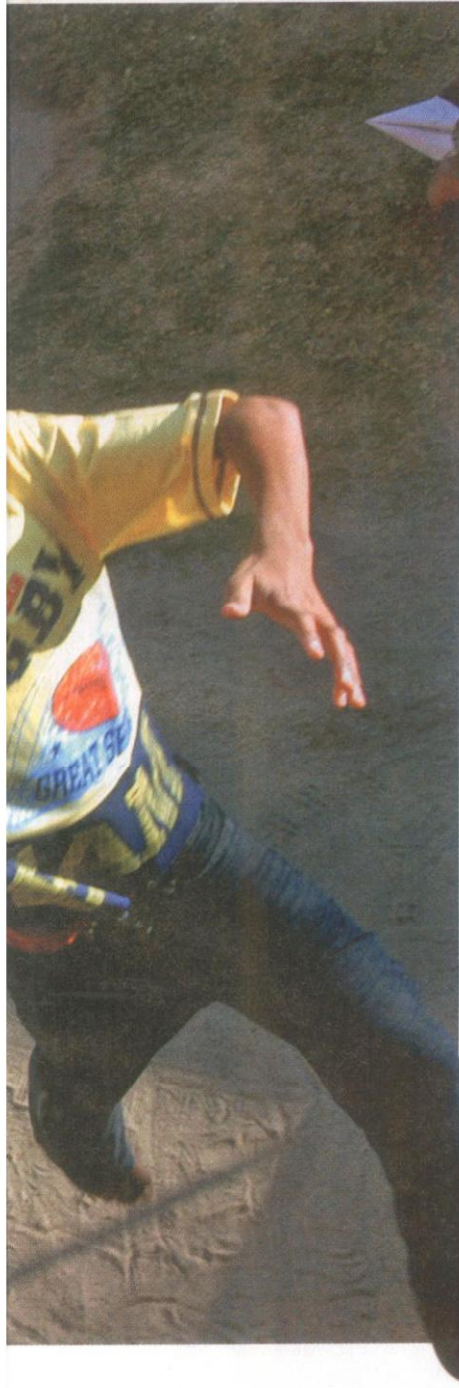
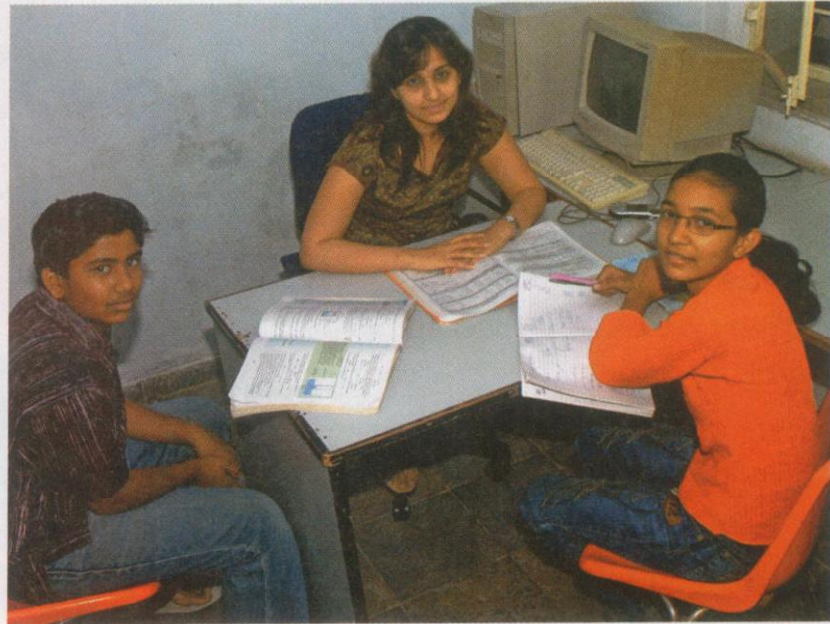


AS THE OBJECTIVE IS TO GIVE INTELLIGENT UNDERPRIVILEGED CHILDREN THE OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP THEIR TALENTS, IQ IS AN OPERATIVE WORD HERE



enrolled into one of the partner schools. This networking, according to Shroff, works well towards the development of a child.

Vandana Agarwal, a trustee of Manav Sadhna, agrees that such partnerships have gone a long way in getting the benefits of NGO efforts to the underprivileged across the states. Besides Visamo, Manav Sadhna partners Arzoo, Utthan, Service Association for the Blind, Dr Babasaheb Ambedkar Open University for distance learning, Gujarat Harijan Sevak Sangh, Animal Help Foundation, Sabarmati Harijan Ashram Trust and Vastu-Shilpa Foundation for Studies and Research in Environmental Design in Gujarat, as also Akanksha, a Mumbai-based NGO for underprivileged children.

She says, "There are many big Gujarat-based organisations doing good work like Environmental Sanitation Institute that have taken up major projects in many states of India or a Rajkot-based NGO that can always be counted on for support. We also work with many USA-based organisations that provide grants and instruments to children who show promise in the world of music and other cultural arts.

Besides having a large number of NGOs, Shroff opines that Gujarat is for-

(Extreme left) Musician Sanjay with friends; Basket ball player, Raju (left) ; Volunteer Renita Patel (above)

tunate to have a government that is pro-education for the affording and the underprivileged. "The chief minister, education minister and the secretaries concerned are all very serious about literacy and higher education in Gujarat. In fact, it was Sudhir Mankad, Chief Secretary of the Government of Gujarat who suggested that we start Prerna, a special education school for dyslexic children as about 10-15 per cent of the world population comprises people who have learning disabilities that do not reflect their intelligence or other abilities." The brand ambassador of this school is Abhishek Bachchan as he is a youth icon. "Children with dyslexia think through mental or sensory imagery, rather than using words, sentences, or internal dialogue in their minds."

As she concludes, "In India, where a very small percentage of schools have counsellors or give financial aid, and learning disabilities have only recently been recognised as genuine problems by the government, we are proud that Gujarat has schools that are giving such support and that Calorx we have centres that take care of their special needs." ■ by Anil Mulchandani