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*Dear Readers,*

*Yet again we bring you lots of news with another issue of Ripples. We have been blessed to be supported by wonderful people such as you in each and every baby step of ours in the Foundation's journey.*

*Personally, being associated with Arvind Foundation has taught me a great deal and I am in awe of the children, their enthusiasm, and their never give up attitude. Aadukalam and Vegam are evidence to that; so is Arvind's cafe. It is us who fail to look at their so many capabilities. They are the truly gifted beings who don't have to fight their everyday battles of jealousy, greed, or be drowned in the ocean of self-pity or love for that matter.*

*The teachers are the backbone of the Foundation and they do a fabulous job of training the children. It is my pride and pleasure to be the instrument in keeping you abreast with our children's achievements & milestones and of course of the Foundation itself through this newsletter.*

– **Gomathy T (Editor)**



## Aadukalam 2016

As the curtains drew to a close at Rio Olympics, we had our very own Olympics, **Aadukalam '16**, our third intra center sports day, at The Parade Grounds, Police Training College, Ashok Nagar on 21 August 2016. We were honoured to have Dr Sylendra Babu, IPS, declare the sports day open. We were also delighted to have other dignitaries, Dr. Arutchelvan, Endocrinologist UK, Mr. Anil Kumar Reddy, Industrialist, Mr. Prabhakaran, Principal, Kendra Vidyalaya, Ashok Nagar, Ms. Shama Prasanna, President Inner wheel, Mr. Siddharth Jayakumar, Manager Trade Operations, Indus Ind Bank, President and Members of Lions Club of Meenam, and Actors Aadhi, Uday, and Ramachandran. There were many field and track events including ball gathering, kicking the ball, running 100 meters (slow/fast), crawling with / without assistance, identification of body parts, multi-tasking games, assisted walking, sound tracking, visual tracking (for severely challenged), hitting the ball to target, etc.



***We are ever so grateful to our individual volunteers and our corporate sponsors who made the event a grand success. It is only with such support that we are able to continue our journey in serving the differently blessed children.***





## Arvind's Café

We celebrated the first anniversary of Arvind Institute of Vocational Excellence on 23 July 2016. We celebrated this a little differently by setting up our own Arvind's Café. Filter coffee, masala chai, hot pakodas, crunchy bhel, and the all-time favorite murukku sandwich found their place in the menu. The items were prepared and served by our special needs young adults. Our young adults also sang the Tamil Thaa Vazhthu and also put up a skit demonstrating the skills that they have learnt.

We also initiated a kitchen garden on the day in the presence of Dr. Sylendra Babu, IPS, ADGP, Coastal Guards, Rotarian Mr. Ananth, Director Vocational Services, Rotarian Mr. Kannan, Stewardship Chairman – Foundation Grants, Rotarian Mr. Ravi, President Rotary club of Chennai Kilpauk.

The garden will be maintained by our young adults with special needs at the Foundation and the produce will be used in our institute. The children are already excited about growing their own vegetables.



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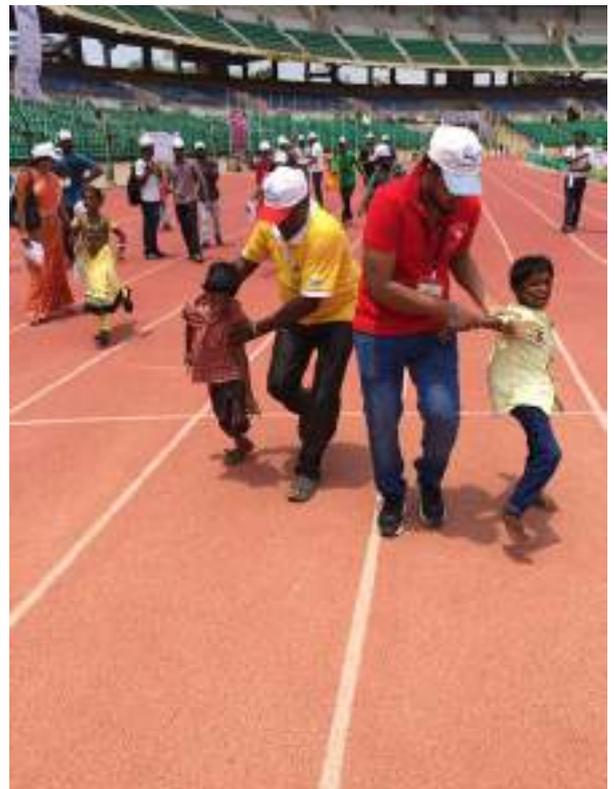
***Arvind café is an Arvind Foundation initiative through which we endeavour to train our special needs young adults to implement and practice the skills learnt. We hope that they find sustainable jobs with such skills and become independent and self-sufficient in life.***



### Vegam 2016

VEGAM is India's biggest athletic meet for the differently abled organized by Chennai Social Service. This event has found its place in the Asia Book of world records.

Our students also participated in this event and won **34 medals and certificates** and also a trophy for being the **best cheering school**.





## Curative Lectures by Rudolf Steiner

Dr. Steiner's twelve lectures on Curative Education have a wealth of knowledge and suggested treatment for Special Needs Children whom Dr. Steiner calls as retarded or handicapped children. In this series of lectures, Dr. Steiner discusses cases like epilepsy, hydrocephalous, adenoids, kleptomania, infantilism, and autism. The treatments discussed have a direct effect on different organs of the body and has a direct relationship to the four bodies (Physical, Etheric, Astral, and Ego organisation) of human beings.

Dr. Rudolf Steiner's Lecture 1 (June 25, 1924) helps in understanding the normal children and children in need of special care, the difference between soul and spirit—soul which goes through various incarnations. The three processes of thinking, feeling and willing find their respective places in the organs of the body. The head system is considered as the synthetic processor and thinking develops in the brain. Metabolic system is the analytical processor and functions with various organs—it is the basis of WILL formation. Liver helps in activating the "will" of a person to act on what they wish to do. A healthy liver is the catalyst for the will to be activated.

In this lecture, Dr. Steiner also briefs about the developmental changes that happen in the first three- seven-year periods of a special needs child's life. In the first seven-year-period, body is considered to be an inherited model of the ancestors. In the second seven-year-period, the spirit soul builds a new body of its own etheric and plays major role by shedding away what the ancestors have passed on. In the third seven-year-period, the body is built in relation with earth forces, wherein maturation plays a major role.

Dr. Steiner felt that physical organs and the soul life are deeply connected in children, and in adults they are independent. He also says that the inherited defects are based on the *karma* of the individual and it is the soul which decides the type of the body and the parents it is going to inherit. In olden times, it was strongly believed that for every child who is ill education was a healing process which brought to that child, as they matured, health for becoming a whole human being.

***(Adapted from the book "Education for Special Needs—The Curative Education Course" by Rudolf Steiner)***

The next lecture of Dr. Steiner speaks about the importance of the attitude of the curative teacher which we will delve into in the next newsletter.

– ***Sudha Athmaraj (Co-founder)***

## Independence Day

Our seventieth Independence day was observed with great fervour on August 15, 2016 across all our centres. The day was marked by speeches, dance performance, dramas and mime shows.

At Arvindniketan and Arvind Institute of Vocational Excellence the children, parents, and the staff went on a silent march holding the placards with "Go Green" slogans. During the march our special needs children also cleaned the streets.

At the Independence Day celebrations organized by K.K. Nagar residential association and EXNORA conducted in 6th Sector Park, we also had the opportunity to put up a skit.



### Independence Day



### A Family amongst the Hills—Arvind Outreach, Mannavanur

Travelling through winding roads, tall green trees and terraced lands of growing crops, you reach Mannavanur. This beautiful little village houses Arvind Foundation's Outreach Centre for children and adults with disabilities. The Centre is like home for the students and teachers who are running it, and I was warmly welcomed to be a part of it. Being a special educator and having travelled and worked in different places and terrains, the hills were a first. Blending with the lives, culture and primarily agrarian economy of the village, the curriculum, skill development and activities are built keeping this in mind. What better way for the students to start their day than gardening and farming some fresh fruits, vegetables and flowers and in the process, learning the how-tos of farming and having a jolly good time.

I spent two weeks working with the students individually and as a group giving the teachers a perspective to understand individual needs of a student and how to cater to the diverse needs in a group. The group includes students with Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation, Autism, Speech and Hearing Impairment and Multiple Disabilities. We explored and strengthened ideas for pre-vocational and vocational skills, literacy through multi sensorial teaching, communication, play, independence skills and leisure.

One of the many highlights of the two weeks was the music and dance sessions with the students. The sight of all the children dancing, making rhythm, swaying and singing along to the music in the most pristine setting of Mannavanur is to behold.

– Anu Alex (Special Educator)



**Mannavanur**



Arvind Outreach, Anthakarna, Chengelpet celebrated its fourth anniversary with lots of enthusiasm. The center had organized a small program. The program started with a prayer song by our special needs young adults and staff, welcome address by Mohana Priya, a special needs adolescent, Eurythmy by Sarulatha, a special needs adolescent, and teacher, Ms. Thilagavathi, followed by a small skit demonstrating the ways to preserve nature.

The guest for the day was Mr. Bala, Assistant art director of Kabali fame. He also runs a play school "Bodhi Dharma." He talked of his experiences and was very happy to see the love of teachers towards our special needs children.



**Anniversary Celebrations at Our Centers**

Two of our centers, Arvindaalayam, Kolappanchery and Arvind Outreach, Anthakarna, Chengelpet celebrated their second and fourth anniversaries respectively.

Arvindaalayam celebrated its second anniversary with a prayer song by our special needs young adults and staff, dance and a small skit showcasing the safety rules to be followed on roads. Our student, Anushya, spoke about the Foundation at the event. Mrs. Revathy of World Bank visited us on the day with her children. The day was marked by planting of saplings for kitchen garden which will be maintained by our special needs young adults.





### Anniversary celebrations



### A New Parent at the School

Hi Everybody,

I am **Poorna Balaji, B. Rammohan's mother**. He is a 17 year old handsome, autistic boy 😊 I came to know about Arvind Foundation through Google and my son joined this school from in July 2016. It has been just about a month, but has started enjoying going to school. He is very resistant to change and his interest now amuses me. Thanks to the wonderful teachers there. In these 17 years he actually participated in a typical sports day, ADUKALAM, for the first time. He won 2nd prize in all the three events he participated. All credit goes to the two teachers, Mrs. Ashwini Priya and Mrs. Saraswathy, who trained him patiently for nearly two weeks even though he was new to them. Typical examples of teachers of special children. I am at a loss of words to express my gratitude to them. Hope our association with them goes a long way and gives more meaning to my son's life. It is a pleasure to be a part of the Foundation.

### Our Student Says...

My training centre Arvind Foundation is the most enjoyable place. It is located very near to my home. I like the prayer assembly in my centre. I love all my teachers. They are very kind and patient in training us. They have never been hard on us and am proud of my Arvind Foundation. I like my training centre very much. Any student who shows an extraordinary talent will be given a special attention and students are regularly motivated through awards during school programs and are appreciated during school functions

– Sathya Priya



## Volunteers at Aadukalam '16

I along with a few of my friends from British Council was fortunate enough to have been part of the swarm of volunteers at Aadukalam. I also had the delightful opportunity to light the lamp along with VIPs and my friends had to pull me down from cloud nine. There were different, really different and not-so-easy track and field events. A special mention to the whole team for the meticulous planning as resources were being shared from across their five centres. The oohs and Aahs were heard from everywhere. The best of cheering came from the special children and adults themselves who were also lavish in praising one another. Celebrities coming and going seemed of no importance to any of us except for a little glance now and then as we were among the brightest of stars ourselves. Children and young adults in various capacities dashed through victory and each time someone won, I felt like I won, won over the conception that these children are "not normal"... won over the myth that these children are "less capable"... won over my perception of my own limitations. It was an overdose of life lessons and I have not ceased to boast about my experiences. If not for want of space, I could go on. My learning in a nutshell **"Disability is OUR incapability to see the ability in these children."** Wishing an everlasting bonding with Arvind Foundation and the angels!

– *Gajalakshmi Sendil, British Council (Volunteer)*

It was an awesome and a satisfying experience for all of us. We thoroughly enjoyed and had a great time in Aadukalam. Each and every game was refreshing and we felt the enthusiasm of students who were totally involved in that. Hats off to Mr. Athma Raj, Ms. Sudha, Ms. Revathy, Mr. Ramesh & other teachers who trained and encouraged the students. It was very well organized. Special games conducted at the end of the event surprised us all. 😊

It was Wipro's pleasure & privilege to take part in Aadukalam.

– *Ramya, Wipro (Volunteer)*

## 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 more special children lead better lives.*

*If you would like to help us in our journey, please contact 9841034234, 9841615333 or 7299911022 or email us at [arvind\\_foundation@yahoo.in](mailto:arvind_foundation@yahoo.in)*

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