



MAHARASHTRA
DYSLEXIA
ASSOCIATION



ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020

Art by: Daisy Mhatre, 19 years



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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The reporting year 2019-20 has been an exciting one, marked with nascent projects beginning to fulfil their promise. Our In-service Training programme saw a boost with Special Educators, Remedial Teachers, and a Clinical Psychologist joining the teams at MDA and Nair Hospital's Vivekanand Learning Centre, while we continued with a full calendar of workshops and events. Two schools 'graduated' from our training programme in structured reading instruction in the regular classroom, and our very own Masarrat Khan, who has designed and customized this programme, received some well-deserved recognition for this pioneering work, being invited to international conferences in Perth and Singapore to present papers on various aspects of the programme.

On the policy front, the RPWD Act 2016 continues to drive a slew of directives and government resolutions from the State Education Department, though serious issues regarding benchmark norms and implementation persist. Strides continue to be made in developing tools for screening and assessment with the government as well as private agencies working on creating new tools or upgrading existing ones. India is still a long way from developing its paradigm for understanding, defining, and dealing with learning challenges in children of all ages, but it is encouraging to see the first few baby steps being taken.

The pandemic at the end of the year under review has failed to dampen the "Can Do" spirit of Team MDA. Despite the very real challenge of limited resources and taking a voluntary cut in salaries, our team was online even as the lockdown came into force, reconnecting with students, parents and other stakeholders, offering free consultation and counselling online, and honing their skills to convert upcoming training programmes to a new virtual platform.

Their dedication to giving the best of themselves and their skills to our students and our organization goes far beyond the call of duty, and we are proud to have each one of them on our team. God bless them all!

Kate Currawalla



We take this opportunity to convey our appreciation to all our Committee Members who take time out of their busy schedules to provide valuable inputs that help propel MDA further ahead. This Committee is made up of dedicated Association Members who have charted the growth of the organization and facilitated the myriad activities and services MDA provides in the community.

Ms. Kate Currawalla - President
Ms. Jyoti Row Kavi - Hon. Secretary
Mr. Cyrus Shroff - Hon. Treasurer
Ms. Meena Mody
Dr. Indula Panchal
Ms. Priyamvada Merchant
Ms. Arlene Karanjia

MEET THE TEAM

The fuel to our fire, this talented and committed group of psychologists, special educators, remedial teachers, and administrative staff is responsible for keeping our vision alive by contributing tirelessly to our journey day-after-day. Thank you for your continued commitment.

- Ms. Masarrat Khan, Certified Academic Language Therapist, Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist, Rehabilitation Psychologist. - CEO
- Ms. Divya Balgi, Administrator
- Ms. Ashwini Nair, Consultant - Brand Communication
- Ms. Manek Chitalwala, Special Educator, Dyslexia Therapist, Certified Academic Language Therapist
- Ms. Fatima Martins, Special Educator
- Ms. Susan George, Special Educator
- Ms. Deesha Pandya, Rehabilitation Psychologist
- Ms. Diya Basu, Psychologist
- Ms. Kaschit Mishra, Psychologist

- Ms. Priyanka Pandit, Psychologist
- Ms. Sonal Ashok Barve, Psychologist
- Ms. Sai Gharpure, Psychologist
- Ms. Deepti Makhija, Remedial Teacher, and FIE Facilitator
- Ms. Jumana Shipchandler, Psychologist
- Ms. Lucy Martins, Psychologist and Special Educator
- Ms. Pervin Dudhmal, Volunteer - Administration, and Accounts
- Ms. Sushma More, Accounts and Admin
- Mr. Manjeet Valmiki, Office Assistant
- Mr. Balkrishna More, Office Assistant

Welcoming: Labanya Ghosh, Shilpa Vyaas, Nimisha Vora as Trainee Remedial Teachers - June 2019, & Priyamvada Kotnis as Trainee Psychologist - July 2019
Bidding Goodbye: Ms. Fatima Martins.

Interns during the year: Ms. Anoma Shetty, pursuing a degree in Psychology and Health Studies at the University of Toronto joined as an intern for 2 months in July and August. Mr. Devashish Kadam and Ms. Ritu Sharma from ITM Center for Social Initiatives, ITM Business School, Kharghar, interned at MDA from 18 November to 4 December 2019. Ms. Poonam, Ms. Sabilla, and Ms. Aparna, students from the B.Ed. Learning Disability Course at Hashu Advani College of Special Education, Chembur were placed at the MDA Deonar Centre and also contributed by helping out at the Summer Camp activities. Mr. Daivik Chawla from Grade 11 at Dhirubhai Ambani International School also interned at MDA in July 2019.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS

Individual Members: 227

Institutional Members: 124



The year April 2019-March 2020 saw our Centres reach out to approximately 300 children and parents in direct, one-to-one services comprising remedial, assessment, counselling and consultation. The in-house assessments at various schools in Mumbai & Pune also touched around 600 students. We were able to impart training on various remedial programmes including Multisensory Math programs to approximately 280 teachers in schools, at our centres and on-site at their own organizations. Through our continuous awareness programmes and the World Dyslexia Awareness Week as well as our flagship National Conclave on SLD, we could reach out to around 50000 stakeholders through direct workshops, social media marketing, and outreach activities. We share below details of the various activities carried out throughout the year for our students, parents, professional, and stakeholders.

ACTIVITIES AT MDA

- ASSESSMENTS FOR STATE BOARDS, ICSE,IGCSE ,INTERNATIONAL BOARDS AND UNIVERSITIES.
- AUTHORISED TO CERTIFY FOR ENTRANCE EXAMS OF IIT JEE, IIT MAINS, NIFT, NID.
- FAMILY SERVICES - COUNSELLING AND INTERVENTION
- LIBRARY FOR GENERAL PUBLIC
- FREE WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS
- PROFESSIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND WORKSHOPS
- SUPPORT SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS
- INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES
- ADVOCACY AND RESEARCH

OTHER ANNUAL PROGRAMMES

- PRATHAM - ONE DAY ONE STORY
- SUMMER CAMP
- ART AND DRAMA
- FELICITATION OF STUDENTS
- WORLD DYSLEXIA AWARENESS WEEK
- NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES.

Presence: Mumbai (Deonar, Vile Parle & Dadar), Dombivali, Goa and Surat

SUMMER CAMP 2019

The theme for 2019's Summer Camp explored **WORLD EARTH DAY - OUR CARBON FOOTPRINT & PROTECTING SPECIES** at our Deonar centre and **COMMUNICATION SKILLS: BUILDING SELF ESTEEM AND CONFIDENCE** at the Dadar centre. The children learned the importance of saving the Earth by reducing our carbon footprint through videos and documentaries and a quiz, planting a tree sapling in a tender coconut shell to proudly carry back home, and discussed how they could individually reduce their own impact on the environment.

Communication is fundamental to children's development empowering children to express themselves, exchange ideas and build satisfying relationships. Students explored the concept of verbal and nonverbal



communication through role play, body language, voice modulation, gestures, posture, head movements, facial expressions, eye contact and movement through action songs, videos and activities.

This year's Field Trip focused on an 'Acting Workshop' conducted by Mr. Manoj Singh, who taught students speech exercises, voice modulation, and intonation exercises, which boosted their confidence. Art and Craft activities at MDA are designed to promote the motor, social, and cognitive development of students. From helping the students socialize and express themselves, to helping them develop other skills and

Think more critically, Arts and Craft have numerous benefits. We are very grateful to our Committee Member Mrs Meena Mody for facilitating all of this while teaching the students to make utilitarian articles to carry home along with their folder. Mrs Mody has become the most beloved visitor at our Centres.

ONE DAY, ONE STORY

Every year, in September, we celebrate International Literacy Day by collaborating with Pratham Books' Champions on the 'One Day, One Story' Campaign. This year, the story '**GAPPU CAN'T DANCE**' was read to students at our Centres in Dadar and Deonar. Conducted by Ms. Susan George,



Ms. Priyamvada Kotnis, Ms. Fatima Martins, Ms. Priyanka Pandit, and Ms. Manek Chitalwala, the creative delivery of the story using narration and drama had the students totally engaged. They could easily relate to the story's inclusive message of integrating all children in the class irrespective of their talents or shortcomings.

CHRISTMAS AT MDA

MDA celebrated Christmas, the Festival of Love, Joy & Peace with fun activities and games at our Deonar and Dadar Centres over two days of sharing, caring & giving. The students reflected on all they were especially grateful for in the year gone by. There were interesting contributions from children being thankful for their family, for good health, for a wonderful school and some were very touching as well - being allowed to join cricket coaching, being allowed to have a fish tank at home, being allowed to attend a best friend's birthday party and lots more. The celebrations ended with the much-awaited Christmas Party with games, snacks prepared and decorated by the children, and exchanging Christmas gifts amongst themselves. Ms Susan George, Ms Deepti Makhija, Ms Labanya Ghosh, Ms Nimisha Vora, Ms Priyamvada Kotnis and Ms Manek Chitalwala arranged these events at the two Centres.



CAREER COUNSELING



Some of the older children were taken around the JCTS Technical School, where the professors explained to them the courses in carpentry, automobile mechanics, electricals, and others. They understood what a vocational course entails and the possible career graphs if they opt for different streams. They were also explained the various other career options in industry today and how they need to plan for their career at an early age. Ms Fatima Martins coordinated this with Father John of JCTS, and we thanks JCTS and its staff for a morning well-spent.

FELICITATION CEREMONY

Our Annual Felicitation celebrated the perseverance, hard work, grit and determination of our students with great pride. Our regular donor and well-wisher Mr. Vijay Rajpurohit, Managing Director, CPP Piping Ltd., and his wife Mrs. Archana Rajpurohit were kind enough to grace this occasion as special guests. Since the last few years, Mr. Rajpurohit has been supporting MDA through his Marathon Donations and CSR funds. Every staff member shared the spotlight with their respective students to felicitate them for significant achievements. Their bonds and camaraderie were evident in the stories shared by students as well as parents. For many parents, the felicitation was an emotional event that proved that their children can achieve anything they set out to, as long as they work diligently. For parents of current students, this event is inspirational, motivating them to keep the faith and look beyond test scores to recognize the hidden potential in their child. The children were felicitated with trophies and prizes for their successes in exams and National level drawing competitions. The occasion was graced by over 65 parents, apart from all MDA staff, some committee members, and students with their siblings.



We proudly list our winners and achievers of 2019 below:

Yash Sakat	XII (Commerce) 51%
Kushal Reddy	SSC X 63%
Nimisha Tilekar	XII (Commerce) 90%
Anushka Gopal	ICSE X 91%
Rishi Gala	ICSE X 92.03%
Ishita Mapra	ICSE X 92%
Farheen Siddiqui	ICSE X 81.6%
Iraadat Khan	X 76.6%
Ayaan Dalvi	SSC X 75%
Huafrid Bilimoria	Masters in Disability Action and Studies, TISS, Mumbai
Simran Jaisingani	Secured admission at Berklee College of Music, Boston
Smit Dalvi	ICSE X 82.3%



The creative arts have been credited as an excellent medium for students with Dyslexia to express themselves, explore their ideas, and push boundaries. Hence, our constant endeavor at MDA is to significantly use this medium to provide avenues for students to explore their creativity. This focus has benefitted many of our students to discover their hidden talents, with many even embracing the arts as a profession.

ALL INDIA SKETCHING COMPETITION

As part of their initiative to provide an opportunity for young artists with learning disabilities to express their artistic and creative skill, Bhavani Child Development Center, Jaipur, held their annual event - National Artwork Competition 2019. In the latest edition of the competition, four of our students participated by creating artworks on the theme “INDIA OF MY DREAMS ”. We beam with pride as we share that all four students who participated won prizes for their incredible creations. The level of talent and skill displayed by our students keeps improving year on year. The winners of Bhavani CDC competition:

Being recognized and rewarded on a national platform such as this is very encouraging for students with a learning disability, motivating them to improve their creative ability while adding to their confidence.

VERY SPECIAL ARTS INDIA

A non-profit organization that works with underprivileged youth and those with disabilities through the arts, Very Special Arts India (VSAI) holds its Annual National Art Competition to encourage differently-abled students to explore their talents in visual arts and crafts. Participating in the Twenty-Sixth Edition of this competition held in March 2019, seven of our students created original artwork from among a range of themes like Festivals of India, Seasons, Animals/Birds in Folk Art, Paintings in Abstract Form, and Indian/Western Mythology. We are happy to announce that 2 of our children won prizes



Bhoomika Gunjalkar	Artwork of Excellence - Rs. 1000
Neel Gualti	Artwork of Merit - Rs. 800
Vidhi Jain	Consolation Prize - Rs. 600
Affan Padvekar	Consolation Prize - Rs. 500



Ronak Shinde	1st Prize - Rs. 1000
Kushal Reddy	2nd Prize - Rs. 500

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE CYBER

At the 9th Annual CREATE Trophy for Artistic Excellence held every year by Raell Padamsee's CREATE Foundation, our students presented a play on this year's theme exploring the overindulgence in technology with a message to strike a balance between using gadgets and spending quality time with loved ones. The competition encouraged students to act, sing, dance or present a mime on the theme of the year. Each presentation was allotted three minutes, with six children participating, ranging in ages from 8 to 18 years. Numerous NGOs auditioned for the final competition, of which five from the Differently Abled category and four from the Abled category were selected to perform on the final day. We are proud to share that the skit performed by our students won the TROPHY FOR ARTISTIC EXCELLENCE in the Differently Abled Category. We would like to thank Ms. Raell Padamsee for creating this platform along with Chief Guest Mr. Gerson da Cunha and Judges Ms. Sabira Merchant, Ms. Reena Wadhwa, and Mr. Jim Sarbh for encouraging our students



ATMA

March 2019 saw the culmination of the project partnership in Atma's NGO Accelerator Programme, with the "Accelerator Graduation Ceremony" being attended by Ms. Masarrat Khan, Ms. Divya Balgi, Ms. Diya Basu & Ms. Kaschit Mishra. Atma's dedicated and professional approach to our requirements was outstanding, resulting in the development of the Employee Handbook, Appraisal Forms, Website Redesigning, Pitch Deck & Fundraising Proposal, and M&E Systems that MDA wanted in place for a very long time. Atma's excellent team of consultants and volunteers contributed extensively with their skill sets and competencies for these projects to our great satisfaction



TEACHERS' DAY CELEBRATION



Every year the team looks forward to celebrating each other's contribution to these special kids over a delicious lunch on Teachers' Day. This year was especially memorable with the team enjoying special lunch ordered in and the team playing SECRET SANTA with the exchange of gifts with super excitement and fun. The team also received special Gift Vouchers from Amazon.

LANDMARK SCHOOL AND INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR TEACHING STUDENTS WITH DYSLEXIA

On 19th February, Ms. Sophie Wilson Ed.M., Science Department Head, Landmark Elementary Middle School, USA, shared Landmark's Six Teaching Principles, Language-Based Instructional Strategies for Teaching Content, Use of Graphic Organizers and Study Skills for Content Incorporation of hands-on or demonstrated guided inquiry activities with our team at MDA. It was a very informative presentation for our staff, who are always eager to learn about teaching techniques and methods used elsewhere and will be incorporating what they have learned into their remedial toolkits. The Landmark Outreach team also gifted us excellent books and resources, which will make additions to our little reference library for parents and the general public.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Masarrat Khan attended a Research Seminar on Qualitative Research – Organized by Department of Special Education, SNDT University, Juhu from 29 September to 1 October. The 3-day Workshop was conducted by Professor Richard Rose and Dr Johnson Jament, University of Northampton, UK. Ms Masarrat Khan also attended a workshop on Understanding Mindfulness and its applications in Clinical Practice for various disorders and for Self - Experiential Learning, organized by Dr. Rajendra Barve at The Leslie Sawhny Training Centre, Nashik, on 4th & 5th January 2020.
- Our Administrator, Ms Divya Balgi, attended a webinar organised by Atma on “GST and its Implications for NGOs”, by Taxation expert, Mr Sunil Goel.
- Ms. Masarrat Khan of MDA was awarded Certification as a 'Structured Literacy Dyslexia Specialist' after successfully meeting the requirements set forth by the Center for Effective Reading Instruction (CERI) in April 2019. We are so proud of our CEO!
- The 4 new trainees who joined MDA during the year to attend the workshops and training programs provided by the organisation and were offered at subsidised rates as part of their in-house training requirements.



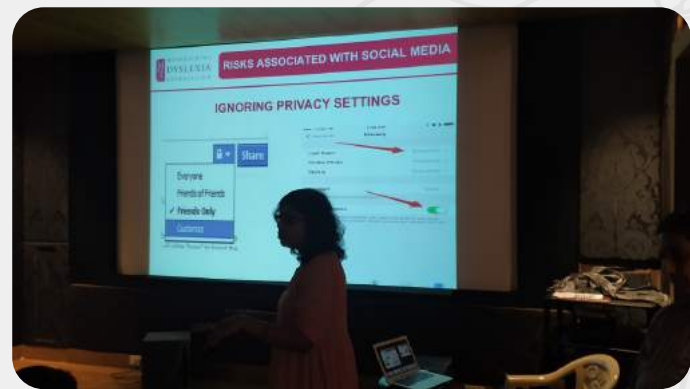
Balancing the pressures of academics while maintaining a positive environment at home poses multiple challenges for parents, who require support and guidance in understanding this complex condition, handling the challenges faced by their child, and advocating for their child at school and in other difficult situations, while also recognizing how all of this impacts them individually and as a family. To ensure that parents receive this ongoing support to help their children succeed, Maharashtra Dyslexia Association conducts regular free workshops at the Deonar Centre, with Hindi and Marathi as the preferred medium of communication. The interactive format of the workshop helped participants to gain a better understanding of each concept, while the handouts equipped them with tools to act on what they have learned at home.

BUILDING DIGITAL GUARDIANS

Conducted by Mrs Sonali Patankar (President of Ahaan Foundation and Founder of Responsible Netism) & Miss Anushka Patankar, parents were taken through the guidelines for screen time and internet use, cybersecurity and cybercrime (hacking, online stalking, sexting, creating fake profiles, morphing, and bullying). Special emphasis was also put on empowering children to stand up and raise their voice against bullying, etc.



MOBILE AND TELEVISION ADDICTION

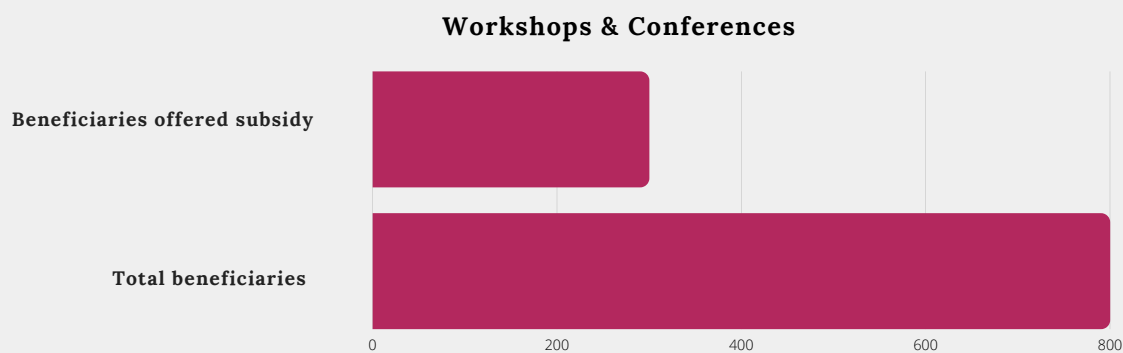


Ms. Diya Basu and Ms. Priyanka Pandit of MDA developed this workshop for parents (some accompanied by their children) on a topic that is foremost on everyone’s mind - how to control screen time. The risks associated with TV and Mobile addiction, warning signs, the influence of Social Media, spending screen time constructively, and alternatives to screens were some of the topics covered. This workshop was repeated later for the parents of “The Beaumonde Towers“,Worli, at their Club Theatre.

HOUSEHOLD CHORES & CHILDREN’S DEVELOPMENT

Ms. Sai Garpure & Ms. Sonal Barve conducted this workshop at our Deonar Centre. The benefits of household chores in terms of cognitive and social development and how to motivate kids to take age-appropriate responsibilities in the household was discussed through videos and group talks. The parents appreciated the tips and knowledge shared and left with a purposeful mind to start delegating more responsibilities to their children.





In the year 2019-20, MDA introduced 2 new programmes designed in-house for teachers and therapists, viz. Phonological Awareness and Phonics and Understanding Psycho-Educational Reports. Apart from these, the calendar consisted of our regular workshops offered every year. Over 800 professionals, B.Ed. students, parents, and students participated, altogether, in all our workshops and conferences. Fee subsidies were offered to a large number of deserving participants, in furtherance of our aim to build a well-trained and enlightened cohort within the education community.

UNDERSTANDING PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL REPORTS



Created by MDA's Senior Psychologist, Ms. Diya Basu, this workshop equips participants to distinguish between screening tools and assessment batteries, identify key areas to be assessed for the diagnosis of SLD according to the DSM 5, and comprehend the rationale behind the diagnosis and the accommodations requested. Due to the overwhelming demand, this workshop was repeated later in the year. More sessions are planned. (12th June, repeated on 27th July 2019)

PHONOLOGICAL AWARENESS & PHONICS

Introduced by MDA for the first time and designed as well as conducted by Ms. Masarrat Khan, CEO MDA, this two-day, activity-based workshop focuses on the importance of developing Phonological Awareness and knowledge of Phonics in very young students, as a firm foundation for reading. This programme is well suited for use with all students, including those with Learning Disabilities, from Nursery to Grade 4. 15th-16th June, repeated on 20th - 21st July).



TEACHING MATHS THE MULTISENSORY WAY - MODULES 1 & 2 :

This popular ongoing series (also developed at MDA) which commenced early in 2018, has become a regular part of our annual workshop calendar. Catering to professionals from the field of Special Education, this series focuses on aiding the teaching of basic mathematical concepts such as Multiplication and Division, Fractions, Decimals and Percentages. It also provides practical tips on generating materials for the teaching of basic operations through three levels of instruction, namely, Concrete, Representational, and Abstract, ensuring that students with learning challenges are taught systematically and with sufficient practice. (Module 1 - 10th - 11th August, repeated on 12th-13th October; Level 2 - 27th-28th December 2019 for participants who successfully completed the Module 1).



TEACHING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



In a one-day interactive workshop, by Dr. Sudha Srikanth, Director, Innovations and Master Trainer at EQUIPKids, shared her approach to teaching effectively, based on the awareness of oneself, labeling one's feelings, recognizing the emotion leading to that feeling, validating the existence of it, and using strategies to manage those emotions. Very informative and practical, this workshop was attended by Psychologists, Special Educators, Remedial Teachers, Mainstream School Teachers, Resource Room Teachers, Graphics Designers, Counsellors, and Parents from across the country. (14th September 2019).

STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING AND STUDY SKILLS:

These strategies, developed by the University of Kansas Centre for Research on Learning, continue to be among our most popular programmes. Being task-specific, each strategy is designed to meet precise curriculum demands and helps develop the student's ability to understand and retrieve information, and finally express it in a written format. Two workshops were conducted by authorized trainer, Mrs. Lalitha Ramanujan, at our Dadar Centre - Reading Comprehension, Visual Imagery & Cooperative Thinking Skills were covered in 2 days for teachers & parents. (2nd & 3rd November 2019).



THE FEUERSTEIN INSTRUMENTAL ENRICHMENT [FIE] PROGRAM

This intervention programme is designed to enhance the cognitive skills necessary for independent thinking. The FIE programme aims to sharpen critical thinking with the concepts, skills, strategies, and attitudes necessary for independent learning; to diagnose and correct deficiencies in thinking skills, and to help individuals "learn how to learn". Mrs. Lalitha Ramanujan, Certified ICELP Trainer, & Director Alpha to Omega, Chennai, covered the first 5 instruments in the STANDARD LEVEL 1. (4th-8th November 2019).



STUDY SKILLS - STUDY SMARTER



Created by our Senior Psychologist Ms. Diya Basu, this workshop builds Effective Study Habits in senior school students - Planning a Schedule and Goal Setting, Techniques to Enhance Concentration, Learning Effective Note Taking Skills, Introduction to three strategies for reading, reading comprehension, and effective retention of the information - KWL, SQ3R, and Mind Maps - offering hands-on training in the application of the strategies learned. Open to professionals, parents, and students from the 8th standard and above. (14th December, repeated 21st December).

DYSLEXIA THERAPIST TRAINING PROGRAMME (DTTP)

In its 12th year, our flagship programme is open to professionals in the fields of Psychology, Human Development, Child Development, Language and Education, or related fields. Preference is given to Special Educators and mainstream teachers with the desire to specialize in Dyslexia Therapy. In association with the Multisensory Language Training Institute of New Mexico, this

Dyslexia Therapists	25
Dyslexia Teachers	2
Structured Literacy/ Dyslexia Specialist & CALT	1
Certified Academic Language Therapists	4

programme has seen increased participation from professionals around the country. Therapists-in-training receive instruction in multisensory methodology using a structured language programme, Sounds In Syllables, to teach literacy skills to students with compromised language skills. On completing 700 hours of supervised, hands-on teaching, they are qualified to sit for the certification examinations held by the Academic Language Therapy Association (ALTA), USA, and the International Dyslexia Association. To date, we have trained 25 Dyslexia Therapists of whom one has gone on to become a Structured Literacy/Dyslexia Specialist and Certified Academic Language Therapist and 4 Certified Academic Language Therapists. We have 2 Dyslexia Teachers and 22 are currently under training.

WORLD DYSLEXIA AWARENESS WEEK

The second edition of the World Dyslexia Awareness Week (WDAW) at Maharashtra Dyslexia Association ran from 30th September to 6th October 2019. While the first year's theme, 'Embracing Dyslexia', focused on the fundamentals of SLD, this year it naturally evolved to showcase a deeper understanding of the subject and took on a more empowering stance with 'Limitless with Dyslexia' (limitlesswithdyslexia). Ahead of the WDAW, robust on-ground promotions by way of leaflets, posters, and a social media campaign were organized. The campaign included two brand new videos, one that gave an overview of Dyslexia, and the other on the year's theme of 'Limitless with Dyslexia', which helped raise awareness and create a buzz.



Scanning Pens, under their campaign, 'Go Red' (#goredfordyslexia), partnered with MDA. Two landmark buildings in the city, Jaslok Hospital and the BMC Headquarters lit up their façades with red lights in support of the cause. The MDA staff, too, sported elements of the colour red at all workshops and events.

During the week, the staff of MDA conducted nearly 40 free workshops in Hindi, English, and Marathi at over 27 schools and both its centres, for teachers, students and parents. Along with offering a general overview of Dyslexia, these workshops focused on tapping into the abilities of students with Dyslexia so that they can achieve their full potential.

The experience was further enhanced with a showcase of relevant clips from the film Taare Zameen Par, along with snippets from the lives of famous personalities with Dyslexia. These anecdotes especially resonated with students who participated in a poster competition on the same topic. The impact was visible when we received a staggering 3201 entries for the poster competition from schools in Mumbai, Pune and even NOIDA. On 2nd October, a free workshop was conducted for parents and professionals at our Dadar Centre, specifically to address their ever-pressing queries and



concerns on assessment, accommodations, and remediation. This year too, the WDAW coincided with the JOY OF GIVING WEEK and allowed us to engage with the DAANUTSAV platform in collaboration with IOCL. Booths were set up at the Sahakari Bhandars in Juhu, Chembur and Anushakti Nagar to hand out leaflets and engage with customers to spread awareness. Six student volunteers from the SNTD University, Churchgate (Psychology, MA part 1), and ten from Hashu Advani College of Special Education, Chembur (B.Ed Special Ed.), also participated in this campaign along with our team.

The grand finale of the WDAW was the Walk for Dyslexia on Carter Road on the evening of 6th October. Over 100 participants comprising parents, teachers, students, counsellors, psychologists, special educators, committee members, friends and family held a silent walk along the promenade dressed in red. This sea of red aroused the curiosity of those in the vicinity and had joggers and cars slow down their pace to browse the colourful posters. The walk culminated with an interpretative dance performance on this year's theme by Akshaya, a student of MDA, and her troupe, at the Carter Road Amphitheatre. The stellar performance was a perfect way to close the week and reinforced the campaign message that students with Dyslexia are truly limitless!



AWARENESS WORKSHOPS

Over the last few months, we have been able to significantly amplify our outreach for raising awareness about Dyslexia and other Specific Learning Disabilities. Psychologists and Special Educators from our team have been invited to schools across the city to endow teachers with an understanding of Dyslexia and Specific Learning Disabilities. They also shared practical information on screening for students at risk.



Awareness Workshops have been organized at aided schools supported by the Kotak Education Foundation, Nehru Science Centre, Madhavrao Kane Ashram School (Palghar District) & Shishuvan to name a few. These were also conducted at our centres in Deonar and Parel. The workshops in English, Hindi & Marathi were conducted by Ms. Diya Basu, Ms. Kaschit Mishra, Ms. Priyanka Pandit, Ms. Sai Gharpure, Ms. Sonal Barve & Ms. Priyamvada Kotnis from MDA.

Our President, Mrs. Kate Currawalla, accompanied by Senior Psychologist Ms. Diya Basu, led two full-day workshops at Lucknow on "Understanding Specific Learning Disabilities, and How to Screen the Children At-Risk" organised by Mr. Sitanshu Kumar of Shashwat Jigyasa (an NGO for specially-abled children and persons). Day 1 was for Special Educators, School Counsellors, Teachers, and Tuition Teachers and Day 2 was attended by School Heads, Administrators, Education Officers, Parents and General Public reaching approximately 150 stakeholders. These interactive workshops enable teachers to share the challenges they face while working with students with Learning Disability and offer solutions to improve teaching methods that facilitate learning. Information on the latest policy changes and government notifications on accommodations available for students who have Dyslexia or Specific Learning Disabilities equips the education community to guide such students.

Last year alone, through these workshops, we were able to reach over 400 professionals.

Impact

REACHED INDIVIDUALS	50,000*
FREE WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED	40
VOLUNTEERS MOBILISED	125
SAHAKARI BHANDAR KIOSKS SET UP	3
SCHOOLS & ORGANISATIONS COLLABORATED	37
STUDENTS SENSITISED	5,000
POSTER COMPETITION ENTRIES RECEIVED	3,201
DYSLEXIA WALK PARTICIPANTS	100+
BUILDINGS LIT RED	3
FREE CONSULTATIONS & GUIDANCE	14



LANGUAGE ARTS AT J. N. PETIT TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL, PUNE

Five years ago, we began a collaboration with J. N. Petit Technical High School to improve their Language Arts Curriculum for all the teachers of the Pre - Primary Department and English Language Teachers of the Primary Department. This included creating an appropriate curriculum for learners of English as a Second Language from the Pre-Primary years upwards. For the effective implementation of this project, we have been conducting regular training for all the teachers of the Primary department. This multisensory methodology has been formatted for classroom usage with teaching aids and workbooks designed by Ms. Masarrat Khan and Ms. Rameeza Khan, and the MDA team regularly monitors its progress. The collaboration with the J.N. Petit Technical School has provided the MDA team an excellent opportunity to apply the principles of evidence-based instruction in the teaching of literacy skills to English Language Learners. Further, we hope this will be a great incentive in developing our curriculum to teach first-generation English learners in municipal and government schools across the board. We are indebted to the Trustees of the school as well as the Management for their invaluable support.

**STRUCTURED LANGUAGE PROGRAMME AT AJMERA GLOBAL, MUMBAI**

MDA has commenced, in October 2017, a joint project with Ajmera Global in the Western suburbs of Mumbai to train their teachers in enhancing their reading instruction and support for students with Learning Challenges. Ms. Masarrat Khan and Ms. Manek Chitalwala of MDA have been training teachers to use a multisensory structured language methodology to teach reading in classrooms from the

Pre-Primary years to Grade 6 for all students. The project was to culminate in March 2020 with an assessment of students for reading and spelling skills to validate the effectiveness of the programme. This has been postponed due to the pandemic and the ensuing lockdown.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AT ST. MARY'S SCHOOL, PUNE

In its second year of consultancy, MDA launched an in-house remedial programme, to be run exclusively by teachers of the school, following training of teachers who had shown an interest in remedial teaching. According to the feedback received from the teachers trained by us, the introduction of the multisensory way of teaching the letter sounds had raised the reading and spelling level of students when compared to the previous years in this school which caters to numerous students from low-income families. The teachers could also better identify students who needed special attention, enabling them to intervene earlier one-on-one with these students. This project successfully culminated in December 2019.

SPECIAL EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION AT SHISHUVAN, MUMBAI



MDA began a remedial project with Shishuvan in August 2019 by assessing 40 Students of classes 2 to 4 screened by the school as 'at risk' for Specific Learning Disability. Of these, 27 students were shortlisted for Remedial Education, which began in September 2019. The students are grouped in threes and are receiving evidence-based multisensory language instruction thrice a week.

TRAINING FOR NIRMALA NIKETAN COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK, MUMBAI

Ms. Masarrat Khan conducted a workshop on "Psychometric Testing and Assessment" for 32 students in the final year of the Master of Social Work programme. This is part of a regular collaboration with Nirmala Niketan to equip their students with basic information about Specific Learning Disability. (1st August 2019).

MULTISENSORY MATHS AT VIDYA VALLEY SCHOOL, PUNE

On 14th & 15th September, Ms. Masarrat Khan conducted MODULE 1 of "Teaching Maths the Multisensory Way" for 17 teachers of Vidya Valley School in Pune. It is always a pleasure to collaborate with this progressive school



UDAYACHAL SCHOOLS

As a long-term consultant to the Special Needs Department at the Udayachal (Primary and Secondary) Schools, MDA has been offering guidance and advice to design, and monitor support services for students with language and academic difficulties. To ensure the consistent impact of this programme, Mrs. Kate Currawalla was on the panel interviewing potential candidates (in April 2019) for the position of Counsellor for the secondary school. Further, (in June 2019), Mrs. Currawalla reviewed the special education programme at the secondary and the primary schools with the counsellors and special educators to plan for the coming academic year.

In an experimental project started in September 2019, Ms Diya Basu and Ms Priyamvada Kotnis trained the Principal and three Special Educators of the Primary School in the use of Comprehensive Test of Phonological Processing (CTOPP-Second Edition) and the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT BLUE) to assess Reading, Spelling and Handwriting skills in young children. Subsequently, all the students of the 3rd standard were screened by a team from MDA. Four students were identified to receive intervention through the evidence-based programme, Sounds in Syllables, to help them in their reading, writing, spelling, and handwriting. Ms. Susan George & Ms. Deepti Makhija of MDA have been assigned to work with the 4 boys, visiting the school thrice-a-week for 2 hours each.

ON-SITE ASSESSMENTS

Ms. Sonal Barve, Ms. Sai Gharpure & Ms. Priyamvada Kotnis conducted on-site SLD assessments for 13 students from the 4th to 8th Grades at the Lodha School, Palava, to identify their difficulties and assist in creating a suitable intervention programme and IEP. (20th to 31st January 2020) Regular assessments for the purpose of programme development and progress monitoring were also conducted by our team of Clinical Psychologists at the **J. N. Petit School, Pune and Ajmera Group of Schools, Mumbai, Lodha World School, Palava**

TRAINING IN ORTON-GILLINGHAM BASED MULTISENSORY STRUCTURED LANGUAGE PROGRAMME: NAIR HOSPITAL

In conjunction with the Department of Psychiatry, BYL Nair Hospital, MDA continued to offer training in the Multisensory Language Remedial programme to be used with students from municipal and government-aided institutions diagnosed with SLD. Special Educators from Nair Hospital;s Vivekanand Learning Centre were inducted into the use of the multisensory structured language programme, which they are now using to teach students. Training sessions conducted by Ms. Manek Chitalwala included programme delivery, pre-test administration, scoring, and interpretation. With seven new students enrolled in the programme in addition to the twenty or so already receiving intervention, advanced training is scheduled for the coming year.

• 199 professionals trained

Impact:

TEACHERS TRAINED	STUDENTS BENEFITTED
73	1,963

PRATHAM

Two national-level organisations, Pratham and CBM India, have been working together to strengthen the education of children with disabilities in mainstream education in the States of Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Over the last couple of years, MDA CEO, Ms Masarrat Khan, has been contributing to the development, piloting and testing of an “Assessment for All” Tool: An assessment tool to measure learning outcomes of children, including children with disability. The tool will measure foundational literacy and numeracy skills and ascertain the learning levels of all children, with a special focus on children with disabilities in government and special schools, with a view to facilitating services and making it possible for migratory communities to access education for children with special needs. This tool was launched in December 2019 in Delhi.

Ms. Masarrat Khan was also part of the team set up to create Demo Teaching Methodology videos as a teaching aid for teachers and parents on the Open Basic Education (OBE) content. The need for such videos is to reach out to teachers and parents specifically catering to learners with disabilities in remote and rural areas where help and training is not available and accessible.

In February 2020, Ms. Masarrat Khan was an invitee at the Consultation on the Status of the Education of Children with Disabilities in the State of Maharashtra. This was a closed door meeting of policymakers to map out a comprehensive policy for the education of children with disabilities in Maharashtra, organised by Pratham and Yashwantrao Chavan Pratishthan, Mumbai.

TATA INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

In March 2019, Ms. Masarrat Khan contributed a paper on Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction (Inclusive Practice that Benefits All Kinds of Learners and Inclusive Curriculum) for Early Literacy Skills. This has been used by The Centre for Education Innovation and Action Research, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, in preparing a report on the status of the right to education among children with disabilities, with the support of UNESCO, New Delhi. A first of its kind, the UNESCO State of Education: Children with Disabilities Report was released on 3 July 2019. The link is below.

<https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000368780>

2019 DSF (DYSLEXIA-SPELD FOUNDATION) LANGUAGES, LITERACY & LEARNING CONFERENCE, PERTH AUSTRALIA - 4TH TO 6TH APRIL

- More than 700 delegates and 90+ speakers came together to share their interests in language, literacy, and numeracy development. Ms. Masarrat Khan & Ms. Rameeza Khan presented a joint paper on Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction on 5th April which was attended by 107 delegates.
- Ms. Masarrat Khan was invited by the Tata Trusts to be on the Committee reviewing applicants for a course on Inclusive Education at the Aatman Academy, Thane, sponsored by the Trust. Ms. Nayantara Hidayatullah, Mrs. Manjushree Patil of Aatman Academy, and Mr. T. J. Ravishankar of the SRTT were other members of the Committee.

UNITE SPLD 2019 CONFERENCE BY DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF SINGAPORE (DAS) – 27 & 28 JUNE 2019

Ms. Masarrat Khan & Ms. Rameeza Khan presented a joint paper on Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction: Inclusive Practice that Benefits All Kinds of Learners on 27th June. Ms. Masarrat Khan was invited to join as a member of the Unite SpLD 2019 conference panel, which was held on 28 June. This question and answer session was on Uplifting the Less Fortunate Learners with SpLD and the opportunities that access to the right education provide them. The other panelists were Professor Angela Fawcett from the UK, Mr. Lee Siang from DAS, Ms. Mandy Nayton from Dyslexia-SPELD Foundation, Australia, and Ms. Phyllis Munyi from Kenya Dyslexia Organisation. Ms. Geetha Shantaram from DAS was the moderator. Ms. Masarrat Khan was also invited to share MDA's Journey at the International Session on 28th June.



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Vol 6 No. 2 July 2019, has the abstract of the paper on Phonological Awareness and Phonics Instruction: Inclusive Practice that Benefits All Kinds of Learners on page 347.

ANNUAL DYSLEXIA CONFERENCE 2019, PORTLAND, USA

Mrs. Kate Currawalla attended the four-day Annual DyslexiaCon 2019 in Portland, USA, in November, which offered an ideal opportunity to listen to leading experts speak about cutting edge research in the field, discuss government policies and advocacy issues around the world with other Global Partners, and renew connections with international supporters, collaborators, and strategic partners.

- **National Institute For The Empowerment Of Persons With Intellectual Disabilities (Divyangjan) Regional Centre, Navi Mumbai CRE Programme (January 2020)**

Ms Masarrat Khan delivered a lecture on Diagnosis and Remediation of Mathematical Problems (Dyscalculia).

- Seminar on **Implementation of RPWD Act 2016** at YMCA, Mumbai Central was attended by Ms. Masarat Khan on 12th November 2019
- **Be the Change** - A Professional Conference for the Stakeholders from Education and Mental Health domain (22nd November) - Mrs. Kate Currawalla was invited to speak as a panelist on "Inclusion of learning Differences" chaired by Ms Faye D'Souza. Organized by Aditya Birla Education Trust & MPOWER.
- **National Conference on Inclusive Education, Bangalore**, 5th to 7th December 2019. Organized by Centre for Disability Studies and Action (CDSA), School of Social Work, TISS, Mumbai, Brotherhood, New Delhi, Association of People with Disability (APD), Bengaluru, National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities (NIEPMD), and Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI). Ms. Masarrat Khan & Ms. Rameeza Khan jointly presented papers on:
 - Spelling Curriculum in Primary School: Its Significance, Influence, and Benefit
 - Concrete-Representational-Abstract and Multisensory Strategies: An Inclusive Approach to Mathematics

The sessions were attended by 70 participants that included principals, lecturers, special educators, teachers, counsellors, psychologists, social workers, and research scholars. 21 papers on best practices and inclusive education were presented.

- Ms. Masarrat Khan was invited on 19 December by the **Global Inclusive Education Network (GIEN) team to be a Member of the International Executive Council (IEC)**. Considering the interest shown by participants from India, Bangladesh, UK, UAE, Africa, and few Asian countries, a three-level advisory council under GLOBAL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION NETWORK (GIEN) was formed consisting of the **International Advisory Council (IAC)**, International Executive Council (IEC), School Inclusive Education Development (SIED) Team. The purpose is to plan, manage, and implement GIEN programmes. GIEN will guide policy formulations, training, and research programmes to be spelled out by the International Advisory Council (IAC).
- **AATMAN ACADEMY**

Ms. Masarrat Khan was one of the panelists on the panel discussion on Diagnosis of SLD and Accommodations on 11 January 2020. This was exclusively for the 25 teacher trainees of the CHILD Course conducted by Aatman Academy, Thane

- **FATEMA CENTRE FOR HOLISTIC HEALTH RESEARCH AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT**

On 16th February, Ms. Masarrat Khan delivered a lecture on the topic, "Learning Disability – Early Identification", for the 30 students pursuing the 4th year of Homeopathy, as well as other faculty, as part of their Certificate Course in Neuro-developmental Disorders at the Fatema Centre for Holistic Health, Research & Child Development.

- **National Consultation on the Concluding Observation of the CRPD Committee in Kolkata, 22nd and 23rd February 2020.**

Organised by the United National Coalition for CRPD reporting, to create awareness about the final recommendations so that DPOs across the country can work with their respective stakeholders in their states/regions synchronisation of the efforts leading to a national level advocacy programme. Ms. Masarrat Khan attended and participated in the proceedings.

- **Tata Mumbai Marathon 2020**

- Mr. Paritosh Joshi has been representing MDA at the Marathon for over six years now and has been encouraging his friends and family to do so as well. This year, he was joined by Mr. Jayakumar and Mr. Vishal Shriyan in running for our cause. The amount of Rs. 55,650/- they raised during the Marathon goes towards subsidising remediation for students who cannot afford it. Thank you Paritosh!
- Dr. Mala Bhambhani also raised donations through her Half-Marathon run, raising Rs. 128,000/- for our cause. Dr. Bhambhani is a committed Marathoner, having participated in events all over the world, and we are very grateful for her consistent and enthusiastic support.

The 2nd Edition of the National Conclave on Specific Learning Disability (Dyslexia) met with an enthusiastic response with almost 250 participants attending the two-day conclave held on 8–9 Feb 2020 in Mumbai to provide a platform for sharing best practices in Inclusion and Intervention. The Conclave also offered an opportunity for professionals from the fields of education, psychology and medicine to come together to discuss government policy and implementation, especially in view of the recently passed Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act 2016.

The Keynote by Dr. Satendra Singh set the tone for the Conclave by highlighting the barriers and enablers in the implementation of the RPWD Act 2016, with a special emphasis on SLD. The Subsequent line up of speakers touched upon ongoing research into the neurological basis of dyslexia, the importance of inclusion and its impact on mental health, standardization in screening and assessment as well as evidence-based interventions, and the

need to include assistive technology to facilitate independent learning. The highlight of the Conclave was the panel discussion featuring MDA alumni that was facilitated by Mr. Kabir Bhogilal. These young adults displayed immense courage in sharing their experiences with Dyslexia with nearly 250 strangers during the session on 'Life After School'. It was extremely inspiring to hear how they overcame challenges, persevered to find their calling, and set out on the path to successful careers.

According to Mr. Prakash Mahtani, Managing Partner at ELDORA Group, "The National Conclave 2020 was a real eye-opener to the excellent work MDA is doing across the country. I strongly feel we need to build a community for self-help considering that most of the children with such difficulties are, in many ways, being ignored and even isolated by the mainstream education system. It is time we come together to learn and help each other deal with these issues in the best possible way and with the guidance and support of MDA."

Ms. Radhika Misquitta, Director of Research and Outreach, The Gateway School of Mumbai, shared, "Each speaker had something unique to share and there were so many takeaways for me. It was so heartening to hear all the wonderful work that is going on in India. Masarrat, I was blown away with the work you and Rameeza are doing, especially knowing the context. I do hope that you will be developing this into a curriculum to share as I can see this being a huge asset to so many others." Ms. Payel Das, Business Head – India, Scanning Pens, said, "Thoroughly loved every bit of this amazing Conclave. MDA brings together the best in practice."

The generous feedback and encouragement we have received from speakers and participants strengthen our resolve to keep working to ensure that every student with a learning disability gets an equal opportunity to succeed in all walks of life.



As our organisation enters its 25th year, there are many strong supporters who we must gratefully acknowledge for their staunch support through good times and challenging ones:

- First and foremost, our Founder-Patron, Dr Pheroza Godrej, along with the Pirojsha Godrej Foundation and Mrs Smita Godrej Crishna for their generous financial and moral support year after year.
- Sir Dinshaw and Lady Laila Petit and the N.M.Petit Charity Fund, for their belief in our methodology and strong support for our school projects.
- Gopal and Padma Vazirani and the Hemibai, Charitable Trust for supporting our Centres and advocating for our cause.
- Echjay Industries (CSR) Foundation and Mr. Vinod Doshi for supporting our Outreach Projects.
- Chemical Process Piping Pvt Ltd. and Mr. Paritosh Joshi for their continuous support through the Marathon and CSR projects.
- Mr Kabir Bhogilal for his staunch support of all activities at MDA, through his Unique Ability Foundation as well as the Leherchand Uttamchand Trust Fund.
- Scanning Pens PLC, UK
- Create Foundation and Ms Raell Padamsee for unfailingly providing a platform for our students to showcase their myriad talents.
- Mr Vijay Dodeja
- Ms Pervin Dudhmal, for volunteering her services year round.
- United Way of Mumbai
- Dr Mala Bhambhani for her advocacy and fundraising efforts through her participation at the Tata Mumbai Marathon 2020

A very special Thanks to 2 of our most enthusiastic and creative volunteers Mr. Jawaad Khan for volunteering to help with designing the banners for 20 schools ,with overnight deliveries during the World Dyslexia Awareness Week .

& Ms. Tanvi Hegde for volunteering to help with the designing and preparation of this Annual Report and during the year with the CREATE Drama skit (audio mixing) and WDAW (photo shoot and video recordings) with enthusiasm and love for the cause.

All those who lent their enthusiastic support through our Marathoners:

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- Ms Lara Kapadia
- Ms Rivka Samuel Israel
- Dr Vinit Shah
- Ms Zareen Battiwala
- Mr Mehernosh Currawalla
- Dr. Farhad Kapadia
- Mr. Bapsy Framji Patel
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- Ms Meher Marfatia
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This page would not be complete without a very big THANK YOU to our CEO, Ms Masarrat Khan, our Administrator, Ms Divya Balgi and our awesome team at the Resource Centres, whose devotion to our students and our cause go well beyond the call of duty. It is they who are both the backbone and spirit of our organization, and their tireless efforts to deliver the best to our stakeholders ensure it is an organization we can all be proud of.



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