



ISHANYA
journey to inclusion

ISHANYA INDIA FOUNDATION

CENTER FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

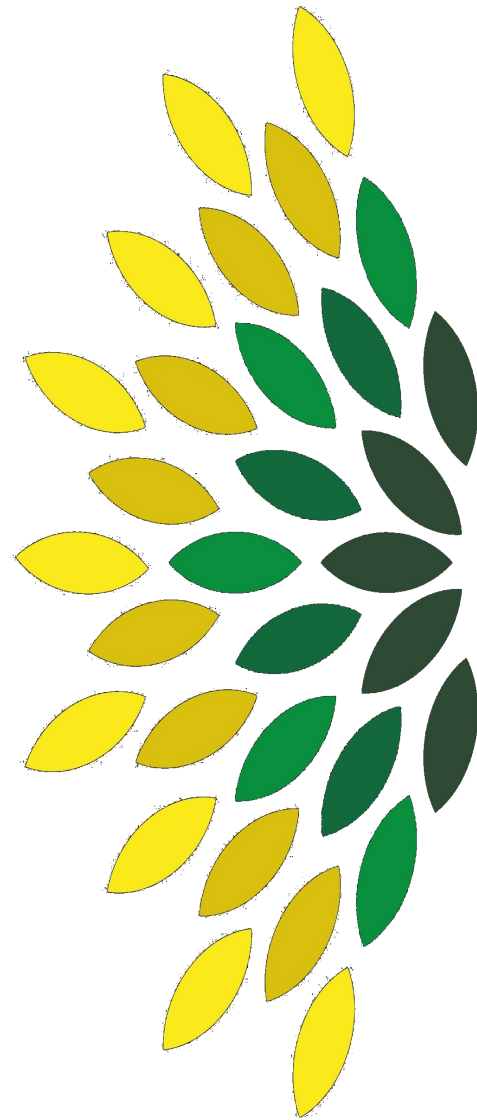


www.ishanya.xyz

The cover is designed by our dear student Shreyas A. P. enrolled in Spruha as part of graphic designing training.

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ISHANYA INDIA FOUNDATION

ISHANYA, which means “North-East”, the direction which symbolically represents Education, Knowledge and Prosperity is a Centre for Individuals with Special Needs.

Ishanya caters to the needs of individuals with difficulties such as: Autism Spectrum Disorder, Asperger’s Syndrome, Learning Disability, Down syndrome, and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.



VISION

To assist and empower individuals with special needs to unlock their abilities and to spread the message of inclusion.

MISSION

Ishanya aims to provide quality services to individuals with special needs and their families by:

- Providing an environment which encourages each individual’s learning
- Focusing not just on academics but also on social and emotional development of each individual

To promote inclusion by:

- Creating new opportunities, providing freedom of choice & experiences to live a life of equality & independence
- Creating awareness, identifying the support system required for an inclusive society.

2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS



Launched
SATTVA Program



Launched
SAMVAD Program



Terrace Gardening-
Collaboration
with My Dream Garden



Bhajan classes by our
student - Karthik



Visit to
Bengaluru International
Airport in collaboration
with Anuprayaas to mark
International day of PwD
2019



Sunday Sip - The Art Affair



2019-20 HIGHLIGHTS

Technology Intervention and Livelihood opportunities -Talk at Vimarsha Charitable Trust, on International day of PwD 2019

Completed first round of field visit to Udupi District for Samarthyaa - A Capacity Building Program for members of DNA

Executed various projects – handmade products, greeting cards, visiting cards

Participated in WeCare Internship mentoring and Vihaan CSR meet at SVKM's Narsee Monjee Institute of Management Studies

Participated in Youth for Seva, NGO Partners' Meet

Participated in Mission 1000 of Enable India



WHAT WE DO



SPRUHA- A SKILL DEVELOPMENT TRANSITION PROGRAM

Our second year into our flagship program saw many new projects, which led our students to acquire new skills. Not only did they learn how to make soaps, candles and lampshades but also how to put up a stall, bargain with clients and pack and sell them. This enhanced their communication and socio-behavioral skills and made them feel confident and independent.

During the visit to Srimath Yoga, our students performed yoga asanas and deep breathing, interacted and played games with students from Govt. Higher Primary School, Arjunabettahalli; at Bengaluru International Airport they learnt about airplane travel and the protocol to be followed at airports; and enjoyed looking at various handmade products made by artisans at the Ragigudda Fair. Starting a terrace garden made them understand the responsibility they have towards the upkeep of the plants, importance of a clean and green environment and how teamwork helps.

Meticulous training, focusing on short and long term goals and regular practise during vocational skill training over the past year has made our students assertive, attentive, goal oriented and responsible. They are now ready for sheltered employment and will work on in house projects, in collaboration with other organizations.

They will receive a platform to apply the skills they have acquired in the past 2 years.



WHAT WE DO

SIDDHI— REMEDIAL INTERVENTION PROGRAM

We completed 58 IEPs for children from age 3 to 25. Currently, we have 38 students who are enrolled in our remedial program.

This year, our Special educators introduced group play sessions for enhancing communication skills and socialization; used art based therapy to work with children with emotional and developmental disabilities; PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) and Avaz app to improve expression and verbal communication and also introduced web mail and how to manage their own email accounts.

As every child is different, our educators use different approaches and strategies to work with them. Tailor made IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) are designed to attain certain goals. Use of various prompts, positive reinforcers, cue cards, activities (puzzles, videos etc.) and comprehensive worksheets helps to achieve these goals. Quarterly meetings with the parents for progress and updates are held to ensure improvement.



SHAALE— NIOS COACHING PROGRAM

This year, we added more students to secondary and senior secondary tutoring programs. We offer Data Entry Operations, Psychology, Painting, Home science, Business Studies, English & Geography. Teachers make lesson adaptations to condense the content so as to make it easier to learn.

This year was focused on using various innovative strategies and using assistive technology like text to speech, screen sharing, adaptive keyboard and mouse for a better learning experience.

Students were given weekly tests, oral revisions, practicals, regular practice assignments to prep them for the exams. These strategies were found to improve their retention and helped them pass exams with distinction.



WHAT WE DO

SUTANTRA- DIGITAL LITERACY PROGRAM

In the year 2019-20, students were independent in performing basic operations and using office softwares like word processing and spread sheets.

Various strategies like Videos with Same Language Subtitling, Online Quiz, Gaming, Accessible font, Screen reading software were adopted during the session to teach various concepts and application of Computers.

The focus was also to make the class more accessible and inclusive for individuals with different needs.



SUNDAY SIP

The Art Affair

This year we had a wonderful workshop on the Art Affair, conducted by one of our parents who is an expressive arts facilitator. This interactive session was an insight into the world of colors which has the power to help express one's self; explore the emotions which one finds challenging to handle, and finding simple harmony within oneself. The session involved the exploration and understanding of the field of Arts Based Therapy.



WHAT WE DO



SATTVA—A FOUNDATIONAL SKILLS INTERVENTION PROGRAM

An intervention program that was launched this year, designed for children aged 11 to 14 that looks beyond the conventional idea of academics. The program is a bridge between academics and functional skills with more focus on developing soft skills for transition to adulthood.

The main skill areas covered are - communication, functional, computers, cognitive, socio-behavioral, fitness, general awareness and leisure skills. This group program acts as a stepping-stone for the student to progress to SPRUHA, a skill development program.

This year our students celebrated festivals like Ganesh Chaturthi - by making clay Ganesha, Dussehra - by arranging dolls, Christmas - by decorating the Christmas tree and giving gifts to each other.

Students participated in gardening & cooking without fire activities as part of functional life skills training. For leisure hour, the students took part in art and craft and animal assisted activities.

These activities not only enhanced socio-behavioral skills but also helped develop friendships between the students and improved communication.



WHAT WE DO

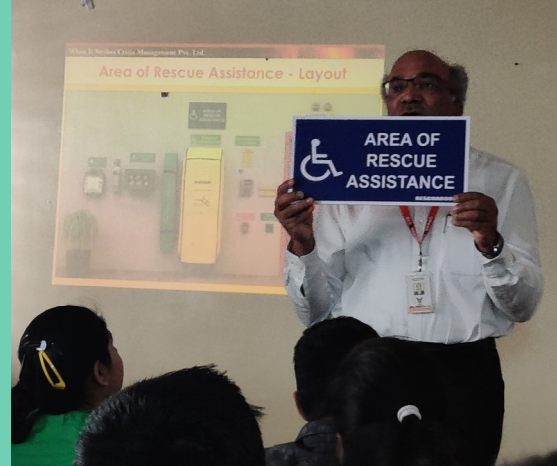


Animal Assisted Activity (AAA)

Cleo, our four-legged friend is a much loved member of Ishanya. During this activity, our students learn how to interact, train, walk and groom pets. This helps to develop visuo-motor, fine motor, communication and cognitive skills. Cleo's gentle nature helps students to decrease their social anxiety, feel relief and happiness during every interaction.



WHAT WE DO



SAMVAD

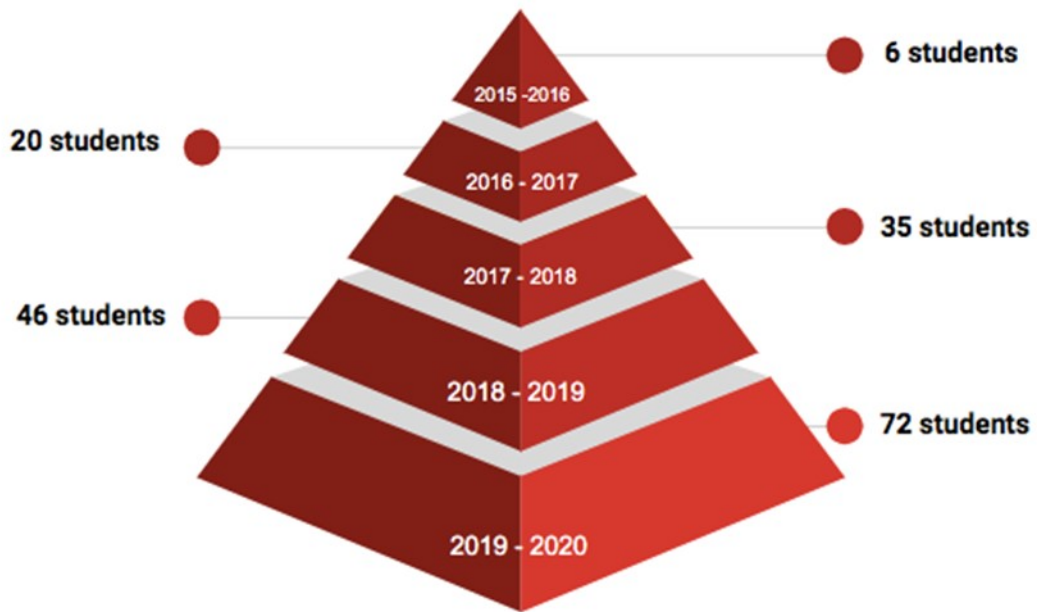
Samvad began as an opportunity for our students to experience and interact with people from various walks of life. We brought together distinguished professionals from their respective fields and the following interactive sessions were organized:

- ◇ Wilderness trail – A photo exhibition and discourse on wildlife of Coorg by Arjun Shandilya, Promoter of Forest Conservation and Ecology
- ◇ The Role of police in Society by Prabhuswamy Madappa, Retd. ACP
- ◇ Off-roading in a bike – A travel diary from the Himalayas by Sharath Vishnu, Trekker and Cyclist
- ◇ Essentials of baking – A hands on session by Meghana Mahesh
- ◇ Fire safety – A practical guide by Jayasheel Adappa, Usha Armour Pvt. Ltd.
- ◇ Movements Ensemble – Bharatanatyam – A way of life, a way of expression by Medha Dixit Vellal, Svasti Art Foundation

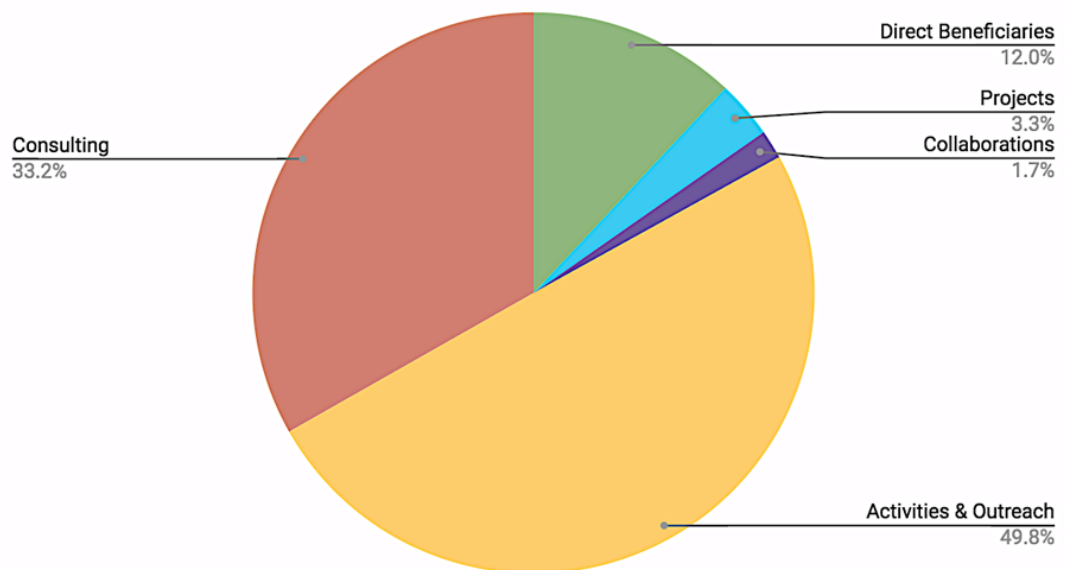


IMPACT

In one year Ishanya helped 72 students achieve their goals

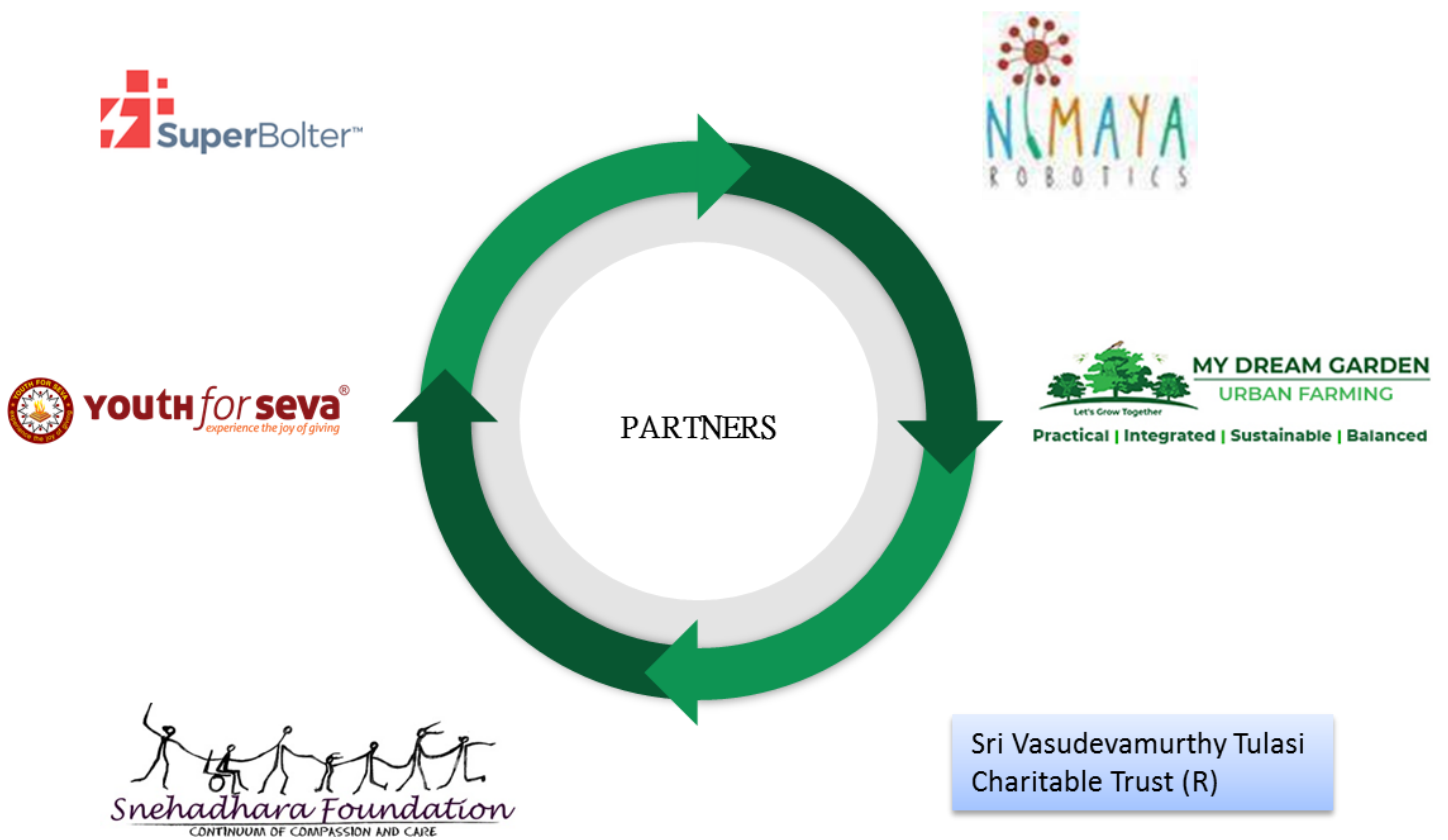


2019-20



PARTNERSHIPS

We have partnered with various start ups and organizations to give our students varied experiences of projects and initiatives.



PARTNERSHIPS

Snehadhara Foundation

Our rationale of inclusion has enabled us to join hands with an organization whose one of the primary goal is Education for inclusion.

This has equipped us to collaborate and develop a course on Assistive Technology with the long-term purpose of building vocational skills.

The children are working on their communication skills using various technology related interventions such as computers, apps, video modelling and other hand-held devices.

Sri Vasudevamurthy Tulasi Charitable Trust (SVTCT)

During vocation skills training, our students work on data entry for applications received from SVTCT. Regular practise, supervision and rechecking has improved our students' performance at data entry. They can finish up to 10 forms every hour as their typing speed per minute has increased.

They are able to compare the data with source and check for incorrect and invalid entries independently.

This collaboration has provided them a window into the world of data entry.

Nimaya Robotics Pvt. Ltd.

Nimaya Robotics partnered with Ishanya India Foundation to provide ground-breaking innovation in the field of training for autism, through the use of robotic devices.

The devices have proven to accelerate the acquisition of psychomotor skills.



PARTNERSHIPS

Superbolter

Data annotation 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. We will work with more such institutions to make such youth self-reliant.”- Arvind Prakash Singh, Founder & CEO

My Dream Garden

My Dream Garden is an organization that promotes environmentally-friendly natural and chemical free vegetables; they create awareness about organic terrace gardening so as to decrease hazardous chemical effects on the environment.

This initiative began to showcase simple ways of gardening that can be incorporated by children, even at home.

We now have a blooming terrace garden with basil, celery, lettuce, spinach, tomatoes, radish, parsley, amaranthus, methi, dil and many more veggies.

Youth for Seva (YFS)

We have partnered with YFS which is a nation-wide volunteering movement that inspires youth to volunteer, and provides them with meaningful opportunities to serve the community. We had an active engagement of interns through YFS who helped in building resources and assisting educators during the sessions.



RECOGNITION

Distinguished Teacher Award– Rotary Bangalore Downtown was awarded to Mr. Anoop Simha for his inspirational guidance and commitment to work with individuals with special needs.



Extraordinary Teacher - IRC– 13th Annual Kalangana was awarded to Mrs. Aquilla Nancy for her dedication, hard work and phenomenal teaching skills.



SUCCESS STORIES

Our 14 year old NIOS student from the first batch has been preparing for his examinations since the past year. Due to a specific learning disability he finds it difficult to spell and his handwriting is almost illegible. He also had exam anxiety and thinking about exams led to sweaty palms, forgetfulness and hyperventilation. His teachers worked on phonics, reading, spellings and lesson adaptations using various online resources and hands on too. This led to a rapid improvement in his grammar, spellings and the quality of his answers. He was also taught relaxation techniques and visualization, which when practised over time made him calmer. He was more confident and not scared of the exams anymore. He passed both his examinations with flying colors. He is now working towards taking the remaining exams so he can move to senior secondary. He has made us very proud!

A 7 year old boy came to us with difficulties in sitting tolerance, toilet training and minimum attention span. When his remedial sessions began, he was unable to sit in a place or pay attention to the educator for less than a minute. Over regular sessions at Ishanya and reiteration and a lot of practice at home, he has shown improvement in completing a task, improved his understanding of play and also has stopped the use of diapers as he can indicate that he needs to use the toilet by going near the toilet. Firstly, putting him on a toilet schedule, using training cues and gradually making him independent led to this improvement



SUCCESS STORIES

Spruha program's 21 and 23-year-old individuals were able to sell products almost independently at the Christmas stall that was set up in Ishanya. They were able to explain how they made the product, its use, and introduce themselves to clients and have small talk. They were successfully able to use skills taught in communication, socio-behaviour and functional class.

When this 6 year old girl first arrived in Ishanya, she had difficulties in gross motor activities such as walking, and in visuo-motor coordination. She had a short span of attention and concentration, and was unable to make and maintain eye contact with peers and adults. However, after continuing sessions at Ishanya, she is now able to look and walk, and climb stairs. She has significantly improved visuo-motor coordination. She is able to make and maintain eye contact. She has an improved span of attention, as she is able to attend to tasks given to her; she looks at materials arranged in front of her, pictures shown to her and objects kept in front of her. She exhibits an improved sitting tolerance as well, and is able to understand concepts of work and play times. The use of reinforcement has helped her understand this concept. The use of various levels of prompts and the fading of prompts has helped her achieve these steps of independence and success in attending to tasks.



TEAM

We are growing!

We added 9 new team members and provided internship opportunities to 30+ students. Our team's varied backgrounds and experience made way to a holistic teaching approach and better assimilation of information.

Each educator made a conscientious attempt to use an eclectic approach, focusing more on the strengths of each student. They used flashcards, videos, flowcharts, assistive apps for communication and many other teaching aids tailored to their students' needs and worked persistently to see that every student achieves his/her goals. Individualized education plans, elaborate home programs for the parents, homework assignments and tailor made worksheets were designed to enhance the learning experience. Our educators left no stone unturned to see that their students excel and it is this passion and hard work that makes them an integral part of Ishanya.



TESTIMONIALS

“When I joined Ishanya I was told that they tend to use tech based teaching methodology across age groups. I was taken by surprise because I was used to the conventional teaching methodology especially with the younger group. Initially I hesitated, but to my surprise the younger children adapted better to this methodology than expected. While the children who did show difficulty in basic skill as pointing, they could very well use the swipe gesture. The presence of the screen in front of them and voice commands given by the tab or computer could easily draw their attention towards the task. What I also observed was that for children with poor expressive communication, simple typing practice or mailing could bring out the best in them. Simple formatting in text such as text annotation, change in font style and size, text to speech etc. made a lot of difference in the way our children perceived and learnt. What I also found very interesting was the use of Excel spreadsheet; students understood concepts such as sentence building better when presented in a grid format. Ishanya has given me the space and opportunity to always introduce innovative teaching approaches with the students and I am grateful.”

- Team member

“Please accept our sincere thanks and deep gratitude for all that you are doing for our children during these testing and troubled times. We are immensely grateful to you and your team for your innovative thinking and coming up with real time solutions to keep their classes going. It is inspiring for us also to be a part of the classes and work with them after the sessions. Wishing each and every member of your team to keep up the good work and each one deserves lots of credit.”

- Parent during the Covid 19 Lockdown



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Ishanya entered the fifth year gazing at the stars and feet firmly on the ground. We started with a few but now we are many not only in numbers but also in talent, creativity, programs, services, and collaborations.

Steve Jobs in one of the interviews mentions how the best creations in the world have happened when people from different fields come together and connect. 2019 saw the best teamwork at Ishanya! We had a great inflow of interns, volunteers from various fields coming together, working with the students, and bringing in fresh ideas to implement. Two of our educators were awarded by the Rotary Club and at the IRC Annual Kalaangana festival.

The launch of our 4 new programs Sattva, Samvad, Terrace Gardening, and Bhajan Classes saw great success. The students had the opportunity to learn from various professionals, engage in various academic and extra-curricular activities. It was not only a great learning year for the students but also for the educators. They learnt to try different methods of teaching, they tried to adapt and innovate. What was impressive was that the educators never gave up and despite some challenges, they had the ability to laugh at themselves. They modelled humility and showed how it is perfectly okay for them to have limitations and they did not let the challenges stop them from doing their best in every session.

This year also saw our older students learning to advocate for themselves. They learnt to identify their strengths and use them on various occasions. They helped younger students, they took responsibility for various activities and showed that despite all the difficulties, it is possible to learn, to grow, and most importantly to be happy.

2019 taught us that a perfect system to teach our students does not exist, each day can be different, a particular program cannot cater to all their needs but when I look back, I am in awe of what we achieved. We fought over prioritizing goals in the individualized education plans, had sleepless nights looking for various strategies, came up with small initiatives to be tried in various sessions, and endlessly advocated for the students and their families.

In terms of the way forward, we are looking at evolving all our programs to create a more holistic intervention that looks at not just academics but life skills training, employment, and post-employment support.

As part of our collaboration with Disabilities NGOs Alliance (DNA), we launched Samarthya, a capacity building program for caregivers/special educators/mentors to train individuals with developmental disabilities on methods of identification, assessment, teaching strategies, and adult livelihood training by conducting programs focusing on practical learning tailor-made for their needs and set-up. The aim of this program is also to provide on-going support and follow up to ensure continuous support to everyone part of the training program. We have begun the groundwork with 4 schools in the Udupi district where the teachers from these schools will be under-going this training program to equip themselves with better skills

We have new programs in the pipeline and we progress to the new year with renewed hope and enthusiasm.

- Mrs. **Swathi Vellal Raghunandan**
Founder Director



UPCOMING PROGRAMS

SAMARTHYA – A Capacity Building Initiative



SAMETI - A Pre-Academic Skills Program





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SERVICES WE OFFER

We design: Posters, Invites, Logos, Visiting cards, Brochures, Flyers, Websites

We also make hand-made products

COLLABORATE WITH US

We at Ishanya believe in joining hands with 'like-minded' people/organizations in our journey for an inclusive society. Reach out to us for a collaboration!

CONTACT DETAILS

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<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1bQFruy88Y8DrgXt4oq3og>



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LEGAL STATUS

Karnataka Trust Registration Act:

Reg No. JAY-4-01301-2017-18; Date of Establishment: 08/03/2018

Registered under section 12AA of the Income-tax Act, 1961

Registration No: CIT(EXEMPTION S) BANGALORE/12 AA/201920/A/10921

DIN & Order No: ITBA/EXM/S/12

AA/201920/1026777602(1)

Exemption under section 80G(5)(vi) of the Income Tax Act, 1961

Approval No: CIT(EXEMPTION S) BANGALORE/80 G/201920/A/10243

DIN & Order No: ITBA/EXM/S/80G/2019-20/1026777752(1)