

## Genesis Foundation, WPP India CSR Foundation treat 300 kids with CHD

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WPP India Corporate Social Responsibility Foundation, along with Genesis Foundation that facilitates medical treatment for critically ill underprivileged children suffering from Heart Defects achieved a new milestone of treating 300 kids with Congenital Heart Defects (CHD). Genesis Foundation has been working as an implementation partner with WPP India CSR Foundation since 2015 towards Saving Little Hearts.

Enabling children in their pursuit of good health is one of the most important pillars of support allowing them to complete their education and follow successful livelihoods. WPP India CSR Foundation and Genesis Foundation have been instrumental in supporting pivotal surgeries across the country. Over the span of three years (2015-18), this welfare collaboration has supported 300 kids. The average number of children treated per month has increased from 8 to 15 over the years, due to strategic partnerships with hospitals and diligent outreach through grass-root level initiatives.

With an incidence rate of 8/1000 live births, nearly 2,20,000- 2,50,0000 children are born with CHD each year in India. Currently, CHD alone accounts for about 10% of present infant mortality in India, which makes CHD a serious life-threatening ailment. The nature of the surgeries is also noted to be complicated and so is the risk. The expenses involved are also high, since CHD surgeries require specialist paediatric cardiac professionals and cutting-edge technology, making it difficult for low-income families to support their kids.

The story of two-year-old Anshul who was diagnosed with CHD is an example. Prescribed with corrective surgery at AIIMS which his father who was on a monthly salary of INR 5000 rupees could not afford, Anshul received treatment with help from WPP India CSR Foundation and got a new chance at life. Similar stories of children like Somnath Bhil, from the tribal districts of Maharashtra and Baby of Rekha, who were treated within hours of birth, are indicative of the expanse and depth of the outreach program.

One of the landmark surgeries supported by WPP Foundation's grant is of little Amritha, who was diagnosed with complex cyanotic CHD. At birth, she was diagnosed with a very rare heart condition where all chambers of her heart were in an extremely unusual location. Her heart was on the right side instead of being on the left. The operation required the usage of a 3D printed heart, which was used to decipher the surgery procedure. This surgery was truly a medical and technological marvel for the country.

Sharing her thoughts on the new milestone, Rama Iyer, Director-General, WPP India CSR Foundation, said, "We, at WPP India CSR Foundation feel proud to be associated with the work done by the Genesis Foundation. We work on an aligned vision of supporting young children affected by Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) through their surgeries and rehabilitating them back in their lives. One of the children, Anshul, has become a known name within WPP India, whose journey from suffering from CHD to being rehabilitated in the school, continues to inspire us in our work. Together, we believe in giving the young hearts of our children another chance to beat."

Speaking about the new milestone achieved, Jyoti Sagar, Founder Trustee of Genesis Foundation, said that, "There are many in our country who are unable to access the healthcare that they so desperately require for their child due to a lack of financial resources. With the aid of Genesis' CSR partner, WPP India CSR Foundation, we have been able to support 300 kids. CSR partnerships plays a crucial role in the work we do; raising money for critically ill children, making sure that the many families affected by CHD in turn have somebody to count on. WPP India CSR Foundation has supported us year-on-year and with them we hope to save many more little hearts in future."