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Patrons: Her Excellency Shiranthi Rajapaksa and Mrs Jane Chilcott

## Happy New Year 2010



*The Rainbow Centre provides daily welfare, education and loving support to children living in extreme poverty in South Western Sri Lanka*



### Our Valuable Work

The Rainbow Centre is a haven for more than 100 children who live in appalling conditions. Its aim is to equip children with the skills to break free from poverty. The Centre operates vocational training programmes, a school, pre-school and nursery. It runs a full medical programme. It ensures that children do not go hungry by providing two nutritious meals a day. It works to ensure, when possible, that children can enter into the mainstream school system. The Rainbow Centre is the only facility in this area for these children to turn to. It has been praised highly at national and local levels for its standard of care. This work is made possible thanks to the generosity of individual and corporate donors, the support of AdoptSriLanka, one of the country's most dynamic and effective charities and an international partnership of Rotary clubs.

## Total Number of Children Placed in Schools by the Rainbow Centre Reaches 107

Congratulations to all the 24 children who graduated from the Rainbow Centre pre-school to take up places in mainstream schools at the start of the new academic year on 4th January 2010. Since beginning its work four years ago, the Rainbow Centre has placed a total of 107 children in the mainstream government educational system. Attending mainstream school makes a crucial difference to a child's general level of education and future ability to access secure employment. Without this support, these children would not have been able to go to school. Many of the children in the mainstream system are taken to and from school by the Rainbow Centre bus and are supported by the Centre after school with their studies and welfare. Rainbow Centre children continue to come top of their classes within the mainstream system. Children unable to find places in the mainstream system continue to be educated at the Rainbow School.



## Annual Concert a Tremendous Success

More than 100 children took part in the Rainbow Centre's fourth annual concert. There were stunning performances of traditional and modern songs and dance following weeks of rehearsals. It was a great celebration of the many talents of the children, applauded by hundreds of parents and supporters who attended the afternoon event.



**Many thanks...** to all the teachers involved in the elaborate preparations...to all the children who practised so diligently...to the Rainbow teenage boys who performed faultlessly without losing their cool...Nirmila, aged four who opened the concert in English...Thilini, the much loved volunteer English teacher and make up artist... the girls who devoted hours to perfecting their performance of Little Red Riding Hood in English...and Piyathissa Cooray for all his invaluable contributions.



**Congratulations...**to the Rainbow School bag makers whose baskets continue to sell out at Barefoot faster than they can make them (many thanks to their mentor Dominic Sansoni). The older children's hand made cards will be hitting the shops soon. Their wishes for 2010 were to go on a school trip, to have new clothes, good friends, more education, to speak English, to have a new house to live in, their own bicycle and a happy family



## New Students



**Selvi, Radika and Niluka**



**Niluka and Selvi (left)**



**Sujith**

Selvi, 15, Radika, 10, Niluka, 12, and Sujith, 8, joined the Rainbow Centre late last year. The children arrived in a terrible state, wearing rags and living in a makeshift shelter with their parents. As small children the girls had worked in a tile factory as manual labourers. Selvi and Niluka then spent two years working as live in servants in Colombo. They worked long hours, seven days a week with little pay. "We suffered a lot," they said. "That's why we are so happy to be at the Rainbow Centre." Their dream is to have the chance to study and to be able to experience some security. "What we want most of all is what all children need – protection and love.

## 2010 Graduates

### From the Nursery to Day Care



*At home as a baby*

*At the Rainbow Centre*

Tharusha, 18 months, entered the nursery as a small baby. He spent much of the first year of his life in hospital being treated for respiratory problems and was supported by the Rainbow Centre medical programme. He is the youngest of five children who live in extreme poverty in a remote rural area. The children travel more than three hours to get to and from the Rainbow Centre. Tharusha's health has improved and he is taking delight at all the new activities in Rainbow Day Care.

### From Day Care to Pre-school



*At home as a baby*

*At the Pre-School*

Akash, aged three has been at the Rainbow Centre since he was six months old and was one of the first babies to enter the nursery. He is the youngest of four children whose mother has been the victim of domestic violence and struggles to make a living as a cleaner. Akash loves coming to the Rainbow Centre and is a very affectionate and intelligent little boy.

### From Pre-school to Moragalla School



*Aged two on the railway*

*At the Rainbow Centre*

Nirmila, aged five, is the fourth of a family of five children all of whom attend the Rainbow Centre. Her father, an alcoholic fisherman scrapes together a living and the family have been homeless with the

children left to go hungry or expected to beg for additional income. In the recent floods, all their possessions were lost. Nirmila is a clever, confident girl who is very proud to be going to school.

## Teaching News

### Harry Barron is Back



The Rainbow Centre is delighted to welcome Harry Barron, a retired teacher from England, back as a volunteer. The children are thrilled to see him again and look forward to another six months of creative and practical lessons in spoken and written English.

## Special Thanks to...

### Pembridge Hall School London

Another fantastic fund raising event was organised by Pembridge Hall and their Rainbow volunteer teachers, Sheila Ross-Hulme and Sue Nelson, with a special auction of the girls' baskets. Thank you all for such stunning generosity.

### Elizabeth Marsden

The Rainbow Centre is indebted especially to Pembridge Hall's outgoing Headmistress Elizabeth Marsden. Mrs Marsden's support of the Rainbow Centre has seen the project get off the ground and flourish. Everyone at the Centre wants to express their thanks and wish her the best in her retirement.

### Francis Holland School Clarence Gate

The Rainbow Centre is honoured to have become a school charity. It is extremely grateful for funds raised at an amazing Just Dance competition. Special thanks to Miss Mahieu, Mrs Forde, Mrs Durham and all the girls in the Upper Fifth.

### Marjan Shephard-Auping

Many thanks to Marjan and her sister Els for visiting the centre and making a generous donation of financial support and a large supply of much needed practical items. The Centre is delighted and touched to be the recipient of Marjan's 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday gifts.

## AdoptSriLanka

The Rainbow Centre continues to depend significantly on the support and guidance of one of Sri Lanka's most dedicated and effective charities, AdoptSriLanka. It is extremely grateful for the increase in the level of support and the direct impact that this will have on the health, welfare and education of more than 100 children.

### Fact List

*The Rainbow Centre currently provides daily education, medical care and welfare to more than 100 children who live in extreme poverty, on the street, in slums and in conditions that threaten their survival.*

- *The Rainbow Centre opened in December 2005 and has grown very quickly.*
- *The Rainbow Centre runs: a nursery; an early-learning centre; a pre-school; and, a day-school. In addition, it provides vocational training programmes, after-school tuition, scholarship schemes and employment schemes for mothers. It operates medical and welfare programmes for all of the Rainbow Centre's children and their families.*
- *It is run from rented premises in Bentota, with easy access to the main Colombo to Galle Road. The children are brought to and from their homes by the Centre's own coach.*
- *It benefits greatly from the support of AdoptSriLanka, one of the country's most dynamic and effective charities specialising in long-term community projects.*
- *It also benefits from the generous funding, expertise and practical assistance of numerous private individuals.*
- *In addition, we would also like to extend our thanks to the following organisations for their funding, assistance and support: The Rotary Club, both within Sri Lanka and internationally; Boyer Allan Investment Management LLP; B and I Capital AG; Suntel Relief Fund; Brandix Lanka Ltd; Hemas Holdings; Mount Lavinia Hotel; Favourites Group; The British High Commission in Colombo; LINE Communications; Kingsley Napley; Passion Pictures Limited; Pembridge Hall School; Westminster Under School; Downe House School; Wycombe Abbey School; Stephen Byfield; Elizabeth Meyer; Clare Allen; Hugh Sansom; Judith Sheard; Deborah Nadel; Marjan Shephard-Auping; and, the MacKay, Burnett, Desai, Duncan, Higgins, Grove, Gordon, Warr Hill, Durant, Lea, Blair and Paradise families.*

If you would like to support the Rainbow Centre, please set up a standing order or donate by contacting <http://www.justgiving.com/rcsl/donate>. Donations for the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka through [www.justgiving.com](http://www.justgiving.com) are automatically entitled to UK gift aid.

Or, please make cheques payable to: "Trustees of the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka" at 26 Campden Grove, London W8 4JQ. Alternatively, please make direct bank transfers or standing order payments to: Trustees of the Rainbow Centre Sri Lanka, a/c no. 71647431, sort code 40-04-09, HSBC Bank, 16 King Street, London WC2E 8JF.



*Full attendance at monthly parents' meetings – The dining room struggles to cope with demand – Trip to the beach*