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Dear Readers,

It has been an exciting journey for all of us at the Foundation; many milestones achieved giving us the hope and strength to achieve many more. It has been a pleasure bringing you up to date regularly with the happenings at our centers. Reaching out to all of you through the newsletter excites our children and staff alike. We are ever so grateful for your patronage. It gives us the courage to dream bigger dreams and strive to achieve them.

Vocational skills are curative in their own way and this has prompted us to make vocational training an important part of our academic curriculum. This, we hope, will be a step forward for us to make our children and young adults self-reliant and self-sufficient. It also brings us immense gratification that the concept of curative education, adopted at our centers, has helped our children to a great extent.

*Our calendars are packed with events and activities and we look forward to many more like our **Arvind Café** that we had put up last academic year. And, yes, we will keep you abreast of all our activities through **Ripples!***

– Gomathy T (Editor)



A New Year, a New Beginning!

Dear Friends,

The new academic year brings us a step nearer our dreams. Over the years, Arvind Foundation has grown from strength to strength. We are proud of our children who are able to find their strengths against all odds. We only wish to put in more and more effort to be supportive of our children. Kudos to our staff who are behind this.

The Arvind Foundation team has been extremely supportive through all the ups and downs at the centers and I am extremely grateful to have such a wonderful & dedicated team. They have been instrumental in reaching out to more and more special-needs children and create awareness among the people to build a more inclusive society. Our focus this year would be to train special-needs children and young adults in vocational skills and make them self-reliant, and we would be scaling up vocational training in all our centers to work towards this. I wish the team all success.

– **Athma Raj (Founder)**

Shining Stars of Arvindaalayam

This academic year, 2016–2017, has started on a very good note for us. Twelve of our children from Arvindaalayam (the Poonamallee Center of Arvind Foundation) participated in “Shining Stars,” a sports event & talent show for special needs children conducted by Cognizant Outreach at their Siruseri facility in Chennai on June 26, 2016. Our differently blessed children came back winning twelve prizes in various events like **Ball Gathering, Sack Race, Target Bowling, Rolling the Ball, Balloon Bursting, Drawing, Painting, Group dance, Hopping & Assisted walking.** Even our staff & volunteers who participated in the event enjoyed the day along with our special-needs children. We thank Cognizant for organizing such an event for special-needs children & encouraging them.



World Environment Day at Pfizer

We had the pleasure and honour of displaying and selling the eco-friendly products made by our special-needs students. Pfizer had asked us to put up a stall with our products at their premises on *World Environment Day*. We set up a stall with our products, **wooden name boards, quilling earrings, wooden earrings, wooden beads, cloth dining table cover, dining place mats, painted pillow cases, paper bags, painted envelopes, greeting cards, cloth aprons for adults and children, jute pouches, jute cell phone cases, and jute bags**. These products made by our special-needs children were for both display and for sale.

The staff at Pfizer were very friendly and were at a loss of words at seeing the products made by our special-needs students. This event gave us an opportunity to spread awareness about the importance of being more eco-friendly and the ways one can do it. We are glad that on this day we were able to inspire many of the Pfizer staff to start using eco-friendly products and we hope our journey continues in the right direction.

– **Revathy Rakesh (Vice Principal)**



An Appeal to Our Well Wishers

No help is small help! We are always looking for funds and volunteer help for our various events and for us to reach more people and help many more special children lead better lives.

If you would like to help us in our journey, please contact 9841034234, 9841615333 or 7299911022.

All contributions to the foundation are eligible for tax exemption under 80G



Curative Education—Balancing the Body, Soul and Spirit

Rudolf Steiner is considered the father of Curative Education. Dr Karl König, who started the Camphill movement, played a key role in further developing the concept of curative education. The Camphill communities are now present in many countries spreading ideologies of Curative Education throughout Asia and the Middle East.

Curative educators view children with special needs just the same as all other children. However, they often encounter significant challenges while working towards nourishing the soul, building hope and trust, and encouraging hidden potential in these children.

Curative Education takes an individualistic yet comprehensive approach towards each child. Here, the teacher tries to bring the unbalanced facets of the body, soul and spirit back into equilibrium. This is often done by bringing to attention those elements of colour, movement, form and sound which personify the opposing polarity to those characterized by the child. This helps the child develop a better sense of self that allows them to develop meaningful social relationships. When ready, they are introduced to the subjects of the key learning areas through the school's curriculum. The aim of curative education is to help every child achieve his or her full potential.

Curative education uses methods based on the deep understanding and observation of disabilities and disorders. Abnormal sights can be indicative of tendencies that have become dominant and cause imbalance at the body, soul and spirit or the social level. For example, an overactive child though overtly active has little inner movement in terms of listening or attention. The human organization has many polarities, processes and layers that curative education tries to elucidate and distinguish based on the Anthroposophical understanding of the human being. For a complete healthy development, these processes should be balanced time and again.

This is the reason why arts play a very important part in curative education and therapy. Art thrives in pure elements such as colour, form or sound. These components provide their own polarities, such as short

and long notes in music or bright and dark colours in paint. Every rhythm or melody unites these opposites in a unique way, while speaking its own language. This is true of any art and also of the basic forms of craftwork. Children or adults with disabilities can be helped by finding a connection to the polarity which is less prominent in them. They should also be encouraged to further improve the potential that is already present. Thus healing requires one to activate the process of integration inwardly as well as outwardly.

Rudolf Steiner called children who were born with developmental disabilities as "children in need of special care of the soul." The term suggests that every human being is not only in need of development but is also capable of developing. Most of the imbalances in us are just more prominent in people with disabilities. Thus, curative education offers opportunities for the child to balance these special characteristics by diagnostic and remedial means.

When we think of disabled people, we are usually reminded of those whose intensity of life, willpower and social sense truly amaze us. They show us by example that one is not confined by one's body but has a body which has to be dealt with and which can be made his own. To a certain extent, we may compare it to a musician and the instrument he plays.

The one who wants to educate children with developmental problems and disabilities "will never be finished, but will find that each child presents a new problem, a new mystery. But he will only discover what he needs to do in each specific case if he allows himself to be led by the real Being within the child. It is not a comfortable job, but it is the only one that is real." (Rudolf Steiner: Curative Education).

And the journey continues...

– ***Sudha Athmaraj (Co-founder)***

Upskilling our staff

Katradhu Kaiyalavu, Kalladadu Kadalalavu (What we know is only fistful, what we do not is as vast as the world itself!)

At the Foundation, we ensure that our teachers are continuously refreshed and retrained, and we believe in constant skill enhancement. We conduct training sessions at the end and beginning of each academic year. Training sessions at the end of the academic year mainly comprise planning timetable, lessons, vocational training, gross and fine motor activities and other major activities that will form a part of the upcoming academic year. This training also included Eurythmy (visual speech), assessment of a child, the sensory systems and its problems and the treatment activities for the sensory problems. We also had a deeper understanding about the four bodies—etheric, physical, astral and ego organization.

Training sessions at the beginning of the year helped us gain a deep understanding of various disabilities and ways to teach students with such disabilities. Eurythmy also was an essential part of this training.

Waldorf Education Training at Khandala

Two of our staff, Mrs. Revathy and Ms. Suguna, had the opportunity to attend a week-long residential training program held at Khandala, Maharashtra. The training was conducted by **Ms. Aban Bana, President and Country Representative of Waldorf education, Ms. Dilnawaz Bana, first Curative Eurythmist in India, Ms. Hemangi Rege Gosh, Mr Geert and Ms Caroline, the Waldorf teachers.**

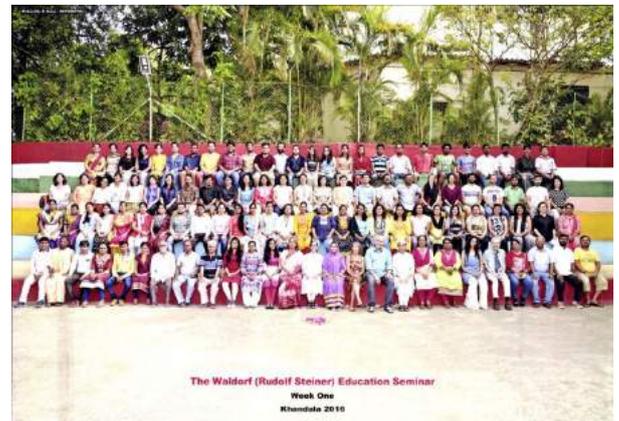
The training gave them a better understanding of the Waldorf education system, Anthroposophy and Eurythmy. They were able to gain more insights about the human body and soul and about various activities that help children learn. It served as a platform to express their thoughts and understand more about the simplicity of life that one should have in order to lead a happy and peaceful life.

Training at Mannavanur

We are privileged to have an outreach center on the lap of nature at Mannavanur, Kodaikkanal. This is a remote village on the Western Ghats, and that makes it difficult for the teachers to travel for the training sessions held at our Chennai center. Our founder, Mr. Athmaraj, along with the co-founder, Mrs. Sudha Athmaraj, and a few other teachers, visits the center once a year and imparts necessary training to the staff and conduct parent–teacher meetings. This gives an opportunity for the teachers from our Chennai and Chengelpet centers to experience a different environment and creates an opportunity for the Mannavanur teachers to interact with the teachers from other centers. Our focus for the year is to introduce our special-children at this center to vocational training and necessary knowledge is imparted to the teachers at the center.

– **Revathy Rakesh (VP), Nithyakala & Seethalakshmi (Teachers)**

At Khandala



Training at our Chennai Center



At Mannavanur



Wedding Bells!

Our dear Anbu tied the knot to Padmini on June 8, 2016. Anbazhagan has been working with Arvind Foundation since September 2009. He joined as an office assistant and with his hard work and persistence is now an accounts assistant and a vocational trainer. We wish him all the very best in life.

A very happy married life Anbu ☺



Our student says...

I am Vanitha from Arvind Outreach, Porur. I love coming to school. I study with my friends here. I learn things like good manners and social behavior at the school. My teachers have taught me to be neat and clean. I have learnt English typing on computer at the school. I love playing, exercising, celebrating with my friends in school and celebrate festivals with friends at school. I have also learnt skills like tailoring, tea coaster mat stitching, making wire bags, and embroidery. I was very happy when I won medals in sports competitions.

– **Vanitha (Transcribed from the narration to the teacher)**

Student's Art Corner



– **Saravanan (14 yrs, Arvindaalayam)**

Parent's Voice

நாங்கள் 2008-ல் அர்ச்சனாவை அர்விந்த் அவுட் ரீச் போளூரில் உள்ள சிறப்பு பள்ளியில் சேர்த்தேன். அவள் இங்கு சேரும் போது தரையில் தனியாக உட்காருவாள்; உதவியுடன் நிற்பாள்; அதிகம் நடக்க மாட்டாள். தரையில் தலையை இடித்துக் கொள்ளுவாள்; Group-ல் சேரமாட்டாள். இப்போது இங்கு சேர்ந்த பிறகு அவளுடைய தேவைகளுக்கு நடக்கிறாள்; அதிக நேரம் நிற்கிறாள். தரையில் இடித்துக் கொள்வது குறைந்து உள்ளது. பாட்டை மட்டும் கவனித்துக் கொண்டு இருப்பவள். இப்போது class-ல் Teacher எடுக்கும் main lesson-னையும் கவனிக்கிறாள்; கொடுக்கப்பட்ட வேலைகளை செய்கிறாள். Teacher மற்ற மாணவர்களோடு பெயர் எழுதும் போது அவளும் கையை கொடுக்கிறாள்.

அவள் பெயரை எழுதி முடிக்கும் வரை கையை கொடுக்கிறாள்.

அவள் கால்களை தூக்கிய படியே சேரில் அமர்ந்து இருப்பாள். Teacher கால்களை தொங்க போடு என்று சொன்னால் போடுகிறாள். Common Prayer-ல் கடைசியாக எல்லோருக்கும் Good Morning சொல்லும் போது அவளுடைய கையை தூக்கி Good Morning சொல்கிறாள். நாங்கள் அனைவரும் உடனே அர்ச்சனாவை பார்த்து சிரித்தவுடன் அவளும் சிரித்துக் கொண்டு தலையை குனிந்தாள். சாப்பாடு சாப்பிடும் போது இன்னும் வேணும் என்று கேட்கிறாள். தண்ணீர் வேண்டும் என்றால் சாப்பிடுவதை நிறுத்தி விட்டு தண்ணீர் கேட்பாள். இப்போது Group-ல் இருக்கிறாள். சத்தம் அதிகமாக இருந்தால் கூட அவளால் தற்போது இருக்க முடிகிறது. அதிக முன்னேற்றம் காணப்படுகிறது. ஒரு தாயாக நான் மிகவும் மகிழ்ச்சியாக இருக்கிறேன்.

– Mrs. Devi, Archana's Mom, Arvind Outreach, Porur

Upcoming Events

1. **Vegam** (A dedicated sports event for differently-abled children) – **July 16, 2016**
Venue: Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium, Chennai
2. **Aadukalam** (Our annual intra center sports meet) – **August 20, 2016**
Venue: Police Parade Ground, Ashok Nagar, Chennai

We will be ever so happy if you could be present in the events and cheer for our children. Looking forward to seeing you there ☺

Yet another angel bids us goodbye



Before we could come to terms with the loss of our little angel Mani, we had to bid goodbye to yet another of our angels, Jenit Praisitta. She was a cheerful and a playful 6-year-old girl. Perhaps the purpose with which she came into the world has been fulfilled and she reached His feet on May 27, 2016. She was a non-verbal, epileptic, spastic cerebral palsy child who came to our Outreach center in Chengelpet about three years back. With her continuous efforts and help from the trainers, she was able to walk a few steps and was able to talk a few words like "Bye, Amma, Vendam." She will be missed dearly by all of us at Arvind Foundation. She looked like a sleeping baby at peace when she was laid to rest. May the little soul rest in peace!

அன்பு ஜெனிட்,
நீ வந்தது எங்களுக்கு
விடுகதையா?
சென்றது உனக்கு
விடுதலையா?

– Athma Raj (Founder)