

# Autism Society of India, Annual Report 2014-2015



Autism Society of India

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*The aim of Autism Society of India is to function as a national body for the concerted action on all matters related to persons with Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families.*

*The objectives are aimed at improving the quality of lives of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorders.*

***Message from the President- Autism Society of India***

***Nishath Kirmani Ali***

Dear Team ASI,

Season's Greetings

The year 2014-15 for ASI was an eventful year with an interesting line up of activities.

We began with the launch of our apps from the Hackathon for Developmental Disabilities to a colorful WAAD celebration, Replications of Prayas Training Module, fashion shows to workshops, Treks and events.

This year also saw Global recognition of ASI, as Project Prayas was nominated for the Global Source Council Awards, at the United Nations Head Quarters in New York.

We came through with State and National registrations and are in a process of acquiring some more important ones. Due to the Government's curbs on foreign contributions, our sponsorships have been held back until the FCRA registration is done. There is a need of constant financial support to run the activities of the organization, for which we are striving from Government and Private Institutions.

Office bearers of all the Zones have been active with various activities. Amrutha Ramanujan has been tirelessly working towards exam accommodations for our children through the Human Resource Ministry and Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Mrs. Kavita Sharma and team Prayas had a successful year of Master Trainer Programmes ranging from Places like Bangladesh, Coimbatore, Mumbai and Madurai. Mrs. Akila Vaidyanathan has been doing some Amazing progress with her institution AMAZE, catering to the needs of our children with autism. Mrs. Ruby Singh has been progressing well with her Assisted Living for Autistic Adults.

I appreciate and thank the efforts of our treasurer, EC members, staff and members who have always been there whenever ASI needed them. Looking forward and wishing Good luck to the new team of governing council members for the year 2015-17. Signing off to a successful 2015-16 with greater and more productive activities for the benefit of this great cause of "Autism".

Good Luck and God Bless.

Best Regards.

Nishath Kirmani Ali.

### ***Launch of Apps Developed through Hackathon for Developmental Disabilities on World Autism Awareness Day! April 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015***

On World Autism Awareness Day, March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2015, Prayas lab hosted hackathon app launch event at the premise of CISCO Bangalore. This event was a continuation of hackathon for developmental disabilities, which was conducted in November 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> 2014. The purpose of the event was to make the apps accessible to the entire disability sector. Through this event 4 apps that won the Hackathon November 2014 event, were launched. The Four developed apps are:

- OKK-One Key Keyboard
- iGrasp
- Ease Life
- AUSM



Hackathon App Launch @Cisco

### ***World Autism Awareness Day Celebration***

The Autism Community came together to celebrate World Autism Awareness Day along with various institutions, parent organizations and corporate Houses on April 2, 2015 at the Cubbon Park, Bangalore. We had renowned corporate houses like HP, Cisco, Copal Amba and Wipro volunteer and make a difference. We also had Representatives from Rotary attend the event.

The event was held at the Bal Bhavan Premises, Cubbon Park, Bangalore.

The day's celebrations began with the registrations of all present. We had a flag off walk around Cubbon Park which led to the outdoor activities like face painting, bubble maker and art etc. for the kids by the parents and volunteers.

Food and Snacks were sponsored by Copal Amba. We had various cultural performances by our children including singing, dance and a fashion show.

This was followed by an effective panel discussion on the challenges faced by parents of children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Health Minister of Karnataka, Mr.U.T Khader visited us on the occasion and promised to support us in awareness and advocacy related activities.



Walkathon on WAAD April 4<sup>th</sup> 2015



UT Khader, Minister interacting with participants

## ***South Zone Activities of ASI***

Activity line up at AMAZE Charitable Trust

Mrs. Akila Vaidyanathan has been doing some extensive programmes of overall development @AMAZE in Coimbatore. Here is a report by her:

We have implemented Daksh@Home last year with one parent /student and this year we have 3 sets of outstation parents/students who come twice a month and we assess the student and train the parent to use technology to create and teach lessons for their child. It is progressing well

Also since April 2013 we have been working on the 16+ group through our program AMEYA where we train the student taking an individualized Lifespan approach and move them towards Vocation/Employment. We do not have any enrollment criteria and cater to the entire spectrum, depending on the severity of the challenges faced by the students we move them to the next level from where ever they are.

The first batch had 3 students (including Bharat who we trained for 6 months and is now a (SAP employee), the second batch started in June 2014 has 5 and the new batch has 4 students. Few of them are now almost independent with the process involved with the Educational aids products [including formatting on the computer up to laminating] that we have been training them on and we have recently completed onsite QA and processed our first order from Euro kids for their customized flash cards set. The students are also getting trained in cooking [where we are getting small takeaway orders], fitness, housekeeping etc.

We have documented extensively including video documentation and we are quite happy to share our learning's for ASI's Daksh@home /Daksh Vishesh efforts .One can have a look at some of this work in our website [www.amazetrust.org](http://www.amazetrust.org) which we have recently launched.

Daksh program @ AMAZE launched in Oct 2013 is also doing very well [3rd batch]. They have trained over 25 students and some of them are doing very well in mainstream and for some others it has been a lifesaver in terms of communication and there are a couple who are doing well on the creativity side also .We combine the technology based efforts with inputs for Special education and communication and social skills [through our other programs like Achint] .More than 100 parents /teachers /professionals also have been trained by the capacity building programs run by us for Technology based intervention .

## **ASI – Advocacy for Inclusive Education System and Exam Accommodation**

Amrutha Ramanujan, Vice President, South has been tirelessly following up with Central ministry of HRD & MSJE about the right exam accommodations for children with Special Needs. She has met the concerned people personally by going to Delhi and convincing them of the need for Right Exam accommodations for our Children. She is in constant touch with them in contrast to the pace of the Ministries

She has also conducted workshop for IB & IGCSE teachers about the need of Modified testing methods for students with Autism in a few International Schools.

She has been counselling and helping families of children with Autism, through emails / Skype meetings / yahoo support group.

## Activity line up at Assisted Living for Autistic Adults-ALFAA:

**Assisted Living for Autistic Adults, ALFAA** founded and directed by Mrs. Ruby Singh has been beaming with activities for their adults taking from Road trips, to Vocational Activities, to festival celebrations, self-help skills and its highlight of their Fashion Show with our Young Adults mentored by Fashion Guru Mr. Prasad Bidappa.

Their article was featured in the Times of India as well, which was a proud moment of awareness of a potential field of employment for individuals with Autism.

A workshop by Mrs. Saswathi Singh, Founder Inspiration was organised by ALFAA.



Fashion Show by Adults of ALFAA,

**Project Prayas**, had a very interesting line of events which are summarized below-

### REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES TAKEN UP BY PROJECT PRAYAS: [www.learn4autism.com](http://www.learn4autism.com)



Project Prayas has completed its ninth batch of training, with this we have trained more than 120 kids with ASD and their parents at the nodal center Bangalore.



Prayas gave the culmination to Hackathon for Developmental Disabilities by launching 4 apps on WAAD- World Autism Awareness Day; April 2, 2015 Prayas had also organised an event called INSPIRE TO ASPIRE, along with SAP and Enable India in the month of August 2015.



Prayas has continued with its objectives; had capacity building programmes in Coimbatore (Prashanthi Academy, Velvi in Madurai, ASWB in Kolkata, Dhaka in Bangladesh, Justice Tankha Memorial in Jabalpur MP, Adarsh Charitable trust in Cochin, Kerala



Project Prayas was nominated by Global Sourcing Council of the US in the Impact Sourcing Category for its 3S Awards which stand for Sustainability, Socially responsible Source. Though, we did not win but were able to create awareness



Our story of success appeared in the social media platform called- Social Story- <http://social.yourstory.com/2015/09/project-prayas/> We are working out collaboration with a few organisations for developing the next module of Daksh.

Another milestone achieved...Prayas is being replicated at the Resurrection School, Indira Nagar, Bangalore through [Pratyasha](#) foundation under the able guidance of Dr. Ruchi Gupta. This School caters to some 600 kids from the low Socio Economic strata of the urban slums of Byapanahalli and Indiranagar. Big thanks to SAP for donating the infrastructure.



## North Zone Presence of ASI

Mrs. Kavita Sharma, VP North has been a very integral and active part of events, replications, seminars and workshops pertaining to the use of technology and innovations in the field of Autism and Disability in general. She reports.....

After taking up the position of the Vice President of Autism Society of India-North Zone, I realized that there are many organizations, especially in New Delhi, Punjab and Dehradun that are doing very good work in the field of Autism. This made me decide that either I align with them or have our presence felt through our differentiators. To execute that I did the following-

1. Created a desk top calendar for the year 2015 with the help of sketches done by Ujjwal Sharma ( A 19 yr old boy with ASD- My son) completely sponsored by the family and distributed 420 copies in the International Conference organized by Action for Autism in February 2015.



2. These calendars- 300 nos. were sold at The Shri Ram School on World Autism Awareness Day –April 2, 2015 at their three branches in Delhi and Gurgaon, the sale and awareness activity was executed by the IB Students of TSRS
3. The same calendars were distributed across the country through friends and family while creating awareness about ASDs.
4. On February 21<sup>st</sup>, gave a three hours lecture at Nai Disha unit of Tamana, DELHI on Prayas. Out of their three units, two have executed Prayas-Daksh training for their students.
5. On April 7<sup>th</sup>, I attended a one day National Conference on Skill Development for persons with Disabilities; it was organized by MSJE and MSDC at Vigyan Bhavan, Mrs. Merry Barua was kind enough to extend the invitation to me.
6. On June 25<sup>th</sup>, I deliberated a one day orientation workshop at Justice Tankha Memorial Institute for Special Needs Children at Jabalpur, MP. It was attended by some 70 participants.
7. On July 31<sup>st</sup> 2015, presented a two hour lecture for the students of DSE-ASD at Action for Autism, Delhi.
8. Initiated “Inspire to Aspire” event, which was executed by Ms. Nishath Kirmani Ali and Team Prayas in Bangalore on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2015

I am executing Prayas virtually from Gurgaon on a daily basis, have been an active member towards other activities of ASI and intend to put ASI on International platform along with all other members of ASI.

Another feather in cap for Autism Society of India was that Project Prayas was nominated by the Global Sourcing Council of the US in the Impact Sourcing Category for its 3SAwards which stands for Sustainability, Socially responsible Source. We did not win in the category, but were able to create awareness of Autism and the benefits of technology to the field.

**We also stood third in the People’s Choice Award category .Our president; Ms.Nishath Kirmani Ali represented Autism Society of India at the United Nations Headquarters in New York for the Global Source Council Awards. It was a proud privilege for ASI to be recognized by the Council and the**



## *West Zone Presence of ASI*

### A report on activities by Mr. Michael Vimal Pillai

- **NETWORKING:** Networking with organizations and professionals in the development sector in Ahmedabad/Gujarat with an objective to create awareness about ASI and its activities and develop contacts that can enable ASI to have collaborative programmes in future.
- **WORLD AUTISM AWARENESS DAY CAMPAIGN:** Created awareness on Autism among schools in Ahmedabad, through E-mail campaign. Reached out to around 15 schools in Ahmedabad.
- **Prayatna Fun-N Fair**

A Fun Fair was organized by parents of children with special needs in Ahmedabad on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2015. I assisted in organizing this fair. Most of the stalls in this fair were managed by individuals with special needs.

Some attraction of this fair included:

- Arts and crafts by children with special needs
- Tattoo painting
- Food Court
- Games
- **SNEH (Special Needs Empowering Hands)**  
I was one of the persons who initiated the formation of **SNEH** – A group consisting of individuals with Special Needs, their parents and passionate people in Ahmedabad. This is informal group at present and it was formed in June 2015. The aim of **SNEH** is to utilize the creativity and talent of individuals with special needs and also to provide avenues for earning and financial independence.

Some products made by **SNEH** include:

- Diya Stands
- Rakhis
- Beaded Jewelry Products.

## *Trek for Autism*

A MoU was signed in Oct 2015, between NALS, an adventure tour operator that offers trekking / expedition services /which also includes camps exclusively for special children and their families and Autism Society of India (ASI), as an all year round fund raising programme.

Trek for Autism organizes camps specifically designed all year through for corporate, families, schools and one camp exclusively for special children and their families in both of NALS locations of Conoor and Manali. Each booking made through the Trek for Autism Project, has its funds going as a donation to ASI excluding the basic costing by NALS.

## *Registrations of our organization*

- ASI has been registered with the Person's with Disability Act 1995, under the section 51 and 52 A on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 2015.
  - ASI has also applied for registrations with the National Trust Act.
- ASI is also in a process of applying with the Foreign Contribution Regulatory Act.

## *Inspire to Aspire*

Prays Lab /Autism Society of India held an event "Inspire to Aspire" which was an interaction with our young adults on the spectrum of Autism, employed at SAP labs, sharing their journey to employment.

It was Held at the Enable India premise, which holds training sessions for our young adults on the spectrum, employed with SAP labs through their project Autism at Work.

We had legendary Indian Cricketer Mr.Syed Kirmani as our Chief Guest, along with Asoka Fellowship and co-founder Enable India, Mrs.Shanti Raghavan as the key note speaker.

It was a very interesting interaction between the Young adults of Autism at Work and parents giving them a vision of the prerequisites of employment and the challenges faced and how to cope with them.



## *Recognition of ASI by the renowned Master Chef Sanjeev Kapoor on Twitter*

