



## PHOTO & CAPTION

# Mothers Bring Children to New Homes



Photo: USAID/Virginia Foley

***Mary offers a loving family environment to young Nithya.***

When Mary, a mother from a modest community in Chennai, India, visited the Community Health Education Society (CHES) shelter for HIV/AIDS-affected children, she left wishing the children living there had the same benefits of a loving family environment that her own children had.

Foster care is not common in India, but with the support and supervision of CHES, Mary became a foster mother to young Nithya. Supported by USAID, a CHES shelter houses and educates 32 AIDS-affected children who have nowhere to live and no family to turn to. The organization also operates five family resource centers where people learn how to care for AIDS victims and where myths and misinformation about HIV/AIDS are corrected to reduce fear and slow the spread of the disease.

Almost a year after going to live under the care of her new mom, dad and two brothers, Nithya has made substantial developmental gains. Mary has the full support of her neighbors and the help of a local women's group, but she receives no financial assistance to care for Nithya. When her act of generosity was published in local newspapers, Mary was inundated with letters of support that she now proudly displays in a scrapbook.

Today CHES continues to provide supportive services for Mary and her family and is considering requests for additional foster home placements.