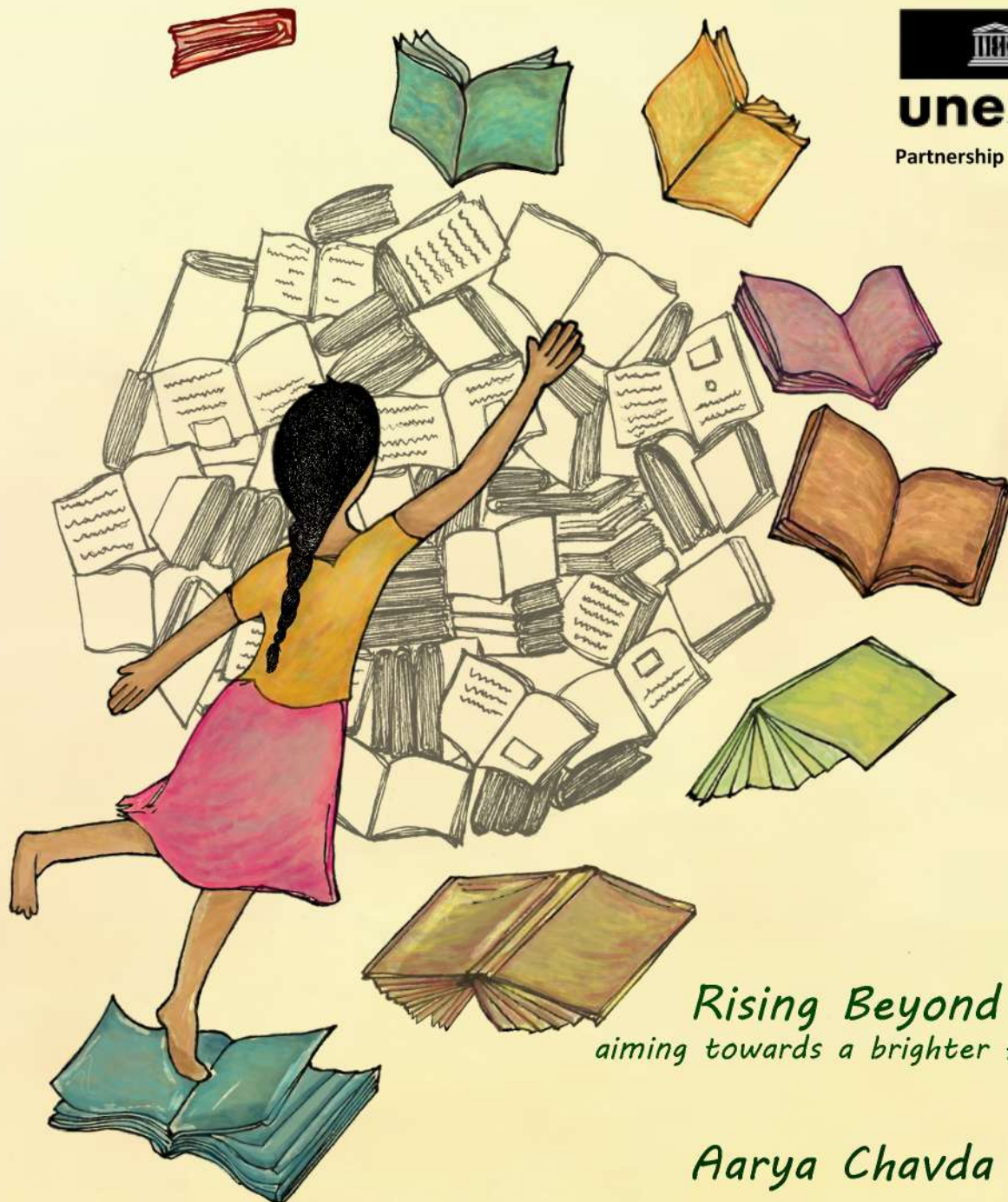


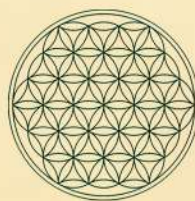


unesco

Partnership

Rising Beyond
aiming towards a brighter future

Aarya Chavda



Inspired Living
merakiart.org

Illustration and Narration by Aarya Chavda

Concept: Rishika Chavda

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Rising Beyond

Illustration and Narration by

Aarya Chavda



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

In partnership with
New Delhi Office

Introduction

Aarya Chavda's book 'Rising Beyond' calls attention to the issue of children's rights. Here, Aarya our young author takes forward the story she began in her first book 'Rising Above' and takes the reader through her journey of realising the importance of child rights and doors they help children open.

As the title of this book suggests, Aarya Chavda's story goes beyond the right to education and explores the spectrum of rights to which every child is entitled. In a lucid and captivating manner, through conversations with her father, Aarya underscores a series of important rights including the right to be protected from abuse and harm, the right to a wholesome family, the right to peace, and freedom so that every child must enjoy making their dreams and aspirations come true.

In present societies, far too many children, in particular girls, are often deprived of basic rights due to social and gender discrimination. The fundamental rights they are excluded from including the right to a safe environment at home, access to education and healthcare, and socio-economic security. As they remain the most vulnerable members of our society, there is an urgent need for greater awareness about child rights as recognized by the 1989 Convention of the Rights of the Child, and to put those rights into practice so that every single child can access a safe and secure environment to be able to achieve his/her potential and be allowed to become active members of a global thinking society.

As always, Aarya's writing remains extremely accessible, capable of expressing complicated ideas directly through her wonderful stories. This volume will certainly serve as a valuable learning tool for children, particularly girls, as well as adults and inspire many to help the most vulnerable members of our society fulfil their potential.

Eric Falt
Director and UNESCO Representative



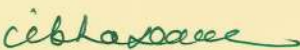
Minister of State, Women and Child Welfare, Education (Primary & Higher Education) & Pilgrimage
Swarnim Sankul-2, New Sachivalay, Gandhinagar.

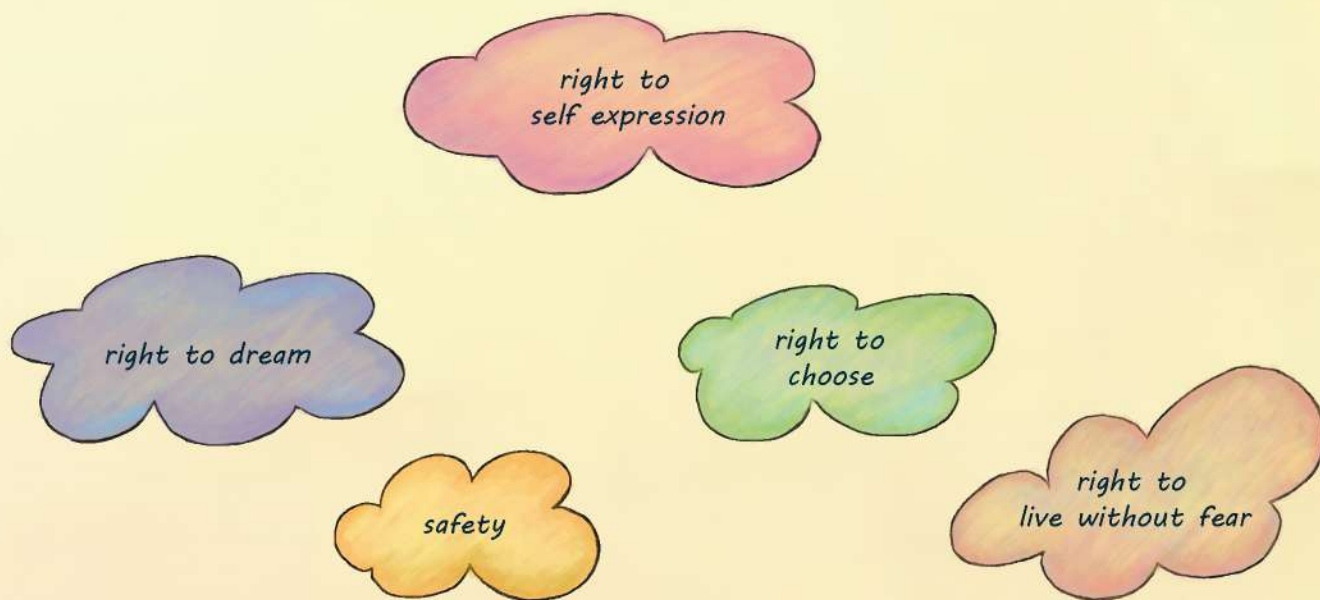
Every child has the right to a world that is healthy and sustainable. Children have similar human rights as adults and also specific rights that recognize their special needs for their overall development to help them reach their full potential.

I commend efforts put forth by Aarya Chavda in this book, "Rising Beyond" which emphasizes on raising awareness by engaging children to enhance their understanding on children's rights and duties.

I am sure that, this book will help to inspire and raise awareness among young readers.

I wish Aarya my best wishes for her future endeavors. I wish Aarya, best of luck for her future endeavors.


(Vibhavari Dave)



Gandhiji once said, "Be the change that you want to see." If we want to change others around us, we have to first change ourselves, and be as good, kind, just, honest and brave as we want others to be.

Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith : means the freedom to do various things, including to speak and write openly about what one thinks; to be free to choose ones friends; to choose and practise ones religion or belief - so long as one doesn't harm other people by doing so.

*We must make sure that we all help and love each other.
Then we can all say with pride, "Sare Jahan Se Accha Hindustan Hamara"*

It was 7, early in the morning and I woke up with the pleasant peck by the rays of the sun on my cheeks. The crowing of the rooster was the final call to drive me out of the cosy blanket. I tenderly walked towards my window to breathe some fresh morning breeze, water my sunflowers and say a good morning to the little chicks near my windowsill. As a part of a regular morning ritual, I would wake up and water my plants, the first thing in the morning, while admiring my surroundings. But today, while tending the bushes, I got absorbed in my own thoughts.

My community friends had got enrolled in the nearby village *Pathshala*. Waking up and going to school had now become a part of their routine. Even though they went to study, I would still visit them every Saturday to clear their doubts with some fun edition of new topics.

After visiting my community friends every Saturday, I would never feel lonely of being the only child of *Amma* and *Pa*, as I considered them as an extended part of my own family. I feel blessed to have been raised with such rich values by *Amma* and *Pa*. Just like a seed that needs proper sunlight, water and nutrition to grow into a healthy plant, *Pa* inculcated the basic values, importance of education and 'how to have a positive approach towards life', in me, since I was a nipper.

Amma - one's mother; used as an affectionate mode of address

Pa - one's father

Pathshala - local nearby school



Helping my dear Sumi in being her first teacher in learning alphabets and few numbers inspired me to extend my arms to the needy, like the children from the community, who, at last, got enrolled in school for further education.

Sumi never fails to call me and gives regular updates about her new developments.

*Back in the village, Sumi had become the torchbearer to raise awareness among the village children on education. She would share her knowledge and urge other children to join school with her. Many children of the village had enrolled themselves at school and now all went together to the nearby **Pathshala** in the village. I feel elated to see my little friend bringing a change. I had never known that our friendship would last so long. I had never imagined that a young village girl could motivate and help the other children in imparting the zeal for education.*

During our vacations, a few girls like my friend Ela, from the community, would frequently visit me at my home to solve their doubts and discuss on their subjects. Later, we would also decide on having some fun competitions and other events for the upcoming Saturdays.

Many times, I sit and introspect as to how all of this has helped in evolving the sense of purpose towards me, my family, the society and our environment. Slowly, I am able to understand that just a small step towards the betterment of one life could lead to a significant change in the entire society.

I often observe Pa, who would always look at things from a positive view point, which inspires me to lead a life like him.

Routinely, in my own way, I lend my support to my school staff and teachers and also help Amma with her daily household chores. I diligently indulge myself in studies and also spend time with the community children, which in turn everyday helps me to learn an important lesson of life and enhance my thought process in my phase from a child to a teenager.





It was Diwali, time for the Kharif season, in this region of Gujarat, where we live. Usually, in this season, we would visit our farmland in the countryside, 60kms away from the city, with Amma and Pa, as it was time to harvest the crops. We always love visiting our farmland during Diwali as it's the best time to have loads of fun.

Our farmland is way different from the hustle and bustle of the city life. It is cooed amidst tall trees of Eucalyptus and Neem. It has a rich variety of crops and lush gardens. One could sight tractors all set to roll for harvesting the crops. Nearby were some fenced pastures, where you can see the cows grazing over the lush green pastureland. Fruit orchards of various kinds like Chikoo, Mango and Pomegranate cordoned the entire farmland. In the middle, lay a residential quarter to stay and for visits.

Every early morning, I and my Pa would go out for a morning stroll around the lush gardens and the nearby farmlands. As a routine, I would pluck a bunch of fresh flowers, such as marigold and hibiscus with a few wild flowers to offer them to God, in the nearby temple.

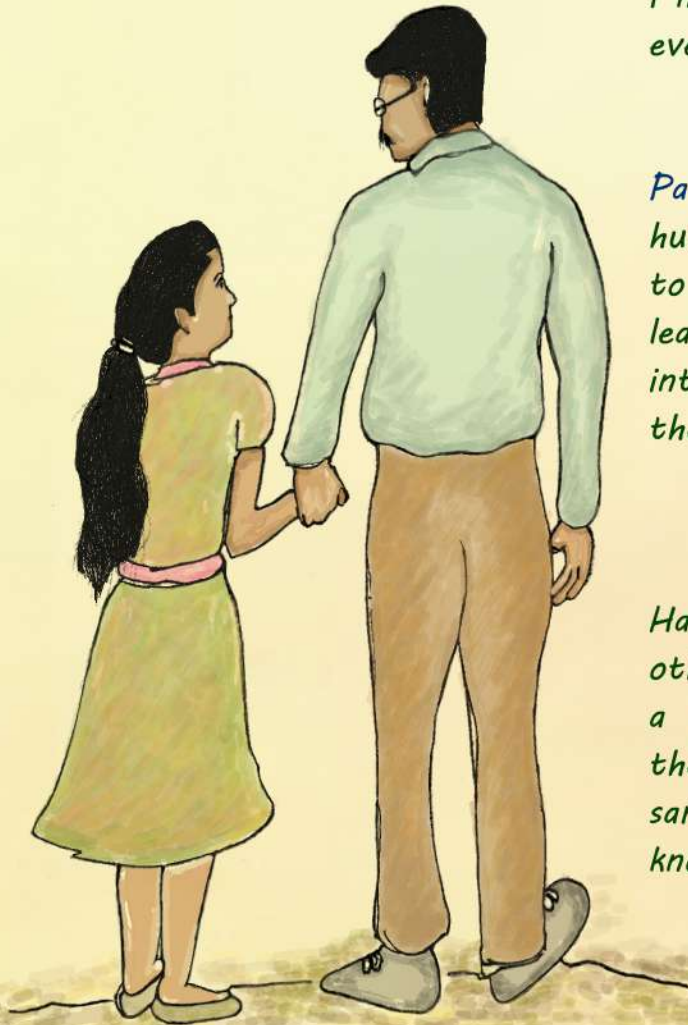
This morning was a bit different. As I and Pa strolled further than regular, to the side-walks of Narmada Canal, he gently patted my back and wanted to share his thoughts with me.

Pa told in a caring voice, “Aarya, as I could see that you are now growing into a matured and compassionate teenager, I think you should gain some knowledge on children’s rights and their duties, which would help you in understanding yourself and the world around you in a better way.”

I nodded my head and keenly paid attention to every word that *Pa* was going to speak.

Pa began, “In an ideal world, Education is a basic human and child right. Every child has the right to go to school and access books and other learning material which can enrich their intelligence and skills, to make the most of their lives.”

Having education not only helps one to access other human rights, but it also tackles poverty in a big way. It strongly draws attention to the importance of hard work, and at the same time, it showcases the process of attaining knowledge, values and skills.”



Pa added further,

"It also enhances one's self-confidence and helps in developing their personality."

As we strolled further, we gazed at the sunrise ahead of us. We saw a brilliant display of reds and oranges near the Canal, over the horizon. The breath-taking sight of the sunrise left us mesmerized and led me to a thought.

I pondered as to how, just like the rising Sun, the rise and development of a child start with basic education, in their early life.

*I was glad that *Pa* had shared this information and I held his hand lovingly. We walked back to the farmland happily.*

*I was constantly contemplating on the right to education which *Pa* had discussed earlier that day. It lingered in my mind, even when I was busy completing my daily rituals of picking vegetables from the vegetable garden, feeding and taking care of the baby calves and watering various plants and bushes.*



That night, while Pa was reading a book in the veranda, I went up to him, sat beside him and cuddled him warmly, "Pa, I am curious to learn more about children's rights. Could you please elaborate on it more, so that I can know more about it?" I pleaded. Pa smiled and kept his book aside, he started explaining in detail; first the importance of childhood and the importance of books that help in developing a child's thought process. He elaborated by saying, "Aarya, children's rights include many rights. Some of them are :



Right to be born well.

Right to education.

Right to basic needs.

Right to play and recreation.

Right to be protected from abuse and harm.

Right to a wholesome family.

*Right to be cared in the absence of parents -
or guardian.*

Right to have access to a good life.

Right to peace and freedom.

Right to a good governance.

Right to live in a productive environment.

Verandah - roofed open - air gallery, attached to the building.

I was completely intrigued by what Pa had said, "Pa, why are children's rights important?" I questioned. Pa thought for a moment and then replied, "Children have special needs as they need more protection than adults. Their childhood must be preserved and they have the rights to participate in decisions that impact their lives."

Out of curiosity, I inquired again, "Pa, what about their right to health and basic needs?" Pa smiled and patted my back. He looked around and responded, "Aarya, It is almost midnight. Can we discuss this tomorrow, during our morning walk?" I happily agreed and hugged Pa tightly. We walked back to our respective rooms, wishing each other a "Shubh ratri."

As I lay on my bed, thoughts on children's rights constantly crept in my mind and I did not realize when I drifted to sleep.

The next morning, I woke up quite early, eager for our morning walk. I pondered over the importance of children's rights and went down for my breakfast. After eating a few freshly picked fruits, I and Pa quickly approached for our morning stroll.

As we reached the Narmada canal, which seemed twice as lively with its rushing waters, Pa said, "Aarya, let us stroll towards the village on the other side of the canal today as I would like to meet some villagers on the way. It has been a long time."

Subh ratri - good night

I nodded, impatiently waiting for Pa to start our daily conversation. I anxiously asked, "Pa, can we—"

Pa sensed my excitement and interest for the topic, "Yes, yes Aarya, let's begin with our today's topic." He interrupted with a twinkling smile. He quipped, "Children's rights to basic needs include a balanced diet and appropriate clothing. A suitable shelter and proper health which are necessary for their growth & development."

Children need access to have a good life that is only possible when they gain support from their near and dear ones, as it strengthens and boosts their confidence for their future. For a child to nurture, they need to be protected from any kind of harm, abuse or danger which includes hazards that can affect them mentally, physically or emotionally. Children should be safe - guarded by the warmth of the communities that can inspire them so that they can give back the best to the community when they grow older.

I never realized that the time had passed by so soon, but every word that my Pa shared had seeped into my mind, just like the soil absorbs the water to nurture the plants.

By now, we had reached the village on the other side of the canal. Pa seemed to know the villagers very well. As we came across a villager, they started talking. While Pa was engrossed in his conversation, I observed the village.

There was a Pathshala in the middle of the village, where neatly dressed children were aligning for an assembly. I could see a small medical dispensary and a few brick houses tucked around the farmlands. Men and women went by off to work in their respective fields with a stack of chapattis and onions bundled in a neatly knotted cloth for their lunch.

As I looked at the serene view, I thought about how villages in my country were developing. I could observe that now the people of the village were maintaining health and hygiene, were equipped with proper sanitization; and have adequate water and electricity for their fields and houses.

I observed that even in the smallest of villages the government of my country had left no child deprived of basic education, food and nutrition.

As I took a final look around me, I realized a famous quote by our honourable Prime Minister coming true, “Mera Gav sudhar raha hai, mera Desh badal raha hai” which means,

“My village is developing, which proves my country is progressing.”

Days passed by,

Ramu, our farm keeper, had a daughter named Kaveri. Kaveri would spend the entire day teaching me how to sow seeds and make organic compost & fertilizer for growing healthy vegetables soon after finishing her school, at the nearby village.

Together, we both would sow and plant seeds of various kinds of seasonal vegetables, in the vegetable garden. We would be busy in taking care of calves, feeding the cows, and watering plants and bushes all day.



This was the time when I would dwell upon whatever Pa had discussed, earlier that day, during our morning walk.

I learnt

- Children also have a right to be brought up well that ensures the safety, development and wellbeing of a child. This right embarks the value to live a life with great prospects and helps in the growth to become matured adults.*
- Children have the right to play and recreate, which gives them a right to rest and also engage themselves in recreational activities. They could participate freely in cultural activities and art too.*



- They also have the right to freedom and peace, which gives on the power to act according to their own will, while respecting the laws and other's rights. Children can do whatever they want as long as it contributes to the peace and betterment of the community too.

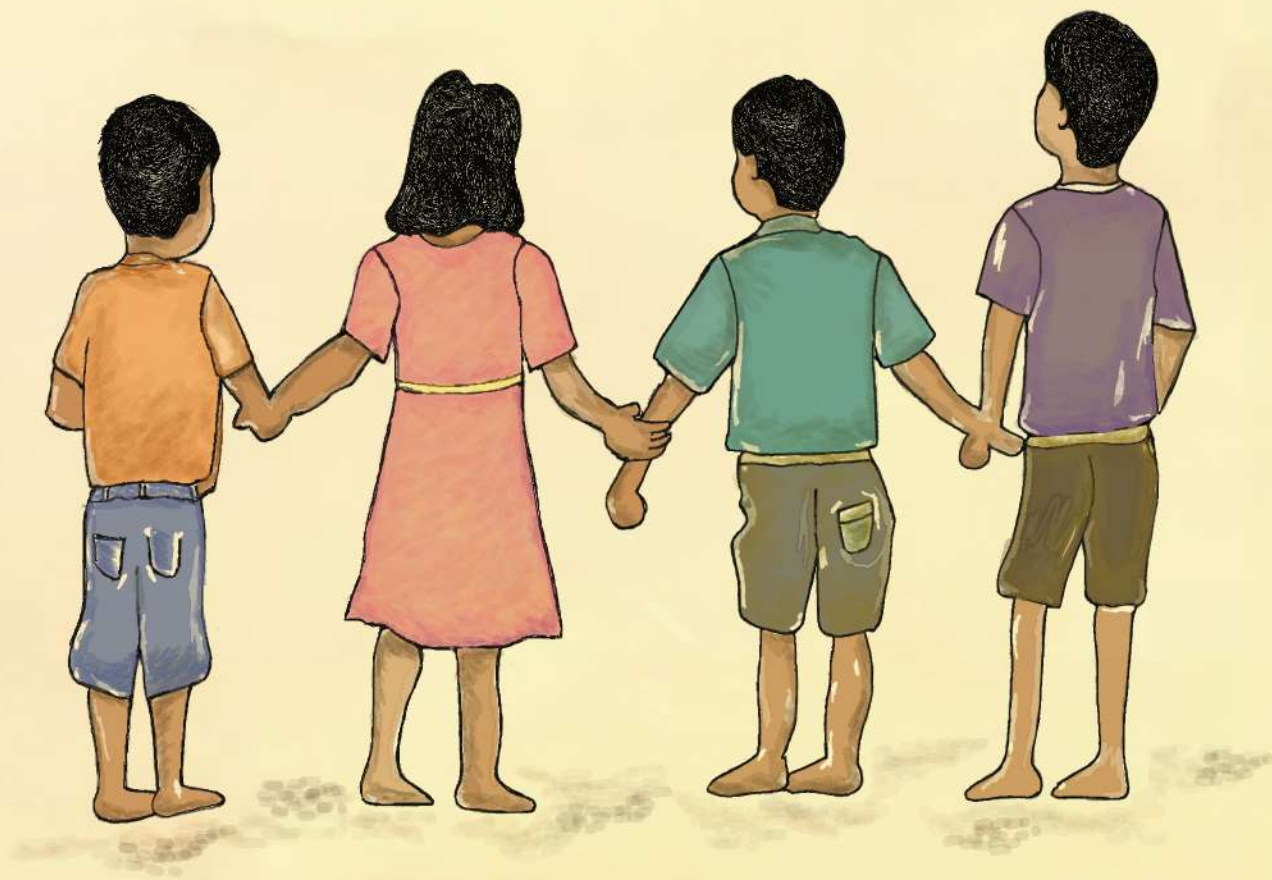
I also grasped upon that-

Every child's first learning environment is their home and family. They are entitled to be a part of a loving and caring family that would later instil moral values in the young ones. These are some of the basic children's rights.

Through daily conversations, I also learnt that, as children grow older, they have to perform certain duties, towards their family, society and the environment, to become a responsible citizen.

The duties and responsibilities of a child are really important. When they grow up, they need to maintain a bright future and lead their nation towards being a developing country, by using their creative minds. They can do this by respecting everyone, bridging gender equality and contributing towards good governance.

They must follow certain rules and responsibilities towards the community and must engage themselves, through activities, for the upliftment of the society.



I soon realized that-

the way *Pa* explained me, during our daily conversations, may it be getting engrossed in my farm tasks or spending time with Kaveri, taking a stroll amidst the serene natural & lively environment, had given me enough time and chance to imbibe what we discussed every morning. I doubt that I would have grasped this knowledge about children's rights and duties so easily in the bustling city life as compared to the peaceful countryside.



Soon, my Diwali vacation ended and it was time to go back home. As we were walking along the pathway with our hands loaded with bags, and heading towards our car, Kaveri came running towards us with a basket full of freshly picked vegetables, as a gift. These were the same vegetables that I had grown, sowing the seeds, with the help of Kaveri a month earlier.

We clutched each other tightly as if promising to remember the days we had spent in the farmland with each other.

We departed soon after.

*Sitting in the backseat of our car, I looked out of the window. I could feel the gust of the morning breeze, refreshing my face. The peaceful scenery of the blues of the sky and the greens of the lush fields, that we were crossing, reminded every moment of learning that I imbibed from my **Pa** at this beautiful place.*

I closed my eyes and took a deep breath, getting carried away in my own world of thoughts, of how, just a small sapling, when nurtured well and given a proper environment to grow, shoots out, to become a healthy tree.

We young children are just like those saplings; we equally need an environment, which not only helps us to grow physically, but also develop mentally, which in turn leads to a holistic development.

As it says, "If we invest in present, then our future will be brighter."

Only if the rights are followed, then only we will all be able to see ourselves evolving into responsible citizens of tomorrow, performing our duties and responsibilities by contributing towards our nation, to rise up and beyond.



Here I am

#Grow your own worth

*It all started a year ago,
during Diwali visit to our farm.
It was then, when I learnt from Pa,
about the rights and responsibilities of
a child.*

*Through our daily conversations I learnt
that,our fundamental duties include,
defending our country, promoting brother-
hood and sisterhood, taking care of forests,
lakes, rivers,and wildlife, and striving
towards excellence.*

*This inspired me to share my views with
children of my age, through my book.*

*While writing this book, I perceived that,
“Children are the seeds that make the
future blossom.” When children lead the
way, we can reimagine the future
of tomorrow.*

About the Author

*We are blessed, but many are not.
With this urge, Aarya Chavda started doing
her bit by giving back to the society
and leaving her impact.*

*At the age of 11, being the author and illustrator of
6 books, she extends her support by donating
her art proceeds to fundraise the welfare of
Underprivileged Cancer patients.*

*Through her campaign on
'Preservation of Cultural Heritage,'
she also demonstrates her commitment
and contributes in spreading awareness
through her programs at government
and private institutions.*

*In this series of colorful illustrations, she
portrays
that there is no duty more important than
insuring that childrens rights are
respected.*

*Elements of her work all meld together
into a lovely whole that entertains and
educates the reader.*

equal education

equal benefits

equal laws

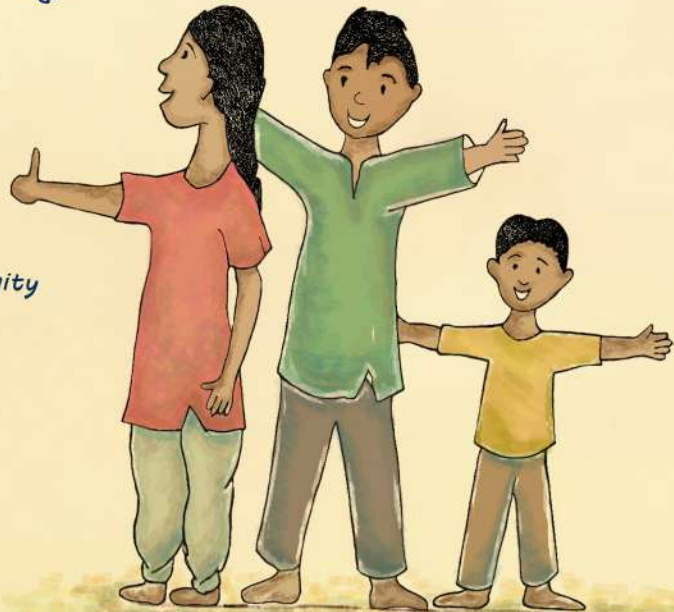
equal opportunity

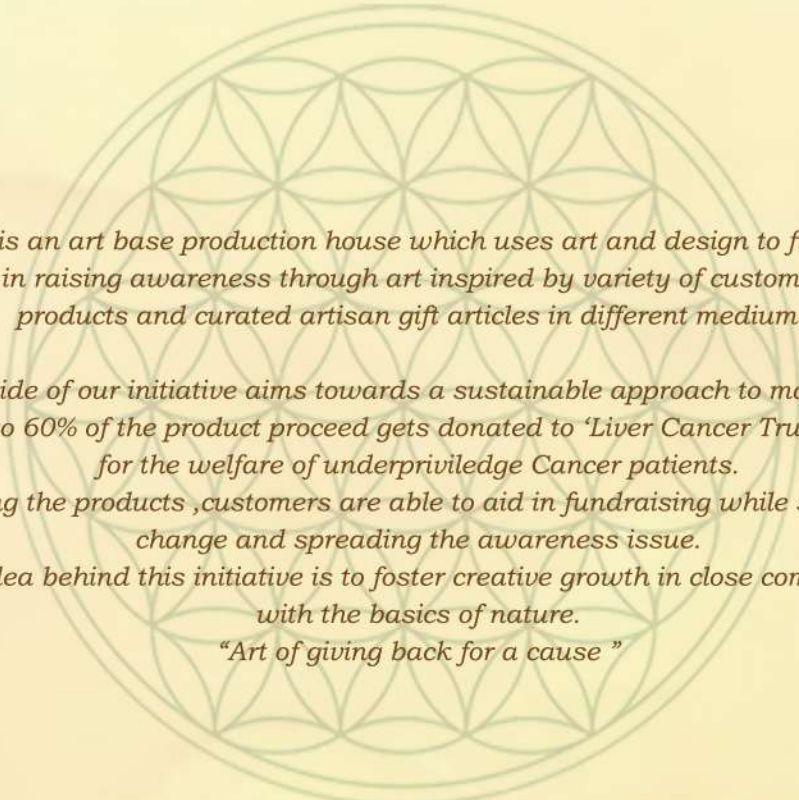


equal rights



equal dignity





Merakiart is an art base production house which uses art and design to fund charities. It believes in raising awareness through art inspired by variety of customized corporate products and curated artisan gift articles in different mediums.

The conscious side of our initiative aims towards a sustainable approach to maximize awareness where 40% to 60% of the product proceed gets donated to 'Liver Cancer Trust Ahmedabad' for the welfare of underprivileged Cancer patients.

By purchasing the products ,customers are able to aid in fundraising while sparking social change and spreading the awareness issue.

The idea behind this initiative is to foster creative growth in close communion with the basics of nature.

"Art of giving back for a cause "

Elements of design in this product are celebrated and produced by Merakiart.

It is the creation of an item made to serve and influence as an artist work.

Its purpose, solely to create the product in its artistic merit and aesthetics.

merakiart.org

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