

ACCOLADES

- SPASTN awarded as the **Outstanding Organization** by Sense International India (SII) on 27th June 2022 during the Partner Meet held at Ahmedabad, Gujarat. 54 Organizations were in the fray and SPASTN was recognized & chosen by SII.

AWARDS

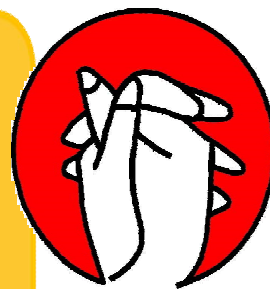
- SPASTN students won 12 prizes in "Kalaangana" a regional level online event conducted by Information Resource Center, Bengaluru
- SPASTN staff Mrs. Revathi was conferred with Best Teacher Award for her work with special needs children by Information Resource Center, Bengaluru.
- Miss. G. Swetha and Miss. Shameera Sofia our students from SPASTN, represented Tamil Nadu State for Special Olympics at Bokoro, Jharkhand

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SPASTN NEWSLETTER



JUNE 2022

SPASTN dedicates this edition of Newsletter to all the "Wonderful Caring FATHERS" out there as we celebrate Father's Day on June 19. One of our student's father was happy to share his journey for this edition and encourages others to be role models...

A 12 Years Roller Coaster Journey

My one and only son Madhav Tharun has just turned 12 years old. I'm sharing my experience of raising a Son with Autism Spectrum Disorder which always have been challenging and is like a roller coaster ride travelling these many years with him.

Madhav was 2 ½ years old when his Pre KG class teacher first noticed that he averted his gaze while talking and when asked, he did not speak and chose non-verbal cues instead. His speech was need-based, He would say 'no' when he doesn't want to eat something, but many times he would choose not to speak at all. He takes my hand to his stomach when he is in pain and make a sound like 'aaooaa'. As a parent I had to develop an understanding of these cues. Madhav had several meltdowns in the early years. He would cry uncontrollably.

We consulted a child psychiatrist specialist, who diagnosed autism spectrum in Madhav and this shook me to the core... I was devastated and heartbroken. I was referred to a therapist and thus began our journey... things continued the way they were.

I put him on a regular main stream school till 2nd standard where he was able score good marks in academics and he even received proficiency award on stage. He knows to read and write - English, Tamil and Hindi. His behavior did not change and he lacked socializing with his classmates. Due to his behaviors, he was isolated in class room and no classmate wanted to sit with him. This made me to look for an inclusive/ special school.

At age 8 he learnt to swim and ride a bi-cycle. I hired a physical fitness trainer and gave him yoga and fitness training which he is still continuing with the trainer with whom he is very co-operative.

Myself and my wife both are working professionals, so most of the time he spends time with his grandma (patty) at home. We spend quality time with him during our free hours in the evening and in the week ends. Every day morning, I start my day having some conversation with my son. I point out the good things / behaviors / work that he has done yesterday and then use to point out the bad behaviors that needs correction and this helps him to cope with his routine day to day activity.

I take my son along with me to all places and never hesitated about what others might think about my son and this helped him a lot to control his emotions in public and how to react with strangers.

I even sent him alone to my relative's home and without him knowing I followed him to ensure his safety; he reached his Periamma's house without any assistance which is 200m away from our house.

The most and only important thing I felt every parent with special children has in mind is - what after we die? I want this world to be as much friendly and approachable as everybody else's. That's when I broke all barriers and started taking him out, meeting people.

That's the only way he can live his life. I wish/ hope one day he will learn all skills to lead his life without parents' support.

- **Mr. Balamurali Minakshisundaram**



Celebrations



Mr. Chetan Kapoor (Chief Executive Officer , Tech Mahindra Foundation), Mr. Sudheer (Program Director- Employability), Mr. Jegan Tharmaraj (Head of Chennai and Bangalore) and Ms. Divya (Manager Education) were the delegates from Tech Mahindra Foundation who visited SPASTN on 7th April 2022 to participate in Autism Awareness Week Celebration by signing on the Puzzle Tree and inaugurating the Social -Emotional Wellbeing workshop for parents.

Dr. Sumathi Chandrasekaran (Counselling Psychologist and certified Happiness Coach) conducted session Socio Emotional Well-Being Workshop for all the parents of SPASTN which was formally inaugurated by Mr. Chetan Kappoor (CEO , Tech Mahindra Foundation)

Autism Awareness Week



A splash of Blue reigned in all SPASTN branches from 2nd April 2022 to 9th April 2022 to celebrate Autism Awareness Week . The students, teachers, staff, parents and volunteers were clad in Blue to celebrate the occasion as they partook in the events organised by staff and parents of students.

SPASTN Royapuram invited Dr. Devaki to be our chief guest for the Autism Week Celebrations. Dr. Devaki addressed our parents, teachers, students and their siblings during the campaign and answered questions related to behaviour management in children with special needs raised by parents.

SPASTN Villivakkam branch invited Dr. Deepa C Philip, Principal of MMM College of Health Sciences to give the Key note address and flag off the rally on Autism Awareness organised by parents, students, teachers and well-wishers.

Doctors from Thiruvallur PHC enthusiastically participated in Autism Awareness events and addressed the community on Mental Health Issues.

SPASTN VISITORS CORNER



Dr. Aloka Guha, former Director of SPASTN visited on 27th May 2022 and met with the alumni



Volunteers from Wells Fargo visited SPASTN on 16th June 2022 and engaged children in "Back to School" activities



REVIEW VISIT

SPASTN Hon. Secretary Ms. Divya Reddy visited Villivakkam and Royapuram Centers on 22nd June 2022 to meet with students, interact with parents & staff. Her visit helped encouraged and motivated the entire team!

SPASTN GALLERY



**Yuppie!!!!
IT'S OUR HOLIDAY!**



Summer Vacation for SPASTN children were filled with fun and adventure visiting places and attending Summer Camps along with completing Holiday Homework

- Our children were featured in Sun TV during the inauguration of Therapeutic Park in Kottur Garden Link Road. (<https://youtu.be/UK7qRNChelA>)
- We thank all ICF officials for inviting our children to Rail Museum on the occasion of International Museum Day on 18th May 2022. Our Children enjoyed the trip as all official engaged themselves to make the day memorable for our Children!
- SPASTN Royapuram branch students visited the nearby Fire Station



SPASTN was buzzing with "cricket fever" before closing of the academic year for summer vacation on 29th April 2022

SPORTS CORNER



Miss. G. Swetha and Miss. Shameera Sofia along with the team representing Tamil Nadu in Special Olympics at Bokoro, Jharkhand for Badminton

In ever loving memory of our Dear Prof. Jeyachandran - founding and life member of SPASTN



Prof. Jeyachandran is in our eyes the greatest visionary leader who shaped not just the policies but also the practices in the field of Special Education across India that served students with Intellectual Impairment (ID) and other developmental disabilities. If there is a Special Education Hall of Fame - his hand and foot prints will be the first one to go.

Prof. Jeyachandran - a genteel, dapper well groomed but very insightful visionary who was one of the founding members of SPASTN who along with Late Cornelius worked on crafting the Memorandum of Association with other founding members. To this day the Memorandum of Association of SPASTN is seen as one of the most visionary document that could foresee the future development of Special Education field. He has shared with me that it was he who coined the acronym "SPASTN" based on numerology.

It is the inspiration and drive of Prof. Jeyachandran that forged a strong foundation in assessment and intervention modalities for persons with ID for successive generations of Special Education students to this day and age. He was the beloved Prof. to god knows how many thousands of special education practitioners and those teachers eyes will remain moist as they remember him with fondness, respect and gratitude. And I am one of them.

SPASTN would offer our heartfelt sympathy to the family of Prof Jeyachandran and to his many prodigies and current leaders of Vijay Human Service. We would offer our promise that the memory of Prof. Jeyachandran's will continue to be honored in everything we do. Prof. Jeyachandran touched everyone he came into contact with, and he will never be forgotten, and we hope that this is in some way a small measure of comfort to the team members of Vijay Human Service he leaves behind.

L. V. Jayashree
Director SPASTN