Our Work

• Any person with intellectual disabilities irrespective of their degree of disability, socio economic condition and age.
• Towards eradicating the stigma associated with disabilities especially intellectual disabilities
• Empowering the children thereby making them confident and self-reliant
• Improve the quality of life through better health care and individualised rehabilitation programmes.

Our Belief

• In transparency
• In professionalism and dedication
• In Charity with Dignity

Our Goal

To establish a specialty centre well equipped with not only latest facilities but also trained personnel, providing good quality, affordable, up to date education and therapy.

Vision

Change the current fragmented rehabilitation system into an integrated holistic one dedicated at improving the lives of intellectually disabled children through individual specialized training thereby making social inclusion a reality.
The year 2013 was indeed a memorable one; not only were we stepping into our tenth year but also a year that saw our long cherished dream of having a state of the art disabled friendly infrastructure come true. We have no words to thank Mr. L.M. Shah, Trustee of The Grace and Gratitude Trust, for helping us fulfill this dream. His meticulous planning and foresight ensured that Satya is able to provide the best rehabilitation facility to over 200 CWSNs.

All the initiatives for the year, be it early intervention, prevention of abandonment of CWSNs through empowerment of parents or the all inclusive play park were towards creating awareness about special needs, providing opportunities for inclusion and ensuring mainstreaming of CWSNs. Activities taken up as a part of Joy of Giving Week helped Satya attract several volunteers and well wishers from Pondicherry. This year also saw the finalization of the building plans for Satya’s first Village Rehabilitation Centre at Muthurampet. We are hopeful that in the next year, the first disable friendly village infrastructure for Pondicherry will become a reality.

Four of Satya’s Special athletes who were part of the Indian contingent to the Asia Pacific Games in Newcastle, Australia made their homeland proud. They impressed everyone by winning gold medals in basketball, track and field events. Volunteers from both within India and abroad helped implement various unique initiatives. A number of experts in the field shared their knowledge and ensured that the staff of Satya keep pace with the latest developments in the field of disability management through various capacity building programmes.

With recent trends in rehabilitation, shifting towards inclusiveness, we at Satya would like to emphasize our commitment towards making Pondicherry a model inclusive society. Our pledge towards achieving this, as Disability Rights advocates is “We will not change you for the world but the world for you”. Upcoming projects such as the After School Remedial Centre, Mobile Sensory Integration Unit, and Model Resource Centre, we hope would ensure that we achieve this goal.

To many well-wishers and friends of Satya - the donors, philanthropists, entrepreneurs, funding agencies, individuals who found it in their hearts to offer logistic, human or financial support to our various programmes - thereby contributing to the process of improving the lives of the CWSNs, we extend our grateful thanks.

Our parents of CWSNs in many ways have been inspirational in beginning our programmes. Their support and their constant effort to change the existing ground realities have helped us in achieving our goals. Satya is able to achieve its goals due to the dedication of its young team of professionals. We hope they keep up the good work in the years ahead!

Our journey towards an inclusive society continues!!!
The Executive Committee has been our source of strength and guidance over the years. With representation from experts in various fields, the committee has been the driving force behind Satya’s growth. Their dedication has been responsible for Satya being rated as a very transparent and professionally run organization. The Executive Committee has met on a few occasions to take important decisions. Due to time constraints this year, we carried out our discussions via conference calls or Skype in order to involve more members at their convenience, in planning for the year.

**Executive Committee meeting held in 2013/14:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Board Meeting</th>
<th>Total Members on Board at that time</th>
<th>Quorum required</th>
<th>Number of Board Members present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4th June 2013</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>15th Sept 2013</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Dec 2013</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st March 2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th April 2014</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
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**Board’s resolution on following:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues</th>
<th>Date of Board Meeting</th>
<th>Number of Members present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget, Programmes and Projects</td>
<td>4th June 2013</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM Skill Development Programmes / IOWA</td>
<td>1st Dec 2013</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting of the VTC/ MD Center/ National Workshop/ Play Park Inauguration</td>
<td>1st March 2014</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIOS/ NIEPMD/ Budget / Projects</td>
<td>25th April 2014</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Executive Committee**

- Dr. Nallam *Patron*
- Dr. Asha Oumachigui *President*
- Dr. S. Chandrasekar
- Dr. Velumani
- Dr. Mrs. R. Chidambaram
- Ms. Maya Chandrasekar

**Advisory Committee**

- Mrs. Sita Ramkumar
- Mrs. Bindu Modi
- Mrs. Chitra Shah
- Mrs. Sita Ramkumar

**State of the Art Infrastructure**

The new State of the art infrastructure offers all facilities necessary for providing rehabilitation services to CWSNs. The support by The Hans Foundation in the up-gradation of the infrastructure has allowed Satya to not only provide quality services but has also made it a model centre for others to emulate.

Mothers no longer have to wait for hours to meet with rehabilitation professionals; in fact, the support from Hans has helped Satya increase its facilities where simultaneously 7-8 children are provided all the needed services.

**Hydrotherapy with solar unit:**

We have a state of the art hydrotherapy facility where the water is solar heated and the temperature is maintained at 35 degrees.

“As an organisation, we always knew that we needed certain specialised equipments that would help in improving the quality of services we offered. The support that we have received from The Hans Foundation has made this dream a reality. The solar powered hydrotherapy unit will help children with Cerebral Palsy cope with their conditions better. If not for the assistance, this facility would have remained a dream for Satya. We are sure that with their support and assistance, the face of disability rehabilitation is set for a path breaking change in Puducherry”

Ms. Sai Lakshmi, Principal, Satya Special School

**Smart board class room with wireless slate:**
**Modified Wheel Chair:**

With the help of the Hans funding, we were able to procure specialised wheelchair chairs that have not only changed the lives of the children but also reduced the burden on the mothers of either carrying their children around or in the case of very young children having to place them on their laps for long hours. These wheelchairs have been designed specifically for use in developing countries. The wheelchairs are robust, affordable, adaptable and comfortable with pressure relieving cushions and have been approved by the WHO.

**For toddlers and children less than 2-3 years:**

A size adjustable supportive chair intended for use by infants has been designed for extra postural support. This chair comes with many features such as a tray, two tilting positions and headrest. It can be used on the floor or worktop and is easy to transport.

One of Satya’s youngest children, 6 month old Justin now can be seated comfortably for 2 hours. The neck rest supports his head and prevents it from jerking. His mother sits across him and works with the educators to impart training. It has been a blessing for children, like Justin as he would always fall off from traditional furniture.

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**Early Childhood Intervention**

Funded by The Hans Foundation, the Early Intervention Programme caters to the needs of 75 children between the age of 0-6 years with Special Needs. This programme has the distinction of being the only specialised centre in Pondicherry, providing rehabilitation services to CWSNs not only in the city of Pondicherry but all the neighboring districts like Cuddalore, Villupuram, Kalakurichi, Thiruvanamalai just to name a few. The facilities and services offered match international standards and the results are a testimonial of the commitment and dedication of the Satya staff. In the year 2013-14, as many as 25 CWSNs have been integrated into main stream schools. Around 10 children are under the follow up programme.

**The Unique Learner Initiative in Pondicherry, India:**

The Unique Learner Initiative is a partnership of the University of Oregon, the Satya Special School and the Sri Aurobindo Society. Established in 2013 in Satya, Early Childhood Special Educators from the UO’s College of Education, USA traveled to Pondicherry four times to work with the teachers, staff and administrators to develop a model early intervention program that will train educators from throughout India in best practices for young children with special needs and positively influence the future of education in the country.

The first training team established the foundation for the project including the goals and scope of the initiative. The next three training teams focused on Satya Special School and infusing best practices into the program. Topics included:

- Physical arrangement and use of the environment to maximize child engagement and learning
- Developmentally appropriate teaching strategies
- Teaching in daily routines
- Activity based intervention
- An integrated team approach across all disciplines
- Visual supports
- Parent involvement

The teaching and administrative staff of Satya Special School are eager learners and dedicated teachers who work very hard to implement each newly acquired best practice technique in their classrooms. They have made great strides and continue to improve their skills and grow as professionals.

“We have made much progress on our collaboration to date. The University of Oregon continues to be excited to be part of a three way relationship to assist the Sri Aurobindo Society and Satya Special School to provide model services for CWSNs and their families and to become a training sight for others in India to learn how to do this. We look forward to implementing the next steps in this collaborative endeavour”

Ms. Judy Newman, Co-director, Early Childhood Cares, University of Oregon

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**Note:**

CWSNs- Children With Special Needs
CWMDs- Children With Multiple Disabilities
PWDs- People With Disabilities
Programmes:

Pivotal Response Training:

Continuing our collaboration with the University of Oregon, USA, Ms. Catherine Chyslop, an autism expert and Ms. Heather Goldman, a speech therapist were at Satya to train the special educators and early interventionists on various new techniques used in training children between 0-6 years. One of the important aspects of the training was to ensure that there is uniformity among teachers in their methodologies and the need for documentation. Based on the initial discussion and feedback from teachers, trainings were provided in classroom situations on how to handle crisis, how to ensure behaviour modifications and discipline amongst the children. The role of the mothers and families were discussed at length.

PRT – (Pivotal Response Training) – a new technique used in handling children between 0-6 years was imparted to the teachers. PRT can be an effective teaching strategy in reinforcing a desired skill by making a child repeat a task several times. Usage of PRT could help the teacher teach both Language and Play Skills and general functional skills to the children in a manner that reduces the stress on the teachers in handling difficult and challenging children.

“The inputs proved to be very useful as most often simple techniques are over looked while handling challenging situations”

A mother of CWSNs

Staffing and Teaming:

In continuation with the Early Childhood Care Program, trainers from the University of Oregon, Mr. Tylor Wood, Speech pathologist and Ms. Kelly Jacob, Special Educator from Oregon University, USA visited Satya Special School to train the staff in rehabilitation services for children of age group 0-6 years based on the US model. During the week long training, Tylor and Kelly worked with the staff and parents. The main focus of training was on “staffing and teaming in relation with PRT (Pivotal Response Training) which was covered in the earlier sessions.

The concept of “Teaming” refers to different faculties working together along with the parent towards the holistic development of the child. In teaming, the respective therapists work in combinations with the special educator to create a common path in setting and achieving goals.

The concept of “Staffing” refers to the meeting of different service providers to discuss about the children’s strengths, needs, and level of performance etc. Staffing is the comprehensive discussion about the children’s strengths, needs, level of performance by meeting different service providers.

“It was an eye opener as we have been trained to work in isolation. By teaming with the other therapists and Special educators, we are able to develop a comprehensive rehabilitation plan. This way we feel more focused and are able to utilize our strength better”

Mr. Jaising, Neuro Development Therapist

Supplementary Nutrition Programme:

A meeting with the mothers was held in April 2013, to decide the kind and quality of nutritional supplements that would be provided to the children. After much deliberation, the mothers agreed that though each child’s food habits are different, it would be better to include fruits, boiled vegetables, foods that can be either steamed or mashed and fed to the children. It was also decided that instead of either outsourcing the supplies or having the teachers take responsibility of it, the entire programme should be run by the group of mothers, who would decide the menu, procure materials and also take care of providing it to the child. This will ensure a hygienic preparation of the food and quality. The programme has ensured greater involvement of the mothers and has also increased their awareness on the importance of nutrition in the lives of their children.

Mothers Kitchen:

After the initial launch of the Hans supplementary nutrition program, a group of four mothers with financial assistance under the microcredit programme of CIAI, have started the Mothers Kitchen at Satya. The group provides tea and snacks to the staff, parents and other offices nearby. They also provide lunch for some children from Satya and the nearby schools. It has become a huge success in just a few weeks with the growing demand for tea and snacks from nearby establishments. The Mothers Kitchen group has made the supplementary nutrition program a huge succes.
**Nithyashree**, a 3 year old Cerebral Palsy student was able to carry out just a few functions like reach out and hold a few objects, depend on her parents for basic needs like brushing her teeth, identify a few common objects, animals, vegetables and fruits. Socially, she would respond to her own name being called and smile in response. After intervention, Nithyashree has been able to carry out many more functions like opening and closing the door, holding the spoon and moving it into her mouth, she reaches out to an empty glass and bring it close to her mouth. She expresses her toilet needs through gestures or some sounds/crying. She is able to eat a few things on her own without her mother supporting her. Academically, she counts up to 5, matches alphabets up to ‘F’, she waits for her turn during classroom activities. Nithyashree is more cooperative while playing with the other students. We are positive that her condition will improve,” says her Mother.

**EIC: 2-4 years**

**Anushree** is a 5 year girl with moderate autism. Before intervention, it was difficult to make her sit in one place, she was uncooperative during group activities, wasn’t aware of common greetings that could be used. Academically she was unable to match colours or identify body parts. She could identify a picture of her parents. It was difficult making her wear undergarments or squat to pass stools. After the intervention, significant changes have been observed by the teacher. Anushree now sits at least for half an hour, she cooperates in group activities, she greets the teacher with appropriate gestures. Academically, she can now identify body parts such as the mouth, nose, ears, eyes, hands and feet. She is able to match all the colours. Earlier she would scribble but now is able to draw outlines of specific shapes. Anushree can write her name and identify common fruits. Such improvements in the child motivates us and we feel enthusiastic and proactive, says Ms. Selvi, Autism Resource Teacher.

**EIC: 4-6 years**

**The therapy facilities offered at Satya includes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Therapy</th>
<th>Number of Students</th>
<th>EIC (hrs)</th>
<th>MD (hrs)</th>
<th>Day Care (hrs)</th>
<th>VTC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physiotherapy</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech Therapy</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensory Integration</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music Therapy</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hydrotherapy</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance Therapy</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>1 hr</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5 hrs</td>
<td>12 hrs</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yoga</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>25 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Therapy</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
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<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weight reduction therapy</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
<td>30 mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**1. Physiotherapy:**

The Physiotherapy department plays a vital role in the school. It caters to over 90 children with special needs. Physiotherapy is given for children attending the Early Intervention center (0 - 6 years) and Special School (6yrs to 14yrs), Children with Multiple disability (0 - 20 yrs) Adult PWDs (15 yrs and above). The services provided are individual sessions, group therapy, counseling, and parent training programs. In group therapy, the children are divided into various groups according to their ability level. Group therapy sessions help in peer learning as children are motivated to imitate or repeat activities done by the other children in their group.

**2. Hydrotherapy:**

Hydrotherapy is given once a week on a one on one basis. Children love to play in water and hence movements are easily achieved under water. Weight reduction therapy also helps the children with obesity and other problems, lose their excess fat and remain healthy. Around 25 children are benefited by this programme.
Programmes:

Feel Your Back- Workshop for Physiotherapists:

A half-day workshop was conducted by Mr. Senthil Coumaran, for 45 physiotherapists on backache problems. The topics covered various causes of backaches, biomechanics of the spine and pelvis, pathological effects of back muscles, precaution that needs to be taken during exercise and how pilates can be used to strengthen the back. The feedback from the participants was very positive.

"I am very happy that Satya has taken this initiative of capacity building programmes for professionals. Until now we had to rely on such training in Chennai or Bangalore. This initiative is laudable."

says a participant

Ananya was brought to the school when she was 2 and half years old in 2010. Back then she was only able to sit and moved by bottom shuffling. She was assessed by the team of physiotherapists, on her motor skills both gross time and on her functional daily living activities. A treatment plan was prepared such that it integrated physical therapy with sensory integration, speech therapy, hydrotherapy and special education.

With some technical guidance from the University of Oregon therapists, both our physiotherapist and speech therapist combined classes in handling her at the same time and this collaborative approach showed positive results. Ananya’s mother who accompanies her to the school was also taught a set of home programme techniques which further helped in improving her condition. Now Ananya can get up if she is sitting on a low stool, hold on to a walker and walks with the support of her mother. She is able to throw and kick a ball when she stands with support, she has also learned to walk with minimal support with using just one hand of her mother. We are confident that she will continue to progress, says her Mother.

Mano Bala is a 6 year child who is diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy of Ataxic type with Hearing Impairment. Initially, he could barely walk 2mts without stopping and would struggle ending his walk. Mano bala received hydrotherapy for 35 mins a week for a period of 29 weeks. After which, on observation it was seen that Mano Bala was able to walk for more than 10 mts without stopping and he could climb and descend down the stairs. He is also able to stop while walking fast at prescribed stop points. His customized hydrotherapy treatment procedure and the implementation of Halliwick’s concept of aquatic therapy has tremendously helped in his progress, says Mr. Senthil Coumaran, Physiotherapist.

3. Speech therapy:

With increase in awareness on the importance of therapy, the year saw a number of parents take active interest in the speech therapy sessions of their children. The most important goal of the speech therapy is to provide state of the art therapy facilities, free of cost to the disadvantaged population to whom these services are either not available or too expensive. The main area of focus is to improve the child’s existing disability through individualized therapy sessions thereby making them as independent as possible and an important step towards social inclusion and acceptance. Around 170 children were provided speech therapy this year.

Programmes:

Dynamics of Speech:

Judicael Nicollet, a speech therapist from Paris, France, with over 15 years of experience in phonological knowledge, speech therapy with deaf children, lip reading and usage of rhythm in speech training was at Satya to help us understand the natural dynamics of speech. In the first session, he trained a mixed group of 15 children, mothers, special educators and speech therapists.

He highlighted the need of stimulating the children not just during the speech therapy session but throughout the day through various activities. His focus was on the mothers and impressing upon them the various simple techniques that they could use while interacting with their child to help improve the child’s speech and language. His second session involved non-verbal communication and the usage of vowels and sounds to indicate certain actions and needs of the children. Mothers of children especially those, with CWMDs found the tips offered by Mr. Nicollet very helpful.

Ganesh Moorthi is 8 and half years old. He exhibits autistic features with delayed speech and language development. At the beginning, he could only say /po/pa/ and his name ‘Ganesh’. He was able to follow one word commands with action. He always liked to imitate sounds that he picked up from the speech software. He could identify a few vehicles. He couldn’t identify common vegetables or fruits and animals. He lacked basic social skills. He pointed at objects to make a request. Towards the end of the year, it was a different story with Ganesh. His vocabulary consists of more than 100 words. He follows simple instructions. He uses words to make requests. He tries to express himself in a few words. He successfully identifies common objects like fruits, vegetables, animals, vehicles and sounds around him. Ganesh tries to frame proper sentences with meaning. He is very enthusiastic about his speech therapy sessions, says his care giver.
4. Music Therapy Workshop:

The world renowned music therapist Mr. Nigel Osborne from the University of Edinburgh, UK returned back to Satya with his team of musicians this year. Their aim was to use music as a means to communicate with each other. By combining the five senses along with rhythms and sounds created, he made CWSNs of Satya develop a song with the rhythm and sing it. He explained how music therapy works and how we can make challenged children improve their speech and psychomotor skills.

5. Sensory Integration:

Sensory Integration Therapy is a direct one to one therapy with the therapist in an environment providing a variety of sensory opportunities. Sensory Integration therapy helps the therapist achieve the following goals in a child:

- Functional behaviour
- Motor skills
- Attention
- Cognitive skills
- Social skills
- Self-harming
- Self-stimulation

CWSNs who show signs of Visual Dysfunction, Auditory Dysfunction, Tactile Dysfunction, Vestibular dysfunction, Proprioceptive dysfunction connected to the five senses of touch, smell, hearing, vision and taste need sensory integration therapy. At Satya, we use various methodologies in providing sensory integration therapy. 1. Stimulation through one to one sessions  2. Stimulation through outdoor activities like sand pits, pebble walks etc. 3. Secondary stimulation in classroom while teaching other skills and adaptation to actual daily living environment. This facility is one of the few options available for CWSNs in this part of the country.

The focus of the year was to impart skills that would help the children live an independent life through various initiatives such as leadership training, confidence building exercises and public speaking skills.

Programmes:

Anjali Children’s festival:

This annual festival is organized by Swabhiman, Bhubaneshwar, Odisha which was set up by the State Disability Information and Resource Centre in 2001. Several workshops, competitions, cultural programmes, musical performances and exhibitions are featured at the weeklong festival. Children from across the country participate during November, around Children’s Day. This year 5 students and 3 staff members from Satya, were a part of the festival.

On the first day, students of Satya participated in a dance and drama programme, a rally was organized for all the participants and over the next few days, the students attended drawing, arts and crafts, puppetry, dance and singing, clown workshops. On one of the days, the children and staff got to visit some important historical places and museums around Bhubaneshwar.

“We not only learnt new skills but also met a number of people from other states. We made friends and were very happy. We are all treated equally and I love this event as it is colourful and makes me happy.”

Manju, student from Satya

Medical Camp For Satya Students:

A medical camp was organized with the help of doctors from PIMS. Around 80 children from all the village centres and 75 from the city centre were screened by the team of doctors. Most of the children were diagnosed as anaemic and needed regular nutritional supplements. Some children were
Downs Syndrome + Cerebral Palsy: 2
Hearing Impairment + Mental Retardation: 2
Hydrocephalus + Mental Retardation: 4
Cerebral Palsy + Mental Retardation: 6

**Description**

**Number of Children**

- Mental Retardation + Visual Impairment: 1
- Autism + Cerebral Palsy: 1
- Mental Retardation + Epilepsy: 1
- Autism + Mental Retardation: 1
- Hearing Impairment + Mental Retardation: 1
- Cerebral Palsy + Mental Retardation: 1
- Mental Retardation + Visual Impairment: 1

**The ‘Creating Ability’ Event:**

Children of Satya witnessed - The “Creating Ability” - an event organized to showcase the abilities of PWDs. It consisted of various performances by persons in wheelchairs who were from the Creating Ability Foundation. The performances included yoga asanas, dance and a performance with swords. The teacher/founder referred to as Guruji spoke to our students about how everyone was capable of achieving whatever they wanted despite their disability. The purpose of organizing a programme of this nature, is to constantly motivate and remind our students that they can function and be a part of mainstream society. It was truly an inspiring event for all of our students.

**The Ahimsa Run:**

Ahimsa run was organized, to spread awareness on disabilities by the Jain Association at Pondicherry, on the account of Mahaveer Jayanthi. There were more than 700 people that participated consisting of the children with special needs (CWSNs) from Satya special school and the general public. It was heartening to see our children running along with the public for a common cause. One of the Satya CWSNs Mr. Praveen Kumar won the 2nd prize in the Children’s Category.

At the beginning, when Anil joined the school, he had certain learning difficulties such as identifying the letters, reading and writing. With in depth assessments, a plan was charted out for him that involved special education, physiotherapy and play therapy (he has certain difficulties in walking) for comprehensive development. Today, Anil is a confident teenager, grabbing all opportunities that are provided by the school. He has improved in all areas such as academics, play, speech, writing, dance and sports. He has been receiving the special education award in the main stream class and last year he had taken up the government exam and successfully passed the eighth standard. This year, he will write the 10th standard public exam with other mainstream ‘abled’ children. With continued intervention, it is only a matter of time that Anil will become a confident individual in our society.

**Satya Center for Multiple Disability**

The Multiple disabilities category includes those students with the most severe physical, cognitive, and communicative impairments. The common connection between students in this category is not just that they have two or more co-existing impairments, but that they generally need extensive support across any number of skill areas.

A need was felt at Satya, to have a Multiple Disability Centre due to the fact CWMD are most neglected and often abandoned. Less than 0.1% attend school and less than 5% avail any rehabilitation services. The costs are incredibly high for a CWMD (Average expenses/month- mainstream child- Rs. 500, Special child- Rs. 3000, CWMD- Rs. 6000-8000). At an MD, centre the teacher, student ratio is 1: 3-5 and we at Satya believed that such a facility was essential for Pondicherry. With all the above in mind, we started a first of its kind Centre for Multiple Disability in Pondicherry. This centre caters to the needs of around 46 children with varying levels of special needs.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Cerebral Palsy + Mental Retardation</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Autism + Mental Retardation</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Downs Syndrome + Cerebral Palsy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Hearing Impairment + Mental Retardation</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Autism + Cerebral Palsy</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Mental Retardation + Visual Impairment</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hydrocephalus + Mental Retardation</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Mental Retardation + Epilepsy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total number of Children with Multiple Disability</strong></td>
<td><strong>46</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Vocational Training Centre**

The success we had last year in income generation activities enthused us to concentrate on livelihood initiatives. Accordingly the focus was on skill development through various training programmes. Training was done in collaboration with reputed institutions like the M.S Swaminathan Research Foundation for mushroom cultivation and skilled entrepreneurs like Ms. Edwina Stanley for tetra pack bag making, Ms. Ashwini for bakery.
Programmes:

**Bakery Training Programme:**

It was provided by Ms. Ashwini. The trainees were taught to make from simple butter cookies to the more complicated Nan kattai. The biscuits produced by the bakery unit was distributed under the Supplementary Nutritional Programme of Satya. This ensures that the internal needs of the school are being met in addition to generating income to the unit. The target for 2014 is to make gluten free cookies for Autistic children and high fibre low fat cookies for diabetic patients. We are also exploring the possibility of selling these cookies to the University and other college canteens.

**Mushroom Cultivation Training:**

A two day training programme was conducted to initiate parents and 24 CWSNs on the lucrative business of cultivating mushrooms. This would provide an avenue for families to earn an additional income. The training programme was conducted at the Bio-village Research Centre, MSSRF. The topics that were discussed and demonstrated were:

1. Introduction to mushrooms.
2. Climatic conditions necessary for growth.
3. Production of the Spawns (Mushroom Seed)
4. Raw materials needed

“It was a very structured and well planned training. The hands on practical training helped us get a feel of the kind of work involved in Mushroom cultivation. The participants are keen on setting up their unit with the help of Satya.”

says Mr. Iyyanar, Special Educator

**Training programme on tetra/candy wrapper bag making:**

With an emphasis on Wealth out of Waste, Ms. Edwina Stanley from Bangalore trained adult PWDs and mothers on converting tetra pack cartons into user friendly ladies hand bags. The purpose of this training, was to provide alternative livelihood options for parents and CWSNs. The steps to making these bags were outlined as follows:

- What are Tetra bags and why are they useful?
- Collection of tetra/candy wrappers
- The process of cleaning these wrappers.
- Categorizing the wrappers based on colour, size etc.

“It is a wonderful initiative and in addition to being environmentally friendly it can also help create jobs for adults with any degree of ability. A great alternative to the run of the mill bags that flood the market. I hope Ms. Edwina would help us set up an unit at Satya.”

**PM skill development programme:**

With the aim of creating sustainable livelihood, the Prime Minister’s National Council on Skill Development Program was launched all over India. Satya Special School has been identified as one of the implementing agency in Pondicherry. To assist young female PWDs, a four month training program on jewellery making and articles made out of dried flowers and leaves was launched at Satya. Around 20 PWDs were trained under this Program which is funded by NIEPMD with the support from the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment.

One of the parent of the trainees said “it would be great if the Government would come up with more livelihood training projects for PWDs so that their wards can make a living and sustain themselves”.

**Prathap**, from our Kodathur VRC has shown remarkable improvement over the last three years of receiving speech, play therapy and special education. He has always wanted to be independent. He approached Satya’s microcredit programme, to start his own business in making chalks. He was trained for three months in one of the vocational training centres and is able to independently make chalks and sell them. At 19, he has started contributing to his family’s finances. Prathap feels that this little initiative has changed his life positively and has helped him move a step ahead in being independent. We hope his story would set an example to many PWDs in Pondicherry.
Shanu Gupta, a 13 year old girl with special needs, lives with her aunt. She moved out of a mainstream school and joined Satya’s Village Center. When she came, she could not understand or express in any other language other than Hindi. She had difficulty in communicating and socializing with people. She now has begun to learn Tamil, enough for a person to understand what she needs or feels. Shanu loves to read and write and is very enthusiastic about all written activities. Earlier she would resist any instruction/command made by the teacher and blatantly say “I won’t do”, but now it is a different story. Shanu understands what the socially acceptable responses/requests/greetings are. Today, she is a confident young girl, having achieved around 80% success and is ready to move to the pre-vocational class.

Archana is a 7 year old autistic child. Before the intervention, she was violent, had to always move around and was constantly making loud sounds. With the intervention and equal support from the parents, her behaviour slowly changed. The sounds, violent behaviour, moving around constantly in the classroom, dramatically reduced. Her vocabulary has increased to 50 words, she is able to repeat sounds after the teacher. She is able to greet people. Her parents wish to see a day when she will be able to communicate just like the other children her age.

The overall objective of the project was to improve CWSN and their families’ quality of life in Puducherry with the specific objective to offer to CWSN families a real alternative to children abandon or institutionalization through the access to health, rehabilitation and special education services.

Sellimedu Village Center:

A UNESCO funded building used by the Partage Dan lemonade, Pondicherry for tsunami rehabilitation work was handed over to Satya Special School to run its village center there. The building needed some major repair and remodelling to suit children with Special Needs. When approached the Pondicherry Heritage Round table – 167 readily agreed to financially support the remodelling to the tune of Rs 2.5 lakhs. Today this centre provides rehabilitation services to over 26 children from the neighbouring villages were such services are unheard off.

The year began with an assessment camp for the identified CWSNs. It attracted children from 30 villages with varying developmental and physical disabilities. Around 56 children were assessed by a team of professionals including Physiotherapists, Speech therapists and Special Educators. Out of the children assessed, 23 were inducted into the village centers for day care services. Another 12 were put under Satya’s Home based programme. In a few cases the team referred the children for further medical examinations. Out of the 56 children, 11 children were below the age of 8 years with 3 below 6 years and they will be integrated into the Early Intervention Programme.

Through various awareness programmes, activities and capacity building initiatives, since the implementation of the programme from June 2012 up to March 2014 not even one case of abandoning or institutionalizing the CWSNs has been reported. From a state where parents felt that abandoning CWSNs was the only solution to their problem, today parents feel both financially, socially and emotionally empowered to care for their CWSNs the same way as they care for the other siblings. Some of the initiatives that helped us achieve this objective are:

- Social awareness camps
- Day care services
- Home based services
- Early intervention programme
- Environmental and group awareness
- Skill development
- Vocational training
- Health and rehabilitation
- Schooling
- Emotional support

Two child leadership training programmes were conducted in the academic year by Mr. Perumal, a motivational trainer. The first was focused on self-confidence and self-expression and the second one was a follow up session on decision making, problem solving and team work. Generally children with special needs find it difficult to express their views and prefer to work in isolation. In order to help improve team work and peer group activities the workshop focussed on self-analysis and team building. Mr. Perumal helped children express themselves confidently, through various group activities. He insisted that children should have a vision and ambition in life and work towards achieving their goals. It was interesting to see children who are non verbal use the computer and smart board to express their views. The workshop was an eye opener for some of the staff members who hadn’t identified some of these hidden qualities in their students. The participants loved the group skills sessions where they interacted with children with varying levels of abilities.

He conducted a follow up session on leadership, provided inputs on how these CWSNs could take ownership and improve the quality of their lives along with developing confidence in their own decision making skills. The participants were made to do certain group activities which required them to critically think and problem solve as well as work together as a team.
Sibling Interaction:

One of the important aspects of the CIAI project is to increase the acceptance of the CWSNs amongst their family members. An interaction was held with the siblings of CWSNs. Ms. Saujanya Prasad, a disability rights advocate and a sibling of a PWD herself, interacted with 40 other siblings from Satya. She started the interaction with an account of her personal life and how she has learned to cope with her brother who is autistic. By the end of the session most siblings had expressed the pressures that they face from their peers and how difficult it was for them to explain or talk about their sibling’s condition, how they were made fun of and how in spite of wanting the be friendly with their special needs sibling, they were ashamed of it. Saujanya managed to impress upon the need for acceptance and the various methods they could use to get the special needs sibling involved in their day to day activities.

“I always wanted my son and daughter to have a cordial relationship. This session has helped break the ice. I thank Satya for focusing on this important aspect.”

Mrs. Soundarya, Mother of CWSNs

Disability Rights Advocacy & Disemmination Programmes:

In order to create a general awareness of the Rights of PWDs a two day programme was organized for University students, parents, special educators and siblings of PWDs. This was led by Mrs. Sumitra Prasad, a special parent and General Secretary of DORAI Foundation, Ms. Amali Aruna: Special Educator, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Mr. Rajiv Rajan: General Secretary of EKTHA and Mr. Harinath, PWD were the resource persons.

Sensitizing Social Work Students:

Around 100 students from the Department of Social Work, Pondicherry University attended the workshop that created awareness on various issues faced by PWDs in the country today. During the workshop Mrs. Sumitra Prasad, highlighted the UNCRPD Act, its various provisions, its implementation and the various initiatives taken around the country. The most important aspect was a discussion on the role of social workers in sensitizing the community and ensuring the rights of PWDs is maintained.

Role of Parents in Advocacy rights:

Acceptance of CWSNs in society starts with the family. In order to stress the importance of the role of a family in the positive development of the CWSN and in making inclusion a reality, an interaction between Parents of CWSNs and Mrs. Sumitra Prasad was organized. Being a parent of a PWD, Sumitra was able to relate to the problems faced by the parents in bringing up their wards.

She stressed on the need to believe in their children and ensure that they do not shy away from accepting their child’s condition. With the acceptance of reality, help is always available through other parents, well wishers and organizations working in the area of special needs. She shared the importance of forming parent support groups and how once such a group provided the necessary support at the time of crisis in Chennai. For the first time around 12 fathers participated in the interaction and shared their views. In addition to the above a number of dissemination sessions on Disability Rights for students of various nursing colleges, Teachers training colleges, Medical Colleges were also held.

“We have been taught about the physiological aspect of disability but never about the social implications. This session has been very useful and in the future when we handle patients with special needs we will be empathetic to both their living conditions and social pressures.”

Ms. Meenakshi, Nursing Student

Disability Sensitization And Peer-Peer Activities Programme:

Around 59 students from the 8th grade of Fathima Higher Secondary School, participated in the Disability Sensitization and Peer-Peer Activities Programme. After the initial orientation on Satya and its activities, Satya’s children performed a dance that was appreciated and equally enjoyed by the audience. Videos were shown, to highlight the difficulties faced by a CWSN. In order to sensitize these students further, some of them were given hands on experience of using a wheelchair. This helped the students have a deeper understanding of what life was like for a CWSN. These students expressed their own as well as society’s perception on disability through art. The participants also scripted their own skit that highlighted how a CWSN coped in mainstream society and the positive impact of Satya on these children.

“Though we have seen children in this building we did not know what it was. Today we have had a whole new life changing experience. We would be happy to come back and spend more time with our friends in Satya.”

A group of students who participated in the programme
Child Protection Policy:

Though it is widely known that abuse and punishment is common among care givers and sometimes family members while handling children with Special needs, we at Satya have a zero tolerance policy towards child abuse. As a first step, various workshops for special educators, care givers, helpers and drivers were held to highlight the importance of Child Protection and the basic rights of the children. As a step towards drafting a child protection policy for Satya, Mr. Manickam from CIAI, Italy a child rights activist interacted with the staff of Satya. Through various group activities he brought out the need for protecting the child against physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

Networking:


Satya Special School and the Department of Social Work, Pondicherry University came together to organize the first ever National Workshop on Best Practices and Current Trends in Special Needs in Pondicherry. The key objective for organizing a workshop of this nature was to bring various national and non-profit organizations together to share successes and failures in the work being done in special needs. The organizers felt that while the fight to make our society an all inclusive one continued, it was of utmost importance to build a common platform where there was a greater unification of likeminded organizations fighting for a common cause.

Around 400 people participated in the event. The audience consisted of students from nursing and B.Ed colleges. Professionals included teachers, doctors and academicians. The panel of speakers represented national organizations like the National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD) and National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped (NIMH) and non-governmental organizations like VidyaSagar, Spastic Society of Tamil Nadu, Madhuram Narayanan Centre for Exceptional Children, Karnataka Parents Association for Mentally Retarded Citizens, CBM, Holy Cross Service Society and DORAI foundation. The sessions covered key themes such as early intervention, inclusion, life span approach, empowerment and building group homes for persons with special needs.

Micro Credit / Sustainable Livelihood Programme:

Financial independence can contribute to the quality of life of CWSNs and their families. Satya with the help of CIAI, Italy launched a Sustainable livelihood programme in 2012. Interest free loans for over 95 mothers and adult PWDs were given to form businesses ranging from petty shops to textiles to consumables or house construction. The recovery of loans was as high as 95 %. This success has encouraged the community coordinators to counsel and identify new beneficiaries to provide them with financial assistance. Around 35 new businesses were supported this year. For the first time, we have provided assistance to individual adult PWDs who have shown the interest and willingness to overcome all hurdles and set an example to the others. In addition to providing them loans, constant capacity building activities were also organized. Motivational talks were given by experts from various financial Institutions like Mr. Agilan INDSETHI, Mr. Govindraja, NHFDE and Mr. Jayaram DIC, Pondicherry.

Motivational talks by Experts on Microcredit

Successful business supported by the Microcredit Programme

Mr. Vetivelan - lead social worker and Micro credit officer from the NGO, Sharana Social Development talked about how the Microcredit system worked and the various mechanisms involved also highlighting the positive impact it had on society.

Service Society and DORAI foundation.
Origin of the Centre:

Though on an average 6 out of 10 disabled children in Pondicherry live in the semi urban and rural areas of Pondicherry, rehabilitation services to this rural disabled population were almost non-existent. In 2010 when a team of community workers from Satya accidentally identified a number of children with special needs in one rural village in Pondicherry 20 kms from the urban center, Satya became the first NGO to cater to this neglected population. Satya’s first village centre was inaugurated on 6th Feb 2010 by Mrs. Wilma Gastel and Mr. Udo Gastel, Trustee, You and We Trust, Switzerland who support the centre till date.

Today, the Kodathur centre is a day care centre and has 25 children with various disabilities. The centre provides facilities like physiotherapy, speech therapy in addition to Special education something unheard of at the village level. All the children visiting the centre are provided free rehabilitation services as per their Individual Educational Plan drawn up after initial assessments and discussions with the parents. Until Satya intervened, these children had never attended school.

Proposed Village Centre:

Since its inception, the Kodathur Village centre has changed lives. With the qualified professionals providing the needed therapeutic and educational intervention, the time was right for developing the necessary infrastructure to house a state of the art village rehabilitation centre – the first of its kind model that could be sustainable, replicable and scalable. A model that could change the lives of many rural deprived children.

The proposed building is to be constructed in the 4800 sqft (453.35 sqmts) of land located in Yogalakshmi Nagar, Muthurampatty Village, Pondicherry donated by the You & We Trust. It will have the best disabled friendly equipment, barrier free environment and will accommodate 75 – 100 rural children from the age of 3 months to 18 years. The centre will have the following facilities:

- Physiotherapy
- Solar powered Hydrotherapy
- Speech therapy – computerised speech training and assistive technology devices
- Activities for daily living – skill development
- A kitchen to provide nutritious meals for the children
- Disabled friendly outdoor play equipments

Programmes:

All Inclusive Play Park:

For years, we at Satya struggled to find a park for our children where they could play at ease like other children. Normally the equipments such as swings, see-saws or slides are just not designed for inclusion. Fortunately this year we were able to make this dream for our children a reality, when we were able to put together an ‘all inclusive play park’ open to our children and the public. What makes this play park special is that all the play equipment has been designed to allow children with disabilities to play at ease. The park has been provided with swings and modified swings for children in wheelchairs. The merry-go round has special seats for the children to sit with maximum support. A sand pit has also been provided for the children to play freely.

The play park was planned with the technical support of Mrs. Odile Perino of Chemins d’Enfances and the inauguration was done out by Mr. Phillipe Janvier Kamiyama, Counsel General of France. It was heart warming to see the joy on faces of children, who perhaps may never have sat on swings or slides all their lives.

Serial No. | Name of Partner          | Number of students |
-----------|---------------------------|-------------------|
1          | LEADS                     | 75                |
2          | Sharana Shelter           | 25                |
3          | Child Development Centre  | 25                |
4          | Sharna Mathur Village     | 120               |
5          | Satya Special Village     | 199               |
6          | Satya Village Centre      | 92                |

Launched in 2010, the play centre and Ludomobil project has been very successful in helping children from difficult situations gain in self confidence while learning problem solving and communication skills. A total of 536 children from 3 partnering organizations in addition to Satya are benefited by this programme. The focus for the year was to introduce Indian games and encourage the children to create their own games.
Play Therapy Workshop:

Sponsored by Chemins d’Enfances, Mrs. Perino, the resource person trained our staff members in using play as a means of therapy. The purpose of play is to purely enjoy oneself which positively contributes to the physical, mental and emotional upkeep of the child. Mrs. Perino stressed on play being a free activity where the child is allowed to stop as and when he likes and hence should not be forced into doing anything against his/her wishes. The participants were divided into groups and were made to discuss and outline the outcomes of CWSNs and mainstream children playing together. Some of the responses were; building self-confidence, sense of inclusiveness, alleviating myths about CWSNs in society, attitudinal changes, developing communicative skills and a sense of equality.

The six principles that the educator must remember while allowing children to play are:
- The game/material/equipment must be user friendly.
- The child has a right to choose the game.
- Every game is different.
- It has to be easy for the child to understand.
- The materials must be of quality.
- Safety is of foremost importance.

Sports for the Disabled

The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports (MYAS), “Sport for the disabled project” that was launched in 2010 saw its fourth year of implementation. Around 146 children of Satya Special School were trained under this programme.

Programmes:

State Level Championship:

The State Level Championship for Table Tennis and Volleyball was held at Thavalakuppam College, Pondicherry on July 2013. 85 Athletes from various special schools in Pondicherry participated in these events. Satya Special School participated in both the Volleyball and Table Tennis events. Both the Boys and Girls team won the Championship in Volleyball. In table tennis, in addition to winning the team championships in both Girls and Boys categories, the individual championship was also won by Sonu and Vijayalakshmi in their respective categories.

First Special Olympics Asia Pacific Games:

It was always felt that athletes from Asian and Pacific countries, due to the lack of international exposure and infrastructure usually do not perform very well in these Summer and Winter Games. In order to help children perform better and gain an international exposure, with the support from Special Olympics – Australia the first ever Asia Pacific Games was proposed.

Four special athletes from Satya Special School namely Praveen Kumar, Kiruthiga Sri, Guna Sundari and Vijaya Lalitha were selected to be part of the Indian contingent. The participants attended two training programmes at Hyderabad and Chennai after which, the teams departed for New Castle, Australia. A total of 39 countries participated in the event. The athletes from Satya Special School won laurels for their school, state and country by bagging medals in all the events that they participated.

- In Basketball Final Match, Girls’ Team played with the opponent team of Australia and won the Gold medal and Boys Team played with the opponent team of Pakistan and won the Gold medal.
- In athletics, Ms. VijayaLalitha won the 3rd prize in 100mts & 200mts and 1st prize in 4x100mts relay.

The success at New Castle was due to the efforts of the coaches and the training offered under the Sports for the Disabled Scheme.

Regional Coaches- Lead Trainer Programme:

Mr. Davamani the Physical Educator, on behalf of the Satya School attended the Regional Coaches- Lead Trainer Development Programme at Goa from 24 to 26 Feb 2014. He was named the “Best Coach”, as it was under his training the students won medals at the Special Olympics held in Australia. He was able to interact and share his experiences with the other coaches. The coaches received inputs on how to encourage and motivate CWSNs to perform better.

National Level Athletics - 2014/15:

The National Athletic Championship was held in March at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi. The event witnessed the participation of 585 Special Athletes and 158 coaches from 27 states of India. Around 8 special athletes from Satya Special School represented Puducherry in the event. The following were the events they participated in and the prizes and ranking obtained at the event.

- In Basketball Final Match, Girls’ Team played with the opponent team of Australia and won the Gold medal and Boys Team played with the opponent team of Pakistan and won the Gold medal.
- In athletics, Ms. VijayaLalitha won the 3rd prize in 100mts & 200mts and 1st prize in 4x100mts relay.

The success at New Castle was due to the efforts of the coaches and the training offered under the Sports for the Disabled Scheme.
Participants List & Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serial No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Prize</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>S. VIMALRAJ</td>
<td>50 Mts/Softball Throw</td>
<td>1st in Softball throw &amp; 2nd in 50mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>S.CHANDRASAGER</td>
<td>200 Mts/Long Jump</td>
<td>2nd in 200mts &amp; 1st in Long Jump</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>S.ANIL</td>
<td>100 mts/ 200mts</td>
<td>5th in 100mts &amp; 7th in 200mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D. PRAKASH</td>
<td>100 Mts /Shot Put</td>
<td>2nd in 100mts &amp; 1st in Shot Put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>NISHANTHI</td>
<td>50 Mts /Shot Put</td>
<td>2nd in 50mts &amp; 1st in Softball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>P.VIJAYALALITHA</td>
<td>200 Mts/400 Mts</td>
<td>4th in 200mts &amp; 5th in 400mts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>S.DEEPA</td>
<td>100Mts walk/Softball Throw</td>
<td>5th in 100mts &amp; 1st in Softball throw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>R. UMA MAHESWARI</td>
<td>100 Mts</td>
<td>1st in 100mts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wishing Tree:

As a part of the Joy of Giving week each child from Satya was asked to wish for something he/she wanted. The wishes were put up in the form of a wish tree at the 3 branches of the Euro Kids Play schools, an industrial unit and a shopping mall. The wishes ranged from a box of chocolates to a piece of jewellery to a frock or a toy. The response from the public to this unique first time initiative was amazing. The event helped us to create awareness about the activities of Satya and on disability.

“I am touched by the amazing work done by Satya. Heart-warming to see such smiling faces amidst pain and suffering. We pledge our full support to this cause,”

as stated by Mr. Perumal, Franchise, Euro kids, Pondicherry

“The joy in the faces of the children on seeing their wishes fulfilled, brought tears to my eyes”
says Murugan an auto driver who gathered his friends to collect money to fulfill some of the wishes of the children.

Elders Day At Help Age India:

The children and staff of Satya spent a day with the elders at Help Age India. It was a heart warming experience for all of us. The staff and children of Satya danced and sang for the elders. They also organized games like bursting the balloon, lemon and spoon etc. The children also distributed blankets and other essential commodities they had managed to collect from their neighbourhood. The elders wanted the children to visit them as and when they could. They looked at these children as their own grandchildren. The warm interaction brought tears in the eyes of many who miss their grand children back home. Satya’s staff and children promised to make this an yearly event.

“I generally CWSNs are seen as recipients of charity. For the first time children of Satya Special School became givers and spread joy to the others. It makes us feel so happy.”

The Staff of Satya

The Joy of Giving Week:

Joy of Giving is India’s “festival of giving”! Launched in 2009, the festival is celebrated every year, in the week including Gandhi Jayanti, i.e., October 2-8, and brings together Indians from all walks of life, to celebrate “giving”. From auto drivers to CEOs, school children to celebrities, homemakers to opinion leaders, millions of people give their time, money, resources or skills back to society - by creating or participating in events of their choice. A giving event could be as simple as a family taking out the maid’s children for an ice-cream party, or as large as Gift Compassion that had 10,000+ school children across India making and exchanging gifts with their peers from different socio-economic backgrounds.

Events are organised by individuals, social groups, schools, colleges, NGOs, corporates, media houses and others. More than 2 million people participated in more than 900 events across 80 or more cities in Joy of Giving 2013, raising several tens of crores in money and resources donated, and millions of volunteer hours.

The year 2013 saw Satya Special School play a major part in organising a number of events both for and by CWSNs in Pondicherry. Some of the initiatives were so successful that it is now being planned as a yearly event in Satya.

Programmes:

The Kids Karnival:

A “Kids Karnival” was organised as part of Joy of giving week. This was also used as a platform to create public awareness about an Inclusive Society. A number of children from various orphanages and residential homes were also invited for the event. Around 700 children, both able bodied and special needs witnessed a magic show, cultural performance and a fashion show by CWSNs. The carnival also had game stalls, a play centre with carom boards, bursting balloons etc where the CWSNs competed with other children from various schools. In addition, face painting, balloon sculpting and application of mehendi on the hands, attracted a number of children. The highlight was a photo session for children with their favourite cartoon characters – Chota Bheem and Dora.
Programmes for Parents:

Various capacity building programmes were held in order to help parents handle their CWSNs effectively.

Programmes:

Physiotherapy Training Programme for Parents Of CWSNs Villianur Village Centre:

Around 30 parents of CWSNs participated in this training programme at the Villianur village rehabilitation centre.

Objectives of the programme were:
- To make the parents of Children with Special Needs CWSNs understand the importance of physiotherapy.
- To make them understand the scientific basis for any therapy.

Mr. Jai Sing, Physiotherapist talked about the stages of human development. This was done in a manner that could be easily understood by the parents. He described the three stages of human development as follows: Pre-Natal stage, Post-Natal stage, Physical development.

Most significantly he explained the importance of home program activities, which need to be carried out by family members. Several queries were raised by parents with regard to specific problems that they faced in handling their child with special needs.

Awareness of Guardianship for Parents and the usefulness of the Nirmaya Scheme:

“What happens to my child after my death?” is a question all parents tend to ask at all parents’ meeting. To address this issue and to provide them with possible solutions, an interaction was organized for parents with Mr. Karthikeyen, coordinator, SNAC Pondicherry. The session covered legal and social issue related to adults like:

- General awareness about govt allotted schemes for PWDs.
- Awareness of Legal responsibilities for PWD and their parents.
- Availing the rights of PWD.
- Awareness about the loan facility given by the Women’s and Handicapped corporation in Jawahar Nagar.
- Procedure of getting guardianship in Puducherry.
- NIRMAYA Insurance Scheme.
- Introduction about Sristi Foundation.
- Information regarding the enrollment into the Adult Independent Living Program.

Role of Special Educators in ensuring Rights of PWD:

In order to sensitize teachers and special educators on the Rights of PWDs and to ensure mainstreaming of CWSNs, a workshop was held with Ms. Amalia Aruna-coordinator of SSA Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA-Chennai). Ms. Aruna insisted that in addition to preparing IEPs for the children, teachers must plan to sensitize peer groups and involve them in ensuring that maximum support is provided to the special child (peer can assist the teacher in helping the child with certain tasks). This would serve as an important step in making inclusion a reality, starting in the classroom. Around 50 teachers from various special schools and Government aided Schools participated.

Basic Physiotherapeutic Methods In Handling Children With Cerebral Palsy:

During the routine activities it was clear that most of the staff members struggled with the students due to lack of knowledge about handling children with CP. Hence an interactive session on the following topics was organized by the Physiotherapy Dept.

1. Basic Normal Fundamental Postures.
   - Types of postures
   - Benefits of good postures
   - Effects of bad postures
   - Proper positioning of the child
   - Importance of the positioning

2. Types of mobility Aids
3. Types of Orthotic Devices
4. Lifting carrying and transfers

Fire Safety Programme:

A long felt need was the training in handling disasters such as fire and cyclones. Around 62 staff were trained on various aspects, including prevention of fire and fighting fire. Demonstrations were carried out for the same. Demonstration on reacting in actual situations helped the staff immensely. It was proposed to have a session on evacuation of CWSNs during emergency / natural disasters in the future.
Workshop On Stress Management:
The workshop on stress management was conducted for our staff members and was facilitated by Mr. Perumal, a Psychologist. He comes with a vast experience of having worked with children and adults in areas of behaviour, cognitive and psychological development. Some of the key inputs on relieving stress are:

- The ‘Who Am I’ method - to know oneself better and have a more positive attitude.
- To be able to share and express any incident that may have caused sadness or have led to depression (with a trusted mental health professional).
- Imagination- To use one’s imagination to set goals that one might want to achieve.
- Meditation or any other activity where a person is at peace with himself/herself and is in a state of awareness.
- Strengthening human relationships and avoiding people with negative attitudes.

Visit to Isai Ambalam School,Auroville:
It is very important for us at Satya, to constantly build our own capacity so that we can serve our CWSNs better. Keeping this in mind, some of the staff members, planned a visit to Isai Ambalam School in Auroville. The school has been employing innovative methods of teaching based on the Glenn Doman method of pedagogy. Whatever concept may be taught, the curriculum ensures that it covers all areas of developmental such as-. Cognitive, Social, Fine motor, Gross motor, Sensory, Aesthetics, Language and Emotional development.

Even a simple activity of reading or identifying sight words was carried out in multiple ways wherein not only did the child learn to read but read with meaning and understand underlying deeper concepts. For example, a factual story about a tortoise was read, related sight words were taught through flash cards and with the aid of the computer, activities with cards were done; where the child arranged the alphabets or words in order, based on what the children have learned during concept teaching, they then create drawings or masks. The Satya team found the visit extremely fruitful and enriching and were eager to try some of these techniques with their own students at Satya.

Workshop on Learning Disabilities:
A one day workshop on Learning Disabilities was carried out by Mrs. Aparna and Mrs. Radhika, Remedial teachers from Chennai. The training was conducted for our special educators, CBR, early intervention, and other technical staff. The objective of the workshop was to provide an overview on learning, the difficulties faced by children, symptoms and diagnosis of these learning difficulties/disabilities and what teachers can do to help.

Major learning disabilities like Dyslexia, Dyscalculia, Dyspraxia, Dysgraphia were explained and many demonstration exercises were carried out for the staff to better understand how the child may experience a particular difficulty in learning. The key message for all of us was that learning disabilities affects 3-10% of the population and has a neurological basis, but it is important for us to understand and believe that with help and the right kind of remedial support, a child can overcome these learning difficulties.
Community based rehabilitation programme (CBR)
for children with special needs (CWSN) in Puducherry:

Satya Special School implemented the project titled “Community based rehabilitation programme (CBR) for children with special needs (CWSN) in Puducherry” with the support of CIAI in rural and semi-urban areas in Puducherry region from May 2010. A study was initiated to assess the change in attitude towards the condition of disability among the parents of special needs children who have received rehabilitation services for about one year through Village Rehabilitation Centres (VRC) and Mobile Therapy Unit (MTU). This project supported about 125 CWSNs living in 44 villages of rural and semi-urban area of Puducherry.

Findings:
- Differently able children were looked after by women mostly in the family and take extra effort to care in all possible ways.
- Men did not pay much attention to the needs of their differently abled children.
- Educated families spend more money and take great efforts in caring for their differently abled children than uneducated families living in rural areas.
- Care takers/parents gained confidence in the children and themselves when they saw an improvement in the children.
- There is a lack of awareness, where men and women both believe that visiting the temple or performing several poojas will ‘fix’ their children.
- 75% of the respondents said that disabled girl children should not be allowed out after attaining puberty which implies that parents are wary of the child’s safety.

The report can be downloaded by clicking on the link: https://www.dropbox.com/s/wbcjs0lh36ucvif/study%20on%20attitudinal%20change%20.docx

Know Your Rhythm:

Know Your Rhythm’ is a Music Therapy training/research programme conducted by Ninad comprising of Arnab and Prarthana for therapists of Satya Special School.

Rhythm and musicality is innate to all living beings. Children recognise and respond actively to sound, rhythm and touch even before they are born. Music pervades our cells, tissues, organs, minds and consciousness effortlessly. It moves us to respond instinctively; our breath, pulse, muscles and internal rhythms pulsate as we listen to it, we feel it. In music therapy, music is used to help improve health (physical, emotional, cognitive, social) and to generally establish a feeling of overall well being. The programme consists of 3 training modules of which Module 1 has been completed.

Module 1 of this programme aims to create an awareness and some experience of this Rhythm and Musicality and their therapeutic effects:
- Assessment of music and rhythm sense in therapists
- Using specifically composed music to help therapists understand and recognise rhythm and ‘feel’ the music
- Training in basic and complex rhythms
- Practice of rhythms with familiar and unfamiliar melodies
- Assessment of vocal skills for humming, chanting and reciting
- Expressing and connecting Rhythm to kinesthetics, proprioception and speech
- Recognising levels of well being individually and as a group
- Administering Music Therapy to children - basic level

For more information, visit http://therapy.ninad.in

Research Division

Future Training Strategy for Satya

Lack of adequate human resources in the field of disability management has been a huge constraint in Satya’s journey over the years. A friendly interaction with Ms. Marie France about the activities of Satya and the obstacles we faced, brought us in contact with Mr. Joachim Kreysler, an Epidemiologist/Nutritionist/Tropical Medicine Specialist, ex WHO and IFRC staff and an independent observer at the UN. Based on the discussions and the visits to the various projects the following were some his observations:

We observed the Satya Special School, their Mobile Unit, Villages Centers, Vocational Training and were very impressed by the achievement, especially the work in the new building, since it has been only a year. Most outstanding is the Early Intervention Centre, which no other school in Puducherry offers. Satya accepts children from 6 months to 6 years and special emphasis is put on this service with the involvement of mothers – which is a prerequisite. This particular achievement was possible with interaction from specialists from Oregon University, who have developed this module according to WHO guidelines.

However, the current situation (lack of human resources) is aggravated by frequent loss of medium-level staff and well-trained personnel, who seem to find more attractive and better paid job offers outside Pondicherry, since no other comparable training facility for disability-teachers exists in Pondicherry. A recommendation made by us is to observe and understand a number of well-functioning models for specialized mass care that have been growing in India in eye-care as well as heart surgery etc. The experiences made in student selection, capability training, career prospects etc. For e.g. ARAVIND Eye Care System in Tamil Nadu might be worthwhile to be examined for its relevance in the field of care for the disabled.

The central focus of the 2 observers together with Chitra Shah and the visiting staff from Oregon University concerns diding a viable training strategy. The agreement was a) emphasis needs to be given to staff being employed in the community, b) On local training in Tamil of middle level professionals in all techniques of professional care. This is the long term goal. c) This will require strategic reorientation in Satya’s eventual projected extension, aims and strategy. Higher priority must be given to parents’ involvement and responsibilities as well as intensification of the outreach program.

The 2 observers confirmed based on their discussions with the senior staff from Oregon University that a similar approach to capacity building is considered as useful for the Satya project. Basically such a strategy would provide 2 training streams: a) a form of practical apprenticeship and sensitizing of (initially un-informed and non-involved) family- and interested community- members with the aim to create a large number of people with a wide range of practical skills in the care for the handicapped on community level and b) to form a group of professional care-takers, but with a job profile fully adapted to the requirements in Pondicherry.

“In conclusion, we fully support Mrs. Chitra Shah in her stated motto that Satya must be a scientific professional project rather than a charity driven model.”

says Mr. Joachim Kreysler