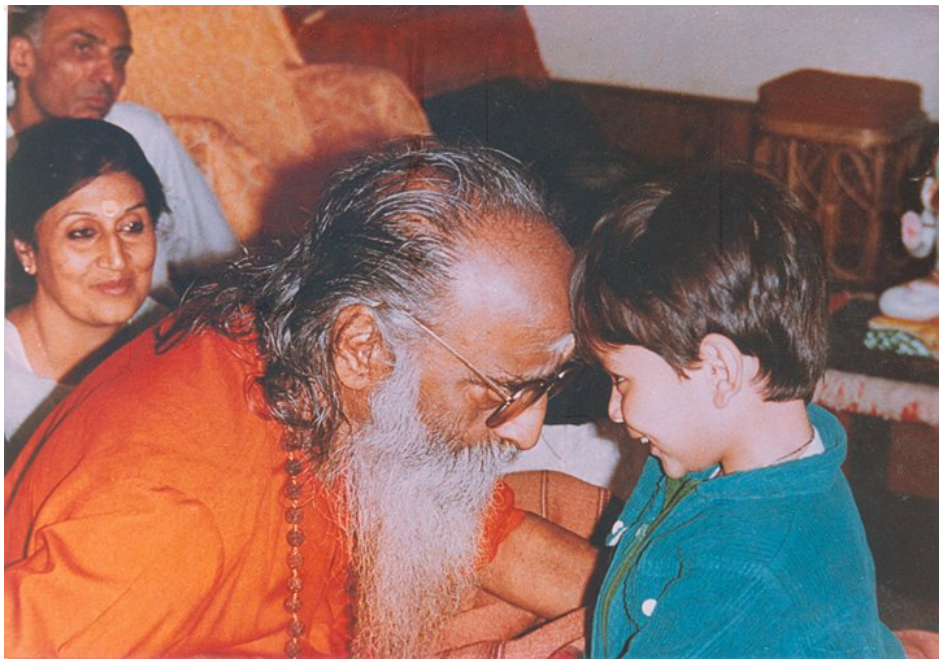

The greatest boon given by Pujya Gurudev Swami Chinmayananda to the younger generation is Balavihar. Balavihar provides a spiritual and cultural orientation to children of the modern age. The rationale of the Balavihars as elucidated by Pujya Gurudev in the "March of the future" talk is summarized below:

- To train the children and inculcate in them a reverence for our ancient culture, and inspire them to live up to it with correct understanding.
- To create self-confidence to serve and act cheerfully.
- To generate a true affection in all contacts, inculcate personal discipline and a true spirit of leadership.
- To mould their capacity to express and assert their individuality.
- To bring out their dormant faculties and detect defects; cultivate and improve their creative abilities.
- To help children to develop a healthy resistance against temptations in the atmosphere in which they grow.
- To provide an atmosphere to grow with noble ideals, healthy emotions and physical discipline.

Need For Balavihar - From The Children's Point Of View

- The character-building of a nation must start from us, children. We are the trend-setters for future generations.
- It is we who will help establish a world of peace and harmony.
- In the absence of the Gurukula system and joint families, we are exposed to minimum of our valued culture. Add to that, our fast paced lives.
- We have no time for all this! Our elders seem to have lesser time for us.
- Balavfihar is the solution where loving sevakas / sevikas teach us what we ought to know, with the love of a parent, the doting of a grand-parent and the discipline of a teacher.
- And best of all - we have fun together !

How Balavihar works?

- Balavihar is a group of children, meeting once a week, at a set venue, for 90 minutes, for the sole purpose of learning our precious culture, spiritual wisdom, and related values through books, stories, and games
- Balavihar inculcates the values of Sanatana Dharma, as taught in our scriptures--Shrimad Bhagavad Geeta, Upanishads, Epics and Puranas-helping us to grow into responsible citizens of tomorrow.
- Balavihar classes for various age groups are conducted by trained sevaks and sevikas. These voluntary dedicated workers impart to children, the glory of our rich culture, aiming at character formation and reverence for our ancient heritage.
- The high ideals and values from our great scriptures are taught in the form of stories, games, quizzes, crafts, bhajans, hymns, shlokas, skits, dances, etc.
- The current syllabus includes: Bala Ramayana, Bala Bhagavatam, Symbolism in Hinduism, Hanuman Chalisa, Why do We in Indian Culture and selected extracts from the Upanishads and the Bhagawad Geeta.

Balavihars are meant for children in the age group of 5-15 years. The Balavihars provide a spiritual and cultural orientation for children.

Gurudev Said: "*Children are not buckets to be filled but lamps to be lit. Children are the architects of the future world. They are the builders of humanity. It is the most sacred task of parents as well as teachers to mould their lives in accordance with the sublime Indian tradition. The seeds of spiritual values should be sown in young hearts and the condition should be made favourable for its sprouting and steady growth by the exercise of proper control and discipline. Cared for with warmth of love and affection, such a tree shall blossom forth flowers of Brotherhood, Universal Love, Peace, Bliss, Beauty and Perfection* ".

Bhajans, stotrams, Geeta chanting, a knowledge and reverence for our scriptures through Puranic and epic stories, and basic values such as honesty, diligence, responsibility, valour and integrity are inculcated in children. The classes help provide a healthy atmosphere to inculcate ideals, discipline, leadership in children, as well as cultivate their creative abilities.