care centre. His elder sister is a physically disabled girl. His brother and sister both come to our day-care centre, to look after Mullah.

He is disabled from birth. At first nobody recognized that he is a disabled child. His mother recognized his disability when he was three months old. She

took him to a doctor to get advice and she treated him according to the advice of the doctor. When he first came in our day-care, he did not do anything.

Physically he was very weak; he could not sit, swallow, roll-over, grasp. Now he can sit and do many things normally through coming to the day-care. He has a special chair to sit in. He can easily recognize his chair when he comes to the day-care. If somebody sits in his chair, he gets angry. He can draw a little bit on paper. When we do our activities he is very happy.

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My Name? It is ARIF



Arif is an intellectually disabled boy. He is 13 years old. At the beginning he was not so disabled but due to his serious epilepsy and lack of proper treatment his problem got worse. He lost his ability to speak.

When he first came to the day-care he was full of fear and could do little.

Since coming he has learned to draw pictures, he tries to say his name and call mom and dad. When he is hungry he will go in the kitchen at home and eat whatever food is there.

Even though his physical condition is deteriorating he has improved socially and is not afraid of people any more. He has come to realize that people love him very much

CHOTO TARA



Last But Not Least ... I Am ORNOB



Ornob is an autistic boy of eight years old. He is disabled from birth. He is coming to the day-care for one year. Ornob could not do anything, but after coming to the day-care he learned a lot. At first he did not want to stay in the day-care and he got angry, he also threw with toys. Slowly he started to feel better in the day-care and now he likes it very much. Before he was afraid to go out of his parents' house, but now it is no problem. He even visits busy places.

He likes singing with us and he can draw nicely. Only when we start playing with a ball, he gets angry. Then he is allowed to play outside. His family is very happy because they see that Ornob learned a lot and he is using those skills even at home.

Ornob has epilepsy, the fits are coming during the night. He needs medication for that.





Concentrating

CHOTO



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Little notice:

We want to let you know that you are always welcome to visit our day-care centers.

If you have ideas for us, we are truly happy if you share them with us.

We always can use some help, so if you are interested to work with us as a volunteer we would appreciate that very much. If you are a foreigner, we will help you during your stay here.

We also invite you to visit our website regularly. There you will find the newsletter with all the news. If you are at www.chototara.com please leave a comment in our guestbook.

Thank you for having interest in our day-care centres and for being our friend.

With a lot greetings,

The Choto Tara Family

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