



DCI's History

Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI) grew out of the vision, life experiences and passion of **Dr. Ehsan Hoque, DCI founder and Honorary Executive Director.**

Growing up in Bangladesh, Dr. Hoque was born nearly blind with congenital cataracts due to vitamin and nutritional deficiency during his mother's pregnancy. By the age of five he underwent seven eye surgeries which restored part of his vision, saving him from complete blindness. Despite these challenges, Dr. Hoque excelled in academia, and with the support of his parents, he completed his medical degree in Bangladesh in 1987.

Personal struggles with his eyesight gave him a deep understanding of the difficulties faced by the visually impaired and the physically challenged – especially children. In school he began to engage in volunteer work, culminating in creating his own volunteer group in high school, helping the disadvantaged, especially during harsh weather conditions and in the event of natural disasters common during monsoon season. Through his work, Dr. Hoque witnessed the suffering of many poor, undernourished, and, all too often, abused children. As a young physician, he organized a number of programs to help improve the quality of life for the poverty-stricken living in remote areas in Bangladesh. He distributed vitamins and vegetables to expectant mothers, to prevent their children from developing conditions such as those that led to his partial blindness.

In 1995, he started supporting education of 50 children who were not able to attend school due to socioeconomic factors, and would be thrust into child labor. Soon he realized there were too many children and families that need help and it's not possible to arrange a comprehensive support system individually. He was determined to build an organization to help underprivileged children and prevent childhood blindness.

In 2003, his dream was realized, while working at Yale University, he founded Distressed Children & Infants International (DCI).

Today DCI is a successful non-profit organization that supports thousands of disadvantaged children, their families and communities worldwide. DCI's motto is "**Children Helping Children**." It works to empower local youth to engage in volunteer work, both locally and