

Hundreds of smiles reward thousands of miles of travel

By [Janet Hefler](#)
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While many seasonal residents enjoy the Vineyard in August, the Brede family of Wellesley will be far from their Tisbury vacation home.



Dr. Ratnam Voggu and Lynne Voggu, at center, with the Brede family on their visit to India last summer. From left are Joshua, Ashley, Debra, and Ken Brede. Photos courtesy of Debra Brede

From August 13-26, dentist Kendrick (Ken) Brede, his wife Debra and their children, Joshua, 17, and Ashley, 15, will be in Hyderabad, India, working as volunteers in a dental clinic for orphans.

"So we'll miss the fireworks, the Ag Fair and the Obamas," Dr. Brede said. Instead, he and his family, joined by his office assistant Pam Allie, friend Bob Lindley, and students Suzy Kia and Robert Ang, will spend marathon days attending to the dental needs of 225 children, ages 3 to 17.

In addition to the challenging variety of their dental problems, about one-third of the children have tested positive for Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) or have Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

The children live in an orphanage run by executive director Lynne Voggu for Agape International, a non-profit organization dedicated to caring for orphans and families devastated by AIDS.



Dr. Brede gives one of his patients some tooth-brushing tips.

"Lynne was my wife's assistant and was like a sister to me," Dr. Brede said. "She got the call to do missionary work, and about five years ago asked if I would consider coming to the orphanage to volunteer my time as a dentist."

Ms. Voggu left her job at Ms. Brede's investment management company in Needham to start her first orphanage in India in 2000.

The orphanage in Hyderabad has four residences with up to 45 children each, and a central school building and central medical clinic. The orphanage's medical director is Ms. Voggu's husband, Dr. Ratnam Voggu, a pediatrician and ophthalmologist.

Each residence has a live-in staff of at least five adults, including a married couple that acts as "house parents." It costs \$625 a year to sponsor an HIV-positive child at the orphanage and \$325 to sponsor one who is HIV-free.

Because of the stigma attached to AIDS and the special precautions necessary because of infection risk, the orphanage needed its own clinic.

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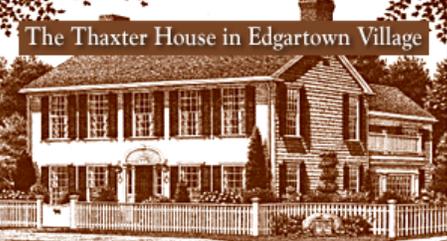
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