



Friendships are the special relationships that play a huge role in molding us. Children in our programmes share this special bond with one another and here are some of their thoughts and stories.

Tejasri, a 6th grade student in Punganur lost her father seven months ago. Her mother is a housewife and her elder brother dropped out of school to work at a nearby salon. As their family struggled through the loss, Tejasri came across the after-school programme (ASP) through one of our staff at the Potter's Wheel Hub.



Since joining ASP, she has grown in great confidence and is also showing development in personal and academic areas. Tejasri says, "I like going to the ASP

classes at Oasis because I love studying with my friends. I take part in all the activities with them at the hub." Studying together has motivated her to do better in school. She says, "One day I hope to become a teacher and teach many other children just like me."

Children from the red-light areas of Mumbai share a very strong connection with each other as they have all faced similar struggles. Some friends have played vital roles in transforming the life of others.

Here are two friendships that paved the way to restoration and safety.



"Kamathipura is a very dangerous, high-risk area for a young girl like me. I felt extremely unsafe, but I'm thankful for friends like Rani*. She encouraged me to join the night shelter where I stay at night. Here I feel safe and secure."

Sakshi*

17

Mumbai



"My classmate Sourav* has been with Oasis for a few years and he introduced me to them. I am so happy to be a part of the after-school programme and the sports team. I have been able to grow my interests and sports has helped me focus better on my goals."

Zaheer*

17

Mumbai



“Ajay* is a very close friend of mine and he has had a great impact on me. I love playing sports with him and hope we can continue to be this way. He introduced me to Oasis and has helped in my transformation.”

Shiv*

17

Mumbai

*names changed



"Life isn't about having a thousand friends, it's about finding the very few right ones you need."

— A.R. ASHER

Life was looking very grey for Sayeesha* because of her alcoholic husband, poverty and unending challenges. The responsibility of providing and taking care of her children fell on Sayeesha. She received no support from her husband or her extended family. Finally she resorted to sex work in Kamathipura, Mumbai.



While working in the red-light area, Kasturi* and Sayeesha became friends. Kasturi had gone through a similar turmoil as Sayeesha, so there was an instant bonding. In time Kasturi met with our staff and eventually moved out of the red-light area. She started helping the staff prepare meals for the children at our programmes.

Kasturi introduced Sayeesha to the Oasis staff and encouraged her to take up the 6-

month vocational tailoring course and the BA1 hair styling course. After a few months, Kasturi helped Sayessha leave the red-light area as well. Now Sayessha works in a beauty parlour and is financially independent. A good friend can also be a trailblazer and Kasturi was just that for Sayeesha.

*names changed

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