



# JHAMTSE GATSAL CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY

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## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

*In Tibetan, Jhamtse Gatsal (jhaam-tsay gah-tsal) means "Garden of Love and Compassion."*

### VISION

We believe the course of individual lives, humanity and the world can be profoundly improved through the active practice of love and compassion. We strive to apply these principles in everything we do.

### WHAT IS JHAMTSE GATSAL?

It is a loving home, community, and school for about 90 children ranging in age from toddler to adolescent. The children come from a diverse background of adversity from nearby villages. Our driving goal is to provide these children with a better life and help them to achieve their fullest potential.



We strive to be a model school and community, serving as a learning center for surrounding villages, through community outreach.

### HISTORY

Lobsang Phuntsok, a former monk from the Tawang District of Arunachal Pradesh, India, dreamed of one day helping children in the remote region where he was born. This dream was realized when Jhamtse Gatsal opened its doors in 2006, to educate children in need from nearby villages.

### LOCATION

Jhamtse Gatsal is located in northeastern India in the state of Arunachal Pradesh, in the district of Tawang. This district is bordered by Bhutan on the southwest, and Tibet to the north. The Community sits on a remote mountain ridge, at 2,011 m (6,600 ft), surrounded on all sides by a dramatic landscape of high Himalayan peaks.



### VALUES

Our values guide all we do, they are – Awakened Mind, Kind Heart, Healthy Body.

#### *Awakened Mind*

**Education** – We provide a quality 21st century education. Core subjects include: math, science, social studies, Hindi, Tibetan and English. Extra-curricular subjects include: sports, drama, dance, music, and visual art. Technology and experiential education are also incorporated into the curriculum.

#### **Cultural Preservation**

– The children are taught to preserve their Monpa and Tibetan cultures through learning traditional dance, songs, musical instruments, visual art, and languages. The children are sought-after to participate in cultural performances, receiving high praise and awards.



## Kind Heart

**Families** – We create a safe, loving environment for the children, by building trusting relationships. Each child is a part of a family, cared for by an Ama la (house mother). The children learn love, compassion, and wisdom, and practice integrating these principles into all aspects of their daily lives.

**Community Outreach** – The children are taught compassion through helping villages in the region. We seek to be a learning center, in the areas of: education, healthcare, childcare, parental guidance, cultural preservation, spiritual traditions, organic gardening, dairy farming, sustainable living and social entrepreneurship.



## Healthy Body

**Food & Gardening** – Community members are provided clean drinking water and nutritious food. The children also help the staff grow and prepare food.

**Healthcare** – The children are taught healthy practices of personal hygiene, teeth brushing, exercise, and keeping their environment clean. They are also provided medical and dental care.



**Sustainable Living** – We teach principles of building a healthy community through clean energy, organic gardening, and waste management.

## THE CHILDREN'S BACKGROUND

Most of the children at Jhamtse Gatsal come from the Monpa tribe, this is the local tribe of the Tawang region. The Monpa language is a dialect of Tibetan, but it has no written form. The Monpa tribe has its own cultural identity, with distinct traditions in song, dance, handicrafts, and dress.

The children are carefully selected to join the Community through an extensive village survey. First preference is given to orphaned or abandoned children. Many of the children come from backgrounds of hardship such as inadequate emotional security, parental care, education, nutritious food or healthcare.

## LIFE FOR THEM NOW



The opportunity for the children to come to Jhamtse Gatsal is more than just a chance to attend school. They are provided a safe and nurturing environment in which they can live, learn, and grow freely. Their emotional, mental, and physical needs are met, while also preserving their culture.

## THEIR FUTURE

As we guide, nurture and empower the children, they are flowering into their innate, natural goodness, preparing them for a bright future. Our hope is to enable and inspire them to become a generation of leaders that will bring positive change in this region, helping to end suffering, spread happiness and build a better world.



*“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them humanity cannot survive.”*

-- His Holiness the Dalai Lama