



Great Lengths Australia is thrilled to announce that we are sponsoring the building of a slum school in India as part of The Anganwadi Project.

Indian Anganwadis are local pre-schools that were started by the Indian government in 1975 to help combat child hunger and malnutrition in the urban slum communities. In these slum communities, more than 18% of children do not get any formal education and children from these poor families often lack proper nutrition. Over 43% of children in India are malnourished. Proper care, hygiene and health services are also deficient for these children.

The Australian based Anganwadi Project is focused on the urban slums of Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India. These pre-schools are designed by Architects Without Frontiers Volunteers - Australia and constructed with local labour. The word itself means "courtyard shelter" in Hindi.

They cater for infants through to six-year-old children and The Anganwadi Project aims to rebuild and renovate 66 anganwadi. We are honored to be able to provide the funding for the construction and sponsorship of one of these schools.

Great Lengths Australia funding will cover the cost of the materials, labour and construction of a pre-school which is due to start building in September 2010. Our sponsorship will also cover the cost of rent and staff salaries along with providing 45 children with a nutritious meal, health services and value based education.

The building is based on the 3 "R" philosophy - Reduce, Recycle and Reuse. All the architectural design elements promote the use of sustainable elements and materials.

We are looking forward to tracking the construction, development and student enrolments of the first Great Lengths School. Please go to www.greatlengths.com.au/anganwadi for updates!

Great Lengths

AUSTRALIA
1300 138 452
info@greatlengths.com.au
www.greatlengths.com.au

NEW ZEALAND
0800 522 467
info@greatlengths.co.nz
www.greatlengths.co.nz

Printed on recycled paper.

THE ORIGINS OF GREAT LENGTHS HAIR



100% ETHICALLY SOURCED HAIR EXTENSIONS
FOR VOLUME, COLOUR OR LENGTH



Great Lengths

GREAT LENGTHS HAIR EXTENSIONS

The foundation of the Great Lengths mission is to source, treat and supply 100% human hair extensions of the highest quality in an ethical manner. In fact, Great Lengths is still the only hair extension company that sources and processes its own hair.

WHERE DOES GREAT LENGTHS HAIR COME FROM?

For over 5000 years, Hinduism has been entwined in the rich culture of India. For Hindus, every part of life is a sacrifice, a giving of oneself or 'Jivayajna' for which one receives true spiritual fulfillment. On a daily basis, devout pilgrims travel to temples across India to pay homage to their gods by making an offering to the temple.

Tirupati Venkateswara Temple (or the Temple of Seven Hills), is one of the largest and most popular of Hindu temples. Located on the top of Tirumala hills, this temple attracts thousands of worshippers a day from all over the world who queue up from early in the morning to late at night. Worshippers donate objects such as gold trinkets, personal possessions or their hair, a symbolic offering to show their devotion to the deity. This ritual shaving of one's hair is known as tonsuring.

In the past, tonsuring was a symbol of repentance, a devotee would ask for forgiveness and their shaved head was a sign of starting a new life. Today, pilgrims make an oath with god and should their prayers be answered, they shave their heads as a precious sacrifice and sign of gratitude and faith.

Prior to the advent of hair extensions the donated hair was often used for the manufacture of oil filters for cars (the microscopic hair cuticles would trap impurities when compacted into a filter) or simply for the filling of mattresses to sleep on. Traditionally, no money changed hands in this process.

In more recent times, the production of wigs, toupées and later hair extensions has created a market for the donated hair. The increased demand has meant that the temples fetch a good price in exchange for the hair and these funds are then used to aid the poor. Whilst those donating don't receive monetary payments, the temples auction off the donated hair and make \$100-400 per kilo of hair depending upon the quality. A small portion of this income is used for regular upkeep of the temple and pays the wages of the people that work there. The remaining money is invested into the local community, providing food, shelter and medical assistance to those in need.

All Great Lengths hair is 100% traceable and sourced directly from these temples.

THE GREAT LENGTHS GUARANTEE

- Every strand has been donated willingly and with the full consent of the donor.
- The donor has been treated with respect and care.
- A fair and reasonable price is agreed for the hair and the money used to procure the hair is used solely for charitable endeavours, not for personal or individual profit.
- A company representative procures the hair to cut out unreliable middlemen and ensure full and direct knowledge of the origin of the hair.
- Exclusive in-house production process is used from procurement of the hair to wholesale selling the extension to ensure full traceability.



FAQs

IS ALL HAIR DONATED VOLUNTARILY? Yes. At all of the temples where Great Lengths sources its hair (mainly Tirupati but occasionally other temples), only those who believe and wish to partake in the religious act of tonsuring donate their hair. Great Lengths does not buy from the scores of middlemen who peddle hair and collect from villages. We work exclusively with a business partner in the procurement of our hair from the temples, to ensure that all Great Lengths hair is 100% ethically sourced and 100% traceable.

DO THE DONATORS RECEIVE ANYTHING IN RETURN FOR THEIR OFFERINGS? The donors consider the spiritual reward for sacrificing their hair (or other possessions) to the gods to be more valuable than money. Some (Westerners) argue that the only way to fairly acquire the hair is to pay money back to the donor. This is purely a Western idea of what is valuable and it is incongruent to the indigenous Indian beliefs. If the donators wanted money in exchange for their hair, they would sell it to the hair collectors in the village.

HOW DO THE TEMPLES USE THE MONEY THAT IS MADE VIA HAIR AUCTIONS? A small amount of money is used for regular temple maintenance and the wages of the people who work there and ALL the remaining proceeds are channelled back into society for funding of schools, hospitals, orphanages, etc...

DOES THE DONATOR KNOW WHAT HAPPENS TO THEIR HAIR? AND THAT MONEY IS BEING MADE OUT OF THEIR DONATION? Visit www.greatlengths.com, where we feature documentaries substantiating the fact that the donors are quite aware/pleased that their hair is being sold by the temples and that the proceeds are funding orphanages, schools and medical assistance to those in need. There are doctors filmed who testify to the fact that the operations they perform are funded thanks to the temple's contribution as a result of the hair auctions.

IS ALL HAIR DONATED USED IN GREAT LENGTHS EXTENSIONS? No. Children's hair and men's hair is too short to be used in our extensions. The minimum required length for our hair extensions is 10", making this hair unsuitable.

WHAT HAPPENS TO UNUSED HAIR, OR HAIR THAT IS DEEMED TOO SHORT FOR GREAT LENGTHS? Unused hair will be sold to a secondary market, which utilises this source for the production of inexpensive clips or toupées. All the other remnants either get used for the manufacturing of oil filters or to fill mattresses and / or get sent to China where keratin is extracted from the hair for subsequent use in the cosmetic industry.

ARE WOMEN BEING EXPLOITED IN INDIA FOR THEIR HAIR NOW THAT IT HAS BECOME A VALUABLE COMMODITY? There are growing concerns over the Indian hair trade as this excerpt from The Observer highlights: 'I was held down by a gang of men who hacked at my hair,' she says. 'I'm not the only one who has been attacked. I know other women who have been blackmailed and threatened to shave their own heads, in some cases their husbands have received money for their hair and ordered their wives to have their heads shaved. There is a lot of money to be made from hair not just from temples but from villages like ours, the police don't care, they will do nothing to protect women.'

This is why it is so important to ask the question "Where does the hair come from?" It is absolutely critical that the hair extension industry works together to stamp out illegal activity like this and to develop ethical benchmarks. Great Lengths is proud to be at the forefront of this campaign.