

a change but simple and loving gestures to create empathy among the children to accept a child with disabilities wholeheartedly is the need of the hour. These thoughtful and much needed actions will promote inclusion in our society and may help in nurturing sensible and emphatic future generations. This may not be an easy path to tread because, at present, individuals are becoming more and more materialistic with every passing day, and one's status in society is determined by their assets and bank balance, not by one's behavior. Unfortunately a top scorer is pampered more, even if he/she/they is insolent or rude, and on the other hand, an average student is ignored or laughed at, despite being a good child with the right values and loving nature. It's time that we introspect about our times and educate our children in the

truest sense by teaching them to respect others based on some valid parameters and not on artificial values. After all, materialistic possessions may be lost but one's nature and attitude stay for life. Therefore, it is necessary to wholeheartedly encourage our children to create a happy place for all, especially for children with disabilities. Remember, if a child has a good and happy childhood then they will surely grow up to become strong individuals who will be able to face and handle challenges effectively that they may face in future as adults. More importantly, happy and thoughtful children grow up into responsible and empathetic citizens who lead our country to become the number one nation of our world..

Child Rights: The Introspection

By Priyanka (Winner of Content Writing Competition)

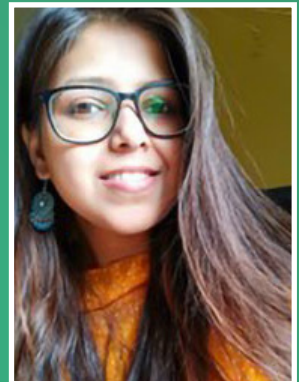
The date was 12/08/2007. The girl was ten years of age. That day, being very determined, she picked up her pencil and her small notebook and wrote "A Child in Mine" and continued –

"Wherever I see, there is smoke,
I am someone with no hope
Burden on my shoulder is tied with rope
Darkness is the thing which I must cope.
Rays of light shining through that hole
Dares to wake up my dead soul
Strength is the thing which I must keep
Keeping my mind sane, this deep.
Brightness of life can be seen outside
But I am stuck, this deep inside
Nothing I do will let me leave
Lots of temptations that I do resist
I am someone surrounded by coal.

Hope its darkness
never reaches my soul

Because I have heard,
life is a drama, and I
must play a role

Then, no longer would
I be a dead soul."



She did not know at that very moment she was writing the first poem of her life; in her mind, her words were rhyming, and what she felt was being reflected in those words.

On the way to school that morning, her bus had stopped near a coal mine. The girl saw a boy through the window of her bus, with black dirt smeared on his clothes. And then he saw her. Now she was used to other children smiling at her or making a face. But she had never seen a child looking at her with a blank face. She saw him watching the bus, and as he came closer to the bus to pick up

the rope, he again looked at her. And then she noticed his eyes. The girl noticed two things- first- unique pair of blue eyes that she had never seen before, and second, a pair of hopeless eyes that she sees every day at her home every night when her mother looked at her with the same hopeless eyes but with immense love. Maybe it was his same hopeless eyes and her feeling of helplessness for not being able to help her mother to have happy eyes. She could not do anything to stop that screaming drunk man from hitting her mother every other night. This extreme feeling of helplessness made her pick up her sharpest weapon – her pencil- to deal with her bottled emotions. She did not know this, but she grew up ten folds that day while writing her first poem.

This story has many social facets if one tries to understand it. I have shared this story to acknowledge that all adults, the child rights protectors who voluntarily make efforts to make a change, were, of course, a child once, and many of us did not have a great happy childhood. Now when we are in this position where we can help millions of children not have a story like ours or worse than ours, we need to step up our game. The change of any kind first begins at home. An experienced adult who has gone through the sufferings of life would naturally like to give their children a better childhood than theirs. This is the only positive outcome of living their life as some sort of ordeal. The concept of Child rights

should not be an extraordinary phenomenon to understand. It should be intricately inevitable and naturally operational. Child rights are essential human rights that begin when a child is born. Children need to be nurtured in a way that not only develops their personalities but can also develop their intellectuality. Every child deserves to live a life. And every family needs to make reasonable efforts to provide for children living in their home mentally and physically sustainably. It should be our moral duty not to corrupt their innocence and make them grow up before time. Thankfully the notion of protecting children has translated into practical, implementable laws. Hence the moral duties which should have been felt naturally and fulfilled by everyone have taken the shape of a legal obligation to make this world a better place for children to live and not to “survive”. We are the homo sapiens, the most distinct species because we do not focus only on “survival” anymore. We “live” our lives. Both national and international organizations have made numerous efforts, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights applies to all humans regardless of age. The Declaration of the Rights of the Child provides both national and international laws to safeguard children and provide them protection. Suppose the existing laws are practically implemented in all the corners of the world. In that case, the efforts of millions of people will be successful, and every child will have hopeful eyes for a phenomenal future.

