



Chinmaya Mission Peoria

Peoria, IL

Bala Vihar Program

About Chinmaya Mission

Chinmaya Mission was founded in 1953 in India, by devotees of Swami Chinmayananda Under the guidance of **His Holiness Swami Chinmayananda**. They formed the nucleus of a movement of spiritual renaissance that now encompasses a wide range of spiritual, educational and charitable activities, ennobling the lives of thousands in In-dia and outside its shores.

There are over 250 Chinmaya Mission centers in India, and almost 50 outside of India. Chinmaya Mission is a global organization with over 300 centers round the world engaged in spiritual, educational and social services.

Presently headed by **His Holiness Swami Tejomayananda**, the Mission is administered by Central Chinmaya Mission Trust (CCMT) in Mumbai, India. Under Swami Tejomayananda's guidance, the Mission has continued mushrooming across the world and stands today with over 300 centers worldwide.

Following the teacher-taught tradition (guru-sisya parampara) since time immemorial, Chin-maya Mission makes available the ageless wisdom of Vedanta, the knowledge of the One Real-ity, and provides the tools to realize that wisdom in one's own life. *To give maximum happi-ness to the maximum number for the maximum time* is the tenet that drives members to up-lift humanity beyond selfish and sectarian attitudes and activities. Each person's gain is mani-fold: personal growth, heightened efficiency, contentment, and living in peace and harmony.

Bala Vihar Mission Statement

Mission Statement

“To provide to individuals, from any background, the wisdom of Vedanta and the practical means for spiritual growth and happiness, enabling them to be-come positive contributors to society”

Our Motto

“To give maximum happiness to maximum number for the maximum time is our religion.”

Purpose of Bala Vihar

“The purpose of Balvihar is to impart values to the children and art of right thinking among the youth.”

- To inculcate in our children and youth a reverence for our ancient culture, and inspire them to live up to it with correct understanding.
- To create self-confidence so that they are able to serve and act cheerfully.
- To generate personal discipline, dynamic leadership, and true affection in all their contacts.
- To develop a healthy resistance against temptations in the environment in which they grow.
- To provide an atmosphere to grow with noble ideals, healthy emotions and physical discipline.

What is taught in Bala Vihar?

In Bala Vihar, the rich cultural heritage of India, including moral values, are taught to children and youth at different levels, using the medium of stories, drama, arts, crafts and discussion. Children are also taught popular Bhajans and Slokas. Chinmaya Mission centers have become models for teaching India's rich spiritual heritage and the fundamentals of Vedanta to the next generation. Chinmaya Bala Vihar classes are organized into different grade levels from pre-KG to Grade 12 to match the child's learning ability with the teaching material and techniques. In promoting and teaching the universal philosophy of Oneness (Advaita Vedanta), children are made to understand that although Hinduism may appear to have many Gods, the Truth (God) is the one ultimate Reality, and thus it is one God appearing as many forms.

Bala Vihar Curriculum

Chinmaya Bala Vihar Curriculum includes various devotional, philosophical & ethical texts and topics, focusing in the early years on developing love for God, in the elementary years on learning & practicing valuebased living, and in the teenage years on understanding spirituality and fundamental Vedantic principles. The syllabus covers topics and texts from Hinduism's Vedas, Puranas and Itihasas. It is child-friendly and taught on age-appropriate levels. A typical curriculum includes: ABC of Vedanta, Ramayana, Introduction of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Shrimad Bhagavatam, Mahabharata, Symbolism in Hinduism, Hanuman Chalisa, India and Festivals of India, Values from Shrimad Bhagavad Gita and Ramacharitamanasa Hindu Culture. Additional topics are developed and taught at the Chinmaya Bala Vihar camps.

Bala Vihar Teachers

Teachers of Bala Vihar are trained volunteers who devote their time to educate the children using a Missionwide syllabus and training modules. They are also trained on regular basis by Acharya, Pujya Swami Sharanananda from Chinmaya Mission, Chicago

Adult Study Group for Parents/Adults

Study Group is open to all Adults and Parents. Parents of Bala Vihar children are recommended to attend Study Group, which will be held concurrent to Bala Vihar classes. Both parents are highly recommended to participate in Study Group. At least one parent is mandated to attend Study Group. The benefits of regular attendance and participation in Chinmaya Study Groups are manifold:

- Knowledge of Hindu scriptures and culture
- Art of listening
- Self-discipline
- Clarity in thinking
- Perseverance
- Inner strength to face challenges
- Self-development
- Personality transformation.

In an atmosphere of satsanga, Chinmaya Study Groups foster and develop love and understanding among members, strengthening the Chinmaya Pledge concept of "We stand as one family" Members' families also greatly benefit through the aspiring member's value-based living and spiritual practices. By living an integrated life, members better society; in turn, healthy societies build wholesome nations and a peaceful world.