

'Nice to know what a b'day is like'

Underprivileged children celebrate their birthday, some for the first time

Radhika Dwivedi

Cuffe Parade

It was more than just a mass birthday party. Around 150 underprivileged and street children belonging to NGOs Hamara and Aarambh celebrated their birthday, many of them for the first time. For some, it was a break from their daily work, while for others it was an eye-opener that they had a birthday too.

Global procurement company 4004 Incorporated organised 'Project Reach', a fun-filled event for the kids, on Wednesday at the World Trade Center.

The children, all between six and 18 years, danced enthusiastically along, played games, admired the juggler's skills, and the magician's tricks.

"I liked coming here because we could forget our problems at home and enjoy ourselves. I made new friends and danced," said 18-year-old Sandhya Pardesi, of Hamara.

For some it was just a good day to



Children enjoy a fun-filled afternoon with Project Reach – Kamlesh Pednekar/DNA

escape work, like 11-year-old Shahid Sayyed who sells water bottles at Mumbai Central station.

"This is something I'll always remember," he said. "My mother says we don't celebrate birthdays, so it was nice to know what a birthday celebration is like," said a smiling Sayad Saleman of NGO Hamara.

"Most children here have never celebrated their birthdays. We thought this would be a nice way to make them happy. It is our way of giving back to the community.

"We hope that April 5 will always be their birthday," said Khyati Bhide, marketing manager of 4004 Incorporated.