



**ISHANYA**  
journey to inclusion  
ISHANYA INDIA FOUNDATION



**Celebrating  
5 years of**



**Ishanya  
India  
Foundation**

The past five years has truly been adventurous! Moments filled with excitement, lots of laughter, panic, instances of self-doubt, being humble, satisfaction & and of course feelings of achievement.

October 2015 saw my dream finally taking shape and from then to now, it has been an amazing journey of learning some truly valuable life lessons as a social entrepreneur. Starting Ishanya India Foundation was a life changing decision and I know I have found my best buddies for life – my students!

Prior to starting Ishanya, when I looked at various other organizations, I realized that the people behind most of them have vast experience in terms of age and profession or are parents/family members to persons with disabilities. It was overwhelming at first especially while interacting with parents because a lot of them felt that I may not be able to live up to the expectations considering my age. It took a lot of efforts to get to where we are today.

In the last 5 years, I have realized the importance of being flexible in implementing various programs, building the team and giving them more autonomy, building a support system and most importantly to build effective relationship and continue to learn. All of this has helped us develop a broader perspective.

In the past 5 years, we have worked with over 500 students, parents, professionals through various programs. We have also collaborated with multiple organizations to spread the message of inclusion. We are particularly proud of all the work that we do with design, art and technology which we feel is the need of the hour.

Covid-19 brought with it a lot of challenges; no one was completely prepared to re-organize the entire education system. It took a while for everyone to get used to the new normal but this whole exercise not only challenged us but brought out the best in us.

We miss the close interactions with the students, those hi-five's & hugs, but I believe that digitization of education has helped us eliminate various barriers and has helped in creating new equations between teachers and students. Today, we are able to reach out to students from different parts of the state and even the country. Although this year has been very challenging, it definitely is filled with lots of love and courage.

Cheers to the entire team at Ishanya and to all our supporters! I am so proud of what we have achieved so far and I am truly excited to see what the future holds for us!

**-Swathi Vellal Raghunandan,  
Founder Director**



# 2020 so far...

Our fifth year began with the launch of the **SAMETI** Program - A Pre-academic skills program for children aged 6-8 years who learn various skills for an easier transition to the academic world

Our first batch of **SPRUHA** students moved to a sheltered employment program where they got opportunities to work on live projects with various companies and polish the skills they had learnt in the past 2 years

Our students participated in the **Kisanvala** Logo Designing Contest where the theme was - Change your relationship with food for good.

One of our students went on to win the contest!

We started working on a **Capacity Building** initiative for caregivers/ special educators / trainers / mentors/ professionals to train individuals with special needs for a more fulfilling future and earning a livelihood

Our team visited 4 schools in the Udupi district who will be part of this program that will be launched soon

We started a **Support group** to help parents of children using **AAC** (Augmentative and alternative communication) in honour of AAC awareness month

We launched a **Home Program** to help parents work with their children in a home based setting



Our students were part of a volunteer engagement program online, with **Intuit India** where they got a chance to interact with professionals and learn basic conversation etiquettes. The volunteers from Intuit also took part in an **autism sensitization program** conducted by our director, Swathi vellal



Our director Swathi Vellal was a part of a panel discussion on **The New Education Policy 2020** organized by ACTS Group Of Institutions



# 2019-20 Highlights

After a successful one year of our flagship SPRUHA program, we got ready and introduced the **SATTVA** Program - A Foundation Skills Intervention Program for students aged 11 - 15 years with the intent to strengthen their basic foundational skills

We also launched the **SAMVAD** Program - An interactive learning session for students to experience and interact with people from various walks of life



A technology Intervention -Education and Livelihood for Special Needs Talk at **Vimarsha Charitable Trust** on International day of PwD 2019 was conducted by our educator Anoop Simha

We joined hands with **Youth for Seva** for internships and volunteering opportunities.

We actively participated in **Mission 1000** of Enable India



We started our own terrace garden in collaboration with **My Dream Garden**



We celebrated our Annual Day by visiting **Srimath Yoga** to understand the relationship between yoga, the mind and the body

**Sai Karthikeya**, one of our students began weekly Bhajan classes



For International day of PwD 2019, we visited Bengaluru International Airport in collaboration with **Anuprayaas**





## Aquilla Nancy Joseph

'**Extraordinary Teacher Award**' - 13th Annual Kalaangana 2019 organized by Information Resource Center For Autism and other Developmental Disabilities.



## Anoop P Simha

'**Distinguished Teacher**' award by the Rotary Club, Bangalore Down Town

# 2018-19 Highlights

Our Founder Swathi Vellal, received the MTC Global JN Dutta **Outstanding Social Service Award**

This year saw the launch of our flagship **SPRUHA** Program - A Core Skill & Vocational Development Program for adults offering vocations like graphic designing, photo editing, data entry, teaching assistantship, and core skills training in social and communication skills, personality development, functional life skills, cognition and computer skills

Launched **SUTANTRA** - A Digital Literacy Program which includes basics of computers as well as learning advanced software programs

We had an interactive session on Experiential Education by **Ajit Basu**, Chief Program Executive at Agastya Foundation to celebrate 3 years of Ishanya India Foundation

As part of **International day of PwD 2018**, our director conducted sensitization programs at Maple bear & Akshara Playschool

Our trustee Raghunandan Ranganath and program director Anoop Simha gave a talk on **technology intervention** at **CISCO**

Started the **SHAAL** Program - **NIOS** (National Institute of Open Schooling) tutoring for secondary and senior secondary courses



Our students got a chance to showcase their skills by designing Women's Day greeting cards for **CITRIX** and **Symphony AI**



On World Cerebral Palsy Day we invited **Siddharth Jayakumar**, author of 'Simply Being Sidids' for an interactive session



Our Founder, Swathi Vellal held talks on Psychology & Special Education at the **Deccan International School**

Our students visited **CISCO** & **CITRIX** to learn more about professional culture, work etiquettes, communication skills and teamwork



# COLLABORATIONS IN 2018-19

We were the first adapters of the **Nimaya robotics** program to improve cognitive and psychomotor skills of children with autism

We collaborated with **SuperBolter** for Data Annotations which is one of the key inputs to any kind of machine learning or artificial intelligence algo. The talented students at Ishanya have filled this gap at Superbolter



In our quest to explore new interventions, we collaborated with **Mr. Karthik Ramasubramanian**, a certified canine behaviorist for Animal Assisted Activity. Our students learnt how to interact, train, walk and groom a dog. These interactions with the dog not only decreased anxiety in a few students but also helped in improving their communication skills



# A Unique Collaboration With Snehadhara Foundation

Our Collaboration with Ishanya goes back to February 2016 where we piloted a program on 'technology assisted intervention' for children with special needs. The objective of this collaboration was to create a child centric equal stake holder model which brings together co-location of organisations to share resources and expertise.

Children from Snehadhara were accompanied by a team member for sessions in Ishanya. This was a demonstration of how organisations can co-locate and work together. We have also in the past few years had a few members from the team of Ishanya be a part of joint training sessions with our team.

Sharing learning spaces for the team and the children has allowed both organisations to beautifully welcome diversity of thought, methodology yet stay unified through the Arts.

We are presently excited to start our programme '**Maitri-building our social world**'. This programme is an outcome of collaboration and friendship of the past few years and aspires to co-create a new learning space that is fluid and challenges the boundaries of physicality, concurrently being close with respect to goals and values in an online format.

Having been a part of Ishanya's journey almost from its inception it is wonderful to see how the Organization has grown in its intent and offerings.

Here's wishing team Ishanya all the very best on their 5-year completion. May you continue to touch lives in your unique ways and take big steps in the practice of inclusion.

**- Gitanjali Sarangan, Executive Director, Snehadhara Foundation**

# 2017-18 Highlights

This year, We launched **Sunday Sip**, a parent support group an informal gathering of parents and professionals for practical and emotional support



## Project Limelight

As the name suggests, Project **"Limelight"**- a collaboration of **Ishanya** and **Milk teeth** - kids' clothing and lifestyle boutique, is an attempt to bring to limelight the capabilities of children with special needs to accomplish great things

Our beautiful children were the models for the boutique's new line of clothing. This adaptive line of clothing being launched today is modified to assist children to dress independently

The apparels have flat seams to reduce friction, easy access with snaps, velcro, tying, stretchy fabric, elastic waist for comfort and all adapted to reduce effort when wearing them



We joined hands with **Plastic Water Labs**, an Edu-Tech start-up in promoting our shared mission of learning with fun using Virtual Reality, giving students an interactive and an immersive experience



We collaborated with SVTC Trust for obtaining Data-entry & Digitization work for our students as part of their vocational training

# 2016-17 Highlights

In our second year, the number of students grew exponentially and we relocated to an independent place

Our first annual day was a gala event!

We visited '**The Farm**'. This place transported us to a different world, where students harvested fruits, vegetables and greens along with feeding birds, rabbits and playing with dogs. It was a fun-filled day with loads of games and soulful meal



We organized two panel discussions

**Assessments that define the child for who he/she is**

Moderator: Gayathri Krishnan; Panelists: Jayashree Rajanahally, Malini Menon, Savitha Ravi and Sowmya T

**Alternative intervention - for the holistic development of the child**

Moderator: Kalpana Srinath; Panelists: Pushpa Bopaiah, Sowmya Ayyar, Gitanjali Sarangan and Rashmi

We joined hands with **Snehadhara Foundation** whose one of the primary goals is Education for Inclusion. We developed a course on Technology-Assisted Intervention with a long-term purpose of building vocational skills



**Our website**, designed by our very own student was launched as part of the annual day



A talk on Diet and nutrition for children with special needs was held by **Mrs. Shalini Gupta**



Our team attended a training session on Sensory Integration Therapy by **Dr. Priti Parikh**



# 2015-16

Our **first** year began with a lot of enthusiasm, hope and excitement for our journey towards empowering individuals with special needs. We aimed to provide an environment which is as barrier free as possible, encourage each individual's learning style, and create new opportunities for them to succeed

We started the **SIDDHI** Program - A one on one remedial intervention program which included tailor made IEPs designed to improve the student's learning needs

We started our journey sharing space with an NGO called **Aid The Weaker Trust** with 2 students





## The Path Ahead...

**EDUCATE**

**EMPOWER**

**COLLABORATE**

### WE AIM TO:

Expand **Capacity building** program to different districts in Karnataka

**Collaborate** with industry partners to create more awareness to make workplaces more inclusive

Expand Sutantra, **digital literacy** program to a larger audience to make the digital world more **inclusive**

Collaborate with other organizations to share **best practices**

Closely work with the **Government** to enhance the benefits and opportunities available for PwDs

To organize more **digital campaigns**, awareness programs to **sensitize** the public

To **empower** individuals with special needs to reach their true potential

As we continue our journey towards inclusion, we would like to thank our team of educators and staff, parents, trustees, supporters and well wishers.

Ishanya's vision of making inclusion a reality can only be achieved with your continued encouragement and support.



**ISHANYA**  
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