

## Our Mission:

*To make Bal Vihar of St Louis an exciting and encouraging educational environment for Asian Indian children through appropriate activities conducted by committed professional volunteers*

Bal Vihar of St Louis—a visionary dream turned into noble reality. Founded in 1992, this institution is designed to promote, instill and foster Indian culture in children of Asian Indian origin. The regular school is open to children ages 5 through 12. We have a youth program for children over 12 years. A Community Service Hours Certificate is provided to students to use for high school graduation.

Our curriculum presents a broad spectrum from Indian cultural values to help students make a difference in local communities. All age groups are taught prayers, yogasana, traditional values and teachings from the Indian epics Mahabharata and Ramayana. Youth Students are taught Bagvad Geeta and meaning of Salokas and the practical implication in this day and age. Children participate in various service projects to help the communities in need

The school year for Bal Vihar begins in September and ends in May. The classes are held twice a month between 10am and 12:30pm at Ballwin Elementary School, 400 Jefferson, Ballwin, MO 63021.



**Center for Indian Cultural Education**  
~a not-for-profit educational institution  
serving local community~

## Bal Vihar Youth and Alumni

*...I liked Balvihar field trip to Chicago Temple. I have learned so much about my culture and religion . I loved teaching the younger students of group 2A. It was the “most rewarding and enjoyable experience”.*

Aditya Suresh (Balvihar Alumni 2008-09)

*...I enjoy Bal Vihar because I have an opportunity to participate and lead the service projects The Community service builds individual character and provides feeling of accomplishment...*

Madhav Narayan (Youth group Y4)

*...Bal Vihar is an exceptionally informative and fun program which helped me realize how important my heritage and religion is. We enjoy too and annual picnic this year has been the most fun...*

Rohan Kohli (Youth group Y3)

*...We discussed the importance of participation in politics to help fix the energy crises and global warming .*

Suyash Raj (Youth group Y3)

*...The SLICE program with Faith Beyond Walls was fun and helping communities in need is very satisfying*

Varun Chakravarthy (youth group Y2)

### **Administrative Offices**

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**From Darkness Unto Light**



**To foster and preserve Indian cultural values amongst children of Asian Indian origin**

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**Bal Vihar of St Louis**  
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## Bal Vihar History

Center for Indian Cultural Education, Bal Vihar of St. Louis is preparing the future citizens of America to understand and apply Asian Indian culture, heritage and values for the best in the community.

With a vision of fostering and preserving Indian cultural values amongst children of Asian Indian origins, Bal Vihar of St Louis was founded in 1992. From the very beginning, the greater St Louis community took active part in the school. Today the school serves over 200 students in learning and preserving their culture to be the most successful professionals of tomorrow. Due to size and number of activities, the school holds classes at the Ballwin Elementary School. The community organizations such as Mahatma Gandhi Center, Hindu Temple of St Louis are providing commendable support to the school by offering their facilities for various school functions.

Bal Vihar of St Louis started with a handful of dedicated volunteers. Now the school has more than 30 teaching staff, including many graduates from the youth program serving on the faculty. There are many hard-working administrative volunteers to ensure the most efficient and effective delivery of the program.

Youth program has been a great success with focus on interfaith dialogue, discussions on current issues and participation in community projects.

Bal Vihar gained the not-for-profit status in 2006 with goals for application for public and government grants for its ever expanded operations.

Let us be proud of our heritage and work together to keep this torch burning and lead us From Darkness Unto Light.

## Bal Vihar Community

Bal Vihar emphasizes on giving back to the community. Students are encouraged to participate in different activities that promote respect and understanding of different cultures. Students have provided practical help to the communities in need

Some of the achievements from past years include working with the organizations to name a few :

- St Louis Children's Hospital
- Ranken Jordan Hospital
- Missouri Baptist Hospital
- Faith Beyond Walls tree planting and SLICE program
- Ronald McDonald House
- Joint Neighborhood Ministries
- Missouri School for Blind
- Annie Malone children & family service ctr.
- Out Little Haven
- Circle of Concern
- St. Patrick's Center
- Yearly Clothing drive
- Yearly Food drive
- Donation of items for Katrina Relief
- Supporting our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Bhutan Refugees

Various in-house community events such as Grand Parents program, Youth Lunch Program and helping at the Blood and Bone Marrow Drives have been a good success in the past few years

Bal Vihar is not only teaching Indian culture but also exposing the students to other cultures and religions by having our classes visit other places of worship. This has helped the students to understand and respect other cultures and religions of the world.

## Bal Vihar Curriculum

Education is designed and offered per age group level. The curriculum is divided into three components:

### Social and Cultural Values:

- Indian festivals
- Rural, urban and city life
- India's contribution to the world

### Religion:

- Forms of God
- Path
- Goal
- Creation and reincarnation
- Karma
- Rites and rituals
- Insight into Hindu way of life

### Politics:

- Freedom struggle
- Democracy
- Comparison between American and Indian democracy
- Women rights

### Everyone is taught:

- Yoga and meditation techniques
- Bhajans

Festivals like Diwali with fireworks and Holi with colors are celebrated at the Hindu Temple.

### Youth Group Curriculum (Age 12-16)

Unit 1: Religious Connection:

Bagvad Geeta Chapter 2

Unit 2 – Interactive classroom discussion

Unit 3 – Community service .

Unit 4 – BalVihar Classroom Volunteers

Unit 5- Field Trips