

AUSTRALIAN PROJECTS BENEFITING THE COMMUNITY

BACKGROUND

The Sathya Sai Organisation of Australia & PNG began to form in the mid 70s as followers inspired by Sri Sathya Sai Baba started to practice the example of free service to the needy, without expectation of publicity, reward or other personal aggrandizement. In fact it is a person's duty to help his fellow human beings to create a caring community.

Approximately 1500 people per week are actively doing and seeking service projects which address needs in the Australian Community. All work is voluntary ie free of charge. In fact, the organisation does not encourage cash donations, however, use of facilities for service projects eg equipment, premises, materials, etc are welcomed.

INDIVIDUAL SERVICE

This is the biggest activity based on Sai principles occurring around Australia & PNG where individuals, working anonymously, help members of their community. These individual activities are too numerous to mention but include the following:

- knitting cuddly 'trauma bears' for local and overseas charities
- making patchwork quilts for the needy
- helping elderly neighbours with:
 - gardening
 - shopping
 - household chores
- hospitals and nursing home visits
- palliative cancer care volunteers
- donations of food, toiletries, blankets through the Centres to charitable organisations
- helping in kitchens, serving at Salvation Army, Smith Family Foundation, etc
- blood donations - in one centre alone 20 people gave blood during February 2003
- Telecross - a free Red Cross 'phone chat' service by Sai volunteers

GROUP SERVICE

There are approximately 10 Sai soup-kitchens around Australia where about 500 meals are handed out weekly eg. Flinders Street Station, Melbourne and Surrey Hills, Sydney. The Sai volunteers are known to City Councils who appreciate the contribution to the community. Similarly food, clothing and blankets are distributed to major charitable houses, including:

- St Vincent's de Paul
- Smith Family Foundation
- Brighton Benevolent Society
- Ardoch Youth
- Salvation Army
- Nursing home visits - singing /entertainment
- Child Detention Centres - value based plays and visits

U-TURN PROJECTS - EXPANDED GROUP SERVICE

Sai volunteers operating within a group provide one-on-one tutoring/care to recipients. Positive results are reported eg increased confidence, securing a job, feeling part of a family, etc hence, lives may be turned around (U-TURN) in such areas as:

- education and training
- self development
- medical attention
- environmental support
- artistic expression

PEACE MURAL INITIATIVE

The 'Peace not Pieces' mural project was an initiative of the Auburn Migrant Resource Centre and supported by Auburn Council. Thirty five people from 15 different cultural backgrounds were involved with Sai youth. The mural was unveiled by the Governor of New South Wales during Refugee Week in 2002. The NSW ABC television program 'Stateline' featured this story. This mural is approx. 40 metres long and 2.5 metres wide. One is planned for each major Australia city.



SAI ORGANISATION AT FEDERATION SQUARE MELBOURNE (left)

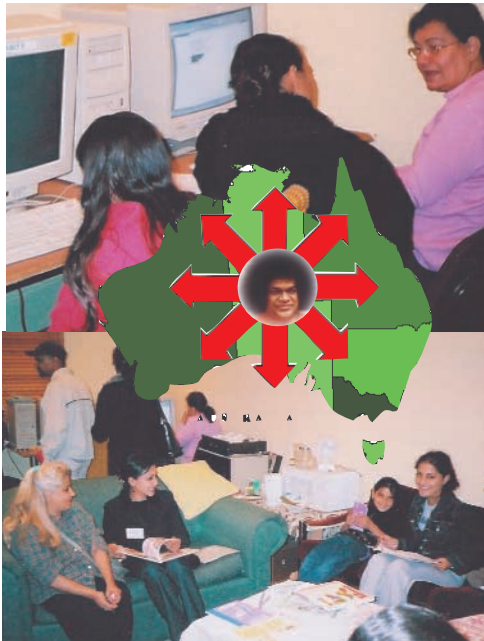
The Youth-For-Sai hosted a National Festival for Dance & Music at Federation Square, Melbourne - one of the Nation's most prominent landmarks. The theme of the festival was WORLD PEACE & LOVE

To download more information on Service Activities in Australia please visit the website: <http://www.saiaustralia.org.au/download/service.pdf>

SMITHY PROGRAM FORGES YOUTH LINKS' (Queensland)

Two Sai volunteers are the facilitators of a special blacksmithing project established in Gympie last year to help reverse behaviour problems in high school boys and encourage them to continue their education.

Students selected for the projects were those who were capable with their hands but had difficulty in a classroom situation. While learning practical skills, the program also improves the reading and writing ability as students must read from manuals to put the knowledge into practice.



SAI HOMEWORK HELP

The homework classes provide one-on-one tutoring for school students who are recent migrants to Australia. Broadly speaking there are two aims:

1. To develop the basic skills of disadvantaged youth so that they be given a fair opportunity to realise their potential; and
2. To provide mentoring and education in a caring environment (human values).

Feedback from students has been positive. Waqas Qudrat is 13 years old and he came from Pakistan with his parents two years ago. So far he has been learning the joys of fractions and percentages. Waqar says, 'I feel proud coming to the centre...'



BLUE NURSES' (Brisbane)

The 'Blue Nurses' afternoon teas & concerts for the elderly, are held at SWARA (Queensland) every second Sunday of the month from March to November. The 'Blue Nurse' afternoons were set up in 1983 by a small group of Sai devotees to entertain, feed and transport elderly people thereby infusing fun into their lives. The themes for 2001 included Africa; old-time British music hall; 1920's Chicago and the USA 'Wild West' (including a mini-musical play). These themes are followed through in the content of the entertainment, music, the decorations, design of the name tags and the colour scheme of the table settings with the aim of creating an effective overall atmosphere'.

CYBER YOUTH (Sydney) - Auburn Migrant Resource Centre

This dynamic service project was inspired by young people from various cultures and religions. Cyber Youth offers intensive one-on-one basic computer training and resume writing - the course helps self confidence, build support networks and provides a safe environment where recent migrants feel empowered.

Cyber Youth Statistics:

- o initiated in February 2002 and now into the third course
- o over 50 adults have completed the course
- o a comprehensive manual has been written
- o extensive training of youth facilitators
- o homework help provided.

'When I first came to these classes I was very shy and very confined. I now feel like I belong to a family. I have gained so much confidence and I have never met so many kind, loving people together.'

THORNBURY ASYLUM SEEKER CENTRE (Melbourne)

The Centre was 'given' to the Sai volunteers every Saturday from 10.30am to 1.30pm (after demonstrating commitment and help to asylum seekers). Sai volunteers offer:

- o homework help
- o English speaking help
- o playgroup with value games
- o single mother support
- o computer training.

Asad from Iraq complained about the 2 weeks Easter closure saying, "the 3 hours are the best part of my week!"

SHINE PROJECT (Perth)

The Melville Council Mayor has given full support to Sai volunteers who arrange essay and art competitions with participating schools on love, peace, right conduct, non-violence and truth (the 5 human values). Prizes and ceremonies take place with judges from all parts of the community. Approximately 10 schools have participated over the last two years. The ceremonies have attracted interest from television, the Education Department and councillors from other councils.

Prime Minister's letter - reproduced from original

SRI SATHYA SAI ORGANISATION - AUSTRALIA & PNG MESSAGE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF SRI SATHYA SAI ORGANISATION OF AUSTRALIA 10-12 APRIL 1998

I am pleased to have this opportunity to congratulate the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation on the occasion of its 1998 annual conference in Canberra. In today's changing world it is important that organisations actively teach and pursue activities that transcend national geographical, cultural, linguistic, racial and religious boundaries. The Sri Sathya Sai Organisation, inspired by the teaching of its founder Sri Sathya Sai Baba, falls within this category and achieves its spiritual objectives by conducting education classes in human values to youth, adults and the community generally. Through the basic values of truth, right conduct, peace, love and non-violence the Sri Sathya Sai organisation is able to pass on to individuals principles that are so essential for the continuation of a tolerant and caring society into the 21st century.

With a network of 117 centres or congregations in Australia and over 1500 worldwide, the work of the Sri Sathya Sai Organisation continues to grow. By visiting hospitals and nursing homes, running soup kitchens, and assisting major community service bodies such as the Salvation Army and the Smith Family, members of the organisation are able to provide a valued contribution in assisting the elderly, sick and disadvantaged in our community. I am sure the 1998 National Conference will be a great success and I send best wishes to all participants for a most rewarding time.

John Howard

SRI SATHYA SAI ORGANISATION



PRASHANTI COUNCIL

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATION

INDIA ORGANISATION

176 countries world wide

AUSTRALIA & PNG
REGIONAL CO-ORDINATOR
Head Office

DEPUTY CENTRAL CO-ORDINATORS

CENTRAL COUNCIL

NATIONAL CO-ORDINATORS

NATIONAL CONVENORS

CONSULTANTS

SR SATHYA SAI SCHOOLS

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

SAI INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SERVICES

SAI INSTITUTE OF EDUCARE

SAI INSTITUTE OF SPORTS

AUSTRALIA & PNG NATIONAL CHAIR PERSONS CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

ACT ZONE

NSW ZONES
A
B
C
D

NT ZONE

QLD ZONES
Central
Northern
SE A
SE B
SE C

SA ZONE

TAS ZONE

VIC ZONES
A
B
C

WA ZONES
A
B

STATE CHAIRPERSONS CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE
(of each state and their zone)

CENTRE CHAIRPERSON / GROUP LEADER
(each centre or group of each zone with a committee of the following)

SPIRITUAL CO-ORDINATOR

EDUCATION CO-ORDINATOR

SERVICE CO-ORDINATOR

LADIES CO-ORDINATOR

YOUTH CO-ORDINATOR

STUDY CIRCLE CO-ORDINATOR

NEWCOMERS CO-ORDINATOR

APPROX 3000 AUSTRALIAN PARTICIPANTS

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