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Dear Readers,

The New Year brings with it the hope for a wonderful year and I would like to extend my warmest wishes to all our readers, well-wishers, patrons, and volunteers. 2016 had been kind to us though there were many challenges, but, by the grace of God and all your support, we have overcome all of that.

My heartfelt gratitude to all of you for your continued support. Your support has been monumental in keeping us going and encourages us to reach many more heights. With great expectations, we look forward to a fruitful year in 2017. Our focus in 2017 will be on innovation in therapeutic and healing techniques. To encourage this we have put in place an innovation award for our staff. We will also be training our staff on various methods and have scheduled intensive training sessions for them to drive them towards innovation. Despite challenges, I am glad that we are able to bring Ripples regularly to you now. We hope to bring you many more success stories through our future issues.

A very prosperous new year and happy Pongal to all of you!

- Athma Raj (Founder)



Colours in Conversation

"A true artist is not one who is inspired, but one who inspires others"

- Salvador Dali

Two of our children, Kameshwaran, aged 9 years and Abdul, aged 8 years, from Arvindniketan, K.K. Nagar, had the privilege of having their paintings exhibited at the Russian Center for Science and Culture as part of a painting exhibition organized by Svavalambana Trust. Under the able guidance of Mr. Augustine Thilak, our children have been able to express themselves through colours. It was a proud moment for us at the Foundation.

We are grateful to all our well-wishers who visited the exhibition and encouraged our children. This exhibition has been a great experience for all of us and we hope to see many more of our children participating at such events.

A Special Marathon

We had the opportunity to participate in a special marathon organized by KRM School for Special Needs Children at Marina beach. This marathon was an attempt to raise awareness on the dangers of using plastics. Around forty of our special children walked from Kannagi statue to Vivekananda house on 15 Nov 2016 between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm. Around 1000 Special children from various schools in Chennai took part in the program to raise awareness on the danger of usage of plastic.





ROTA Talent Show

Rotary club of T. Nagar conducted the ROTA talent contest for differently abled children on 22 Nov 2016 at Kamarajar Arangam, Chennai. Our special-needs children from five of our centers participated in this talent competition. Our team from Arvindniketan, K.K. Nagar, performed a dance show and also put up a puppet show with the theme "Go Green." Our team from Arvindaalayam, Kolappanchery, performed a folk dance. The team from our Porur center performed a skit on tribals, and our children from Anthakarana, Chengelpet performed a skit creating awareness about special children and special schools. Young adults from Arvind Institute of Vocational Excellence performed Eurythmy—a system of rhythmical physical movements. The performance of our children was appreciated by the guests and audience. It was a great opportunity for our children to show case their talent. Our children, Sandhiya and Kameshwaran (Arvindniketan), Renuka, Sarulatha and Mohanapriya (Arvind Outreach, Chengelpet), B. Vanitha and S. Aishwarya (Arvind Outreach, Porur), P. Rajasekar and V. Kumaravel (Arvindaalayam), and Arvind Shivakumar and Aarthi (Arvind Institute of Vocation Excellence) won prizes on the day. It was a wonderful experience for all of us.



Art Duet

On World Disability Day, Nandavanam, a special school, organized an art workshop for special-needs children on 3 Dec 2016 at Cholamandal Artists Village in Injambakkam. It was a journey into the world of art and abstract expressionism for people with special-needs. Volunteers from all walks of life had hands-on experience at handling special-needs young adults. Our student Arvind Raj participated in the event and it was a great experience for him and his volunteer who helped him out. The student and the volunteer were able to explore four art mediums—clay, foam painting, spray painting and wet on wet painting—in one hour. Mr. Augustine Thilak, Ms. Jyotsna Srinivasan, Ms. Ranjini Jacob and Ms. Mala Chinnapa were the facilitators for the event.

The curative art therapy workshop has given our teachers hands-on experience and many new ideas to use it at the school and they also had an insight about different ways to explore art as a medium of healing.



Upskilling Our Staff

Training forms an important part of our curriculum for teachers. To keep them informed and updated about various disabilities that they come across in their everyday job is essential for the benefit of our children. As part of this agenda, our staff had a workshop on “Epilepsy & Seizure” by Mrs. Sudha Athmaraj and “Dyslexia” by Ms. Harini Mohan of Madras Dyslexic Association on 12 Dec 2016. It was an engaging session with skits and other interactive sessions and our staff were able to understand these disabilities better.

Mrs. Sudha Athmaraj conducted the session on epilepsy and seizure. The staff learnt about the structure and parts of the human brain, the difference between Epilepsy & Seizure, causes of seizure, types of seizure, phenomena of seizure and about the Anthroposophical view of seizure. This session also gave them the confidence to handle children during a seizure and also information about the first aid to be given in the situation.

This was followed by a session by Ms. Harini on Dyslexia. This gave our staff an insight about the types of Dyslexia, various ways to identify it, how a child turns out to be Dyslexic, the problems faced by

the child and adults when they are Dyslexic and how to handle such children and adults.

Apart from this, we also had our Vice Principal, Ms. Revathy, and Chief Physiotherapist, Mr. Ramesh attend the "Health & Medical issues in children with developmental disabilities" and International post graduate medical training for doctors, teachers, and health care professionals respectively. The training gave Ms. Revathy a better understanding of medical issues in children with special needs. Mr. Ramesh had the training in various new therapy and remedial techniques.

Curative Lectures by Rudolf Steiner

Dr. Rudolf Steiner's third lecture gives us a better understanding of epilepsy.

Understanding epilepsy through the four bodies—physical, etheric, astral and ego—and with the right educational methods, children make good progress and at times can be cured too. The importance of the transition and connection of the astral and ego to that of the physical and etheric needs to be considered. The ego slips into the physical body and enters into direct relationship with gravity making the physical body light. This happens when the person is awake. Warmth element is closely connected to the ego. Similarly the connection with the etheric body and Ego is in direct contact with the buoyancy.

The connection of the astral force to the etheric body is directly linked to the light element. The ego and astral directly connect with the physical body and its organs. From the organs these forces stream outward to the world. In case of any obstruction while either entering an organ or streaming outward, the individual is awake but not conscious. In case of somebody with epilepsy, the ego and astral, for example enter an organ, Lung, for example, but find it difficult to stream out into the world. This causes congestion in that organ and is manifested as spasms or seizures. In childhood, epilepsy with brief loss of consciousness but more of dizziness means the ego

and astral do not enter into direct relationship with balance. Therapy or treatment is to work with exercises related to balance to make them conscious of the working of gravity.

In Epilepsy with nausea or Vertigo there's an imbalance or an inability to deal with watery element. Treatment includes working with the watery element. Consider swimming and eating sensible food; with severe nausea, the element air is disturbed. Treatment also includes bringing back the feeling of warmth in the child. The child needs to be dressed as to enable the child perspire. When a child with epilepsy turns violet and has no memory afterwards, they also have issues with morality; these children need medical help first and foremost.

Until we meet again...

- **Ms. S R Padmavathy**

Visit by Stella Maris Students

On 19 Oct 2016, a group of eight volunteers along with their mentors had come to Arvindniketan as part of their outreach program. The students had brought activity sheets for colouring for our special-needs children and helped them colour the pictures. They also encouraged our children to draw pictures of their own. Kamesh, 9 year old boy, drew a picture of himself with a house. The volunteers also presented a puppet show to build awareness on rain and the importance of growing more trees.

The volunteers were very friendly towards our children. They enjoyed each other's company. It was a memorable experience for both our children and staff.





Picnic at VGP

On 22 Oct 2016, Rotary club had organized a visit to VGP for our Arvind Outreach Porur children. All our students from the center along with their teachers and parents enjoyed the day at VGP Golden Beach. It was a memorable experience for our children at the amusement park.

Home Visits

It is very important for our teachers to understand the home environment of our children. Home environment is one of the major influences in a special child's life. The family plays a major role in influencing the child's behaviour and growth. To understand the family and their situation better, we organize home visit twice a year. This is the time when the class teacher visits each and every student's house, speaks to all the family members about the facilities available at home, and about the activities that the child does at home. We document this information and is of great help to understand the child's relationship with their families. It also helps us a great deal during guiding and counselling

sessions with the parents. The first round of visits for the year were conducted in the months of October and November across all centers. The next visit will be in the month of March 2017.

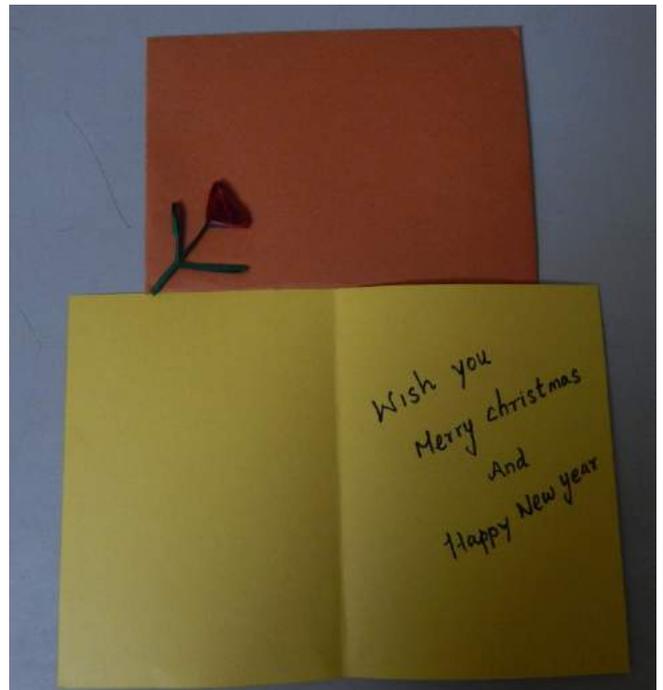
Parent Teacher Meeting

Our Outreach programs at Kolappenchery and Porur, Chennai, had their half yearly parents' teachers meeting in the month of November. During this meeting the teachers take time to meet parents individually and present a complete report about the student for the first term. The reports comprise the improvements and concerns. Goals for the next term are also discussed with the parents. The parents' teachers meeting is always welcome as this provides one on one interaction to understand parents' points of view and their concerns.



New Year Wishes from Our Special-Needs Children

Our children wish you a wonderful 2017 ☺



Parents' Corner

நான் குழந்தை வைத்தீஸ்வரியின் அம்மா. அரவிந்த் நிகேதன் பள்ளியில் சேர்ந்து 8 மாதம் ஆகிறது. முன்பு இருந்ததை விட இப்பொழுது நல்ல முன்னேற்றம் அடைந்திருக்கிறாள். பேச்சில் தெளிவு இருக்கிறது. ஆசிரியர்கள் எல்லாரும் பாதுகாப்பாக பார்த்துக்கொள்கிறார்கள். Sports day அன்று இந்த அளவிற்கு Vaishu விளையாடுவாள் என்று எதிர்பாக்கவில்லை. தகுந்த பயிற்சி கொடுத்ததால் மட்டுமே அவள் மெடல் வாங்கினாள். அதை குறித்து நாங்கள் மகிழ்ச்சி அடைகிறோம். இன்னும் அதிகமாக முன்னேற்றம் அடைவாள் என்று நினைக்கிறோம். உங்களுக்கும் பள்ளியைச் சேர்ந்த அனைவருக்கும் எங்கள் நன்றியை தெரிவிக்கிறோம்.

- S Priya

Upcoming Events

- Dr. Nick Blitz's workshop on Curative education – 20-22 Jan 2017
- Pongal celebrations at all our centers – 12 Jan 2017
- Republic day celebrations at all our centers – 26 Jan 2017
- 5th module of curative education and social therapy training at Camphill Institute, Bangalore – 29 Jan 2017 – 11 Feb 2017
- Saaraansh 2017 – 5 Mar 2017 *(Please do book your calendars; we will be sending you the official invite a little later)*

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

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