



SRI SARVESHWARI SAMOOH, USA  
SonoMa Ashram

## News from Bal Ashram

Varanasi, 7 February 2009

Dear Friends,

On the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January, we were just sitting in the Ashram when two men appeared at the gate with two very small children. Looking from a distance we had already made up our minds...they are too small for us to manage. A three year old girl and her year old brother, both filthy and totally emancipated with malnutrition, were presented before us. Their father died six months ago from tuberculosis and their mother passed away four months ago from heat stroke. The children were living under a tarp in a park where many others had pitched their make-shift shades. They were living off the handouts from other workers, especially a young man from the same village as their parents, who would go to work in the day and return to his tent next to theirs at night. We could not imagine separating the two. Finally we decided to take them both in.



We cut all their hair, bathed them, trimmed their finger nails, applied medicine to visible wounds, and dressed them in clean clothes.







The children were given new names: the baby boy is **Indra** and his sister is **Vidya**. In the beginning Indra couldn't even crawl because he was so weak. Over the past two weeks we have taken them to the hospital several times for various tests. They are getting regular massage twice a day and are well fed. Indra is crawling and he even stood up on his own today with a big smile on his face.





The boys love the new arrivals. Although Vidya is only three, she has matured beyond her age and is very protective of her brother—she always makes sure he is fed first. If he cries in the night, she gets up and looks at him and makes sure someone comes to their side. It is a living example of how struggle shapes our personality.



The addition of Vidya and Indra has brought in some logistical challenges—besides being so young, Vidya is our first little girl. We are looking for a permanent nanny for them who could look after them consistently. Right now we have volunteers, but for the long term, we will need one woman living here and keeping them in her own room. Temporarily, the young woman who was looking after the small boys mainly takes care of them.



Here are Indra and Vidya after their first full week at Bal Ashram.

Babaji sends his love and blessings to you.

Namasté,  
shivani



*P.S. I will write again soon with more news about other happenings at Bal Ashram.*

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