

Empowering Differently Abled Since 2008



Sarthak NAAI March Bulletin

Delhi I Chandigarh I Gurugram I Ambala I Ludhiana I Lucknow I
Bhopal I Jaipur I Mumbai I Pune I Hyderabad I Kolkata I Ghaziabad I
Faridabad I Chennai I Thane

Highlight of the Month



Sarthak Educational Trust since 2008, is actively working to create a facilitative and inclusive environment for Persons with Disability and with the intent to quicken the pace of mainstreaming and extend the impact of its direct intervention, regularly organizes conferences on disability. This March 15, 2019, **Sarthak Educational Trust** and **The Times of India** jointly organized **Round Table Conference** themed around '**Corporate Leadership for PwD Inclusivity**' in Chennai. The conference witnessed the presence **Shri S. Pandiarajan, Honorable Minister of Tamil Official Language and Tamil Culture** and various other corporate leaders from TCS, Capgemini, Disys, Sutherland, Vedanta Sterlite Copper, Cognizant Foundation, Sopra Steria and DOW Chemical discussed around the pressing needs of disability sector.

This conference provided excellent opportunities for different stakeholders to develop an understanding of pressing concerns and prospective solutions. Sarthak believes, the collective efforts by various stakeholders would lead to qualitative improvement in enforcement across the country and with the concerted efforts we shall be able to create inclusive and equal opportunity based society.

Focusing on Pwd inclusivity and empowerment, and with an aim to multiply the opportunities for people with disabilities, Sarthak directed a Job Fair with a desire to provide employment and equal opportunities to people with disability at Chennai location. Active participation from National Career Service Cell, Chennai and equal opportunity employers, such as **Aegis, Sutherland, Amazon, ICICI, The Leela Palace, and Reliance Fresh** conducted interviews of 100+ PwD's with initial shortlisting for the second round of interview of 60+ PwD's.

Centers in Progress

Sensitisation Workshop with Marriot International & Holiday Inn



The hospitality sector is one among the leading sectors who are stepping forward to hire and empower persons with disabilities in various job roles. In order to ensure an inclusive workplace, Sarthak through regular sensitization workshops aims to alter mindsets, address fears, confusion, break stereotypes, and bust myths about people with disability. To ensure this, Sarthak team conducted a workshop with **Marriott International and Holiday Inn** to ensure an inclusive workplace for persons with disabilities.

Health Camp with Biba India

With the support of **BIBA India**, Sarthak organized a General health check-up camp (Height, Weight, BMI, Random Blood Sugar, BP, General Physician Consultation) at Delhi, Chandigarh, and Kolkata for Persons with Disabilities.



Stakeholders Outreach

Convocation Ceremony of Sarthak Delhi trainees



Ms. Krupa Tanna, CSR Manager, HDB Financials visited Sarthak skill-building center for persons with disabilities during the convocation ceremony of Sarthak trainees. Interaction of beneficiaries with Ms. Krupa Tanna motivated the spirits of trainees to work more hard to achieve goals.

Team Sarthak at Tattvaloka

Team Sarthak visited Tattvaloka, Chennai to deliver a lecture on **"Our Shared Dharma to help People with Disabilities"**.



Stakeholders Outreach

Interaction Session with Dr. Pawan Aggarwal



Dr. Pawan Aggarwal, Thane Advisory board member delivering a motivational session for trainees at Pune center. Sarthak is honored to have an International Motivational Speaker, Author, Educationist, Business Consultant, and Successful Entrepreneur associated with Sarthak for mentorship and guidance.

Re-Inauguration of Sarthak Kaushal Vikas Kendra, Jaipur

Sarthak Kaushal Vikas Kendra re-inaugurated its center at a new location in Jaipur. On this occasion, many dignitaries such as **Shri. Sandeep Bhargava, National Advisory Board Member, Shri. Akashdeep Arora, RAS, Indra Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan, Smt. Nidhi Lauria, CEO, Airtel-Rajasthan, Shri. Vikram Joshi, CEO, Rangotri, and Shri. Yashpal Singh, Director, National career service** graced the ceremony with their presence.



Stories of Change & Empowerment

Satisfying the customers with his gestures – Story of Hearing Impaired Shashank Soni



Anybody would just wonder how can a person be a successful salesperson if he is not able to interact with his customers? 18-year-old Shashank Soni has proved this to be true, as he is one of the leading salesperson of his organization despite his inability to hear or speak due to his 100% impairment. His sheer grit and determination to do well in life ensured he not only achieved his dream to support his family of 5 members but become successful despite his shortcoming. Shashank was born in Rasda U.P and is the youngest amongst the three siblings in the family. Being the youngest in the family his parents were always worried and unsure about his future. Despite that, he managed to complete his 10th class from Chhattisgarh Board.

Shashank wanted to earn for himself and his family. However, he had no clue as to what he should do next, to get a job. He started searching desperately for a job but all his efforts went in vain.

Feeling disheartened, Shashank was in for a surprise when out of blue he got a call from **SBI Foundation supported Sarthak Skill Building Centre in Faridabad**. His five-minute interaction with the Helpdesk of the Centre completely transformed his life.

The very next day he visited the Centre and immediately joined the three-month training programme offered by Sarthak. Within a week his trainer was able to identify his shortcoming, that he was very shy in nature and highly lacked in confidence. Other than the training provided in basic computers, retail sector, and soft skills, the trainer worked on his confidence building and ensured he participated in group discussions and gave presentations using sign language. A huge personality change was observed within two months of his regular engagement in the training provided and Shashank got a chance to appear for an interview through the Employment Cell of Sarthak.

He impressed the interviewers with his newly found confidence and was immediately selected by the leading retail chain **Reliance Smart as a Customer Sales Associate** on a monthly salary of Rs. 9500/-.

In his job, his immediate colleagues and superior are very proud of the dedication and sincerity with which Shashank ensures all his customers are taken care of. And even the customers in their feedback have appreciated the professionalism Shashank exhibits when dealing with them.

He now aims to do better in his job and earn more laurels for him and his organization.

Stories of Change & Empowerment

Sonu Kumar, Silent Warrior



Sonu Kumar cannot hear the clicks of his computer keys, but he successfully punches large data on his computer and is one of the best employees in his organization. For 21-year-old Sonu, life was soundless by birth as he was born with 100% hearing impairment. Born in a lower-middle-class family of six members, where his parent, who had no idea on how to deal with him, somehow managed to complete his schooling in 2007 from Aligarh. His family then moved on to live in Noida and he also started looking for employment to provide some financial relief to his parents. His running from pillar to post to get a job, went in vain as nobody showed much interest in hiring him due to his limitation.

Feeling very lost in his life, Sonu was further going into depression, when one day he met one of his friends, who had got placed in a decent job through Sarthak, a Not for Profit Organization working for skilling and employment of persons with disabilities across India. He immediately visited **Sarthak's SMART+ Delhi Centre**, which provides free of cost training to PwDs. Comprehensive counseling by the Helpdesk and the Trainers immediately led Sonu to join the three months training.

This was all a whole new experience for Sonu. He got exposed to various curriculums taught at the Centre which included Basic computers, Soft skills, and sector-specific modules. But what appealed the most to young Sonu was the use of Computers. For a person who had hardly ever touched a keyboard earlier, showed tremendous growth in his typing skills as the days passed. His eagerness to do well also led him to lead the 'Discipline Committee' of his batch. This further imbibed him to follow cemented discipline in his life too.

This exposure not only helped Sonu in improving his confidence level but led to a positive attitude. With this new found confidence, Sonu was able to crack the interview with a Noida based IT firm, **Smart Data**. He was immediately selected as **Data Entry Operator**, in a team of ten members and today he successfully draws a salary of Rs. 10,000/- per month. Today, Sonu has become a hero and a motivational person for the entire family, who feel so proud of his achievement, despite his limitations.

Stories of Change & Empowerment

A hope in the Dark – Story of Devanshi



For a young child, every day is a journey of discovery using their senses, they are continuously gaining impressions and constantly learning new things. If one of their sensory organs is affected, this can have an adverse effect on their development as a whole. Devanshi belongs to the underprivileged section of society and is hard of hearing. She is the only child of her parents and is very pampered. Her parents had many dreams for her but they were unaware of the approaching heartbreak. She attained a normal developmental pace so nothing was suspicious in the beginning, but at the age of 3 years, her mother got a doubt that she was not responsive towards sounds.

Her mother used every way to find out whether her doubt is right and with each step, her doubt got much stronger and finally, they decided to seek professional help.

An ENT consultation was done and the doctor recommended BERA testing, on which she was diagnosed as having hard of hearing. The hearing aid was the best option along with speech therapy sessions where the child would learn about sound. Private sessions were out of their budget and government hospital gave long dates, so the hunt was on. As the saying goes, if God closes one door he will open another and finally, they came to know about Sarthak through community mobilization which was like a ray of hope for them. Without any delay, they visited the center and once the registration procedure was done, she was taken for speech therapy sessions. Parental counseling was done and home management was discussed too so that the parents also get trained and be part of child therapy programme.

Initially, she was reluctant to wear hearing aids and instead preferred to read lips and respond, thus making therapy difficult. So the first aim was to make her aid friendly. Her parents were also made understood about the importance of hearing aid and requested to make her wear it the most time of the day. And once she got accustomed to aids auditory training for identification and discrimination of sounds later vocalization, phonation, blowing, etc techniques were incorporated in sessions. In small time she started responding to sounds and then never stopped.

At present, she responds to her name and also reacts to high and low pitch sounds, answers back to small questions, etc. Also in a short period, she had concept building for alphabets, numbers, fruits, numbers, colors, animals and transport names, etc. With such achievements, she has been enrolled to school and we advised her parents that she is very young and it will be good if she undergoes cochlear implant surgery so that her speech improves to a big extent. Her parents are happy with her improvement and look forward to cochlear implant so that her world does not get restricted just because of her speech impairment.

National Abilympics Association of India

Sarthak NAAI South Zone Workshop



National Abilympic Association of India & Sarthak Educational Trust organized a Sarthak NAAI South Zone Workshop on March 15th, 2019 at Chennai and Sarthak NAAI North Zone Workshop on March 30, 2019 at Delhi.

The workshop was held to sensitize various stakeholders like local NGO's, interested PwDs, institutes in South zone & North Zone, about Abilympics - 'Movement of Excellence' in skilling of PwDs. Since the primary objective was to create awareness, members from various NGO's and institutes attended the event including interested PwD participants.

The event also provided a very useful platform, to interact with jury and experts in the new skill categories. An interactive discussion was held on preparing tasks/test papers, marking scheme and creating technical guidelines for the upcoming regional competitions in South & North zone, to be held in Chennai on July 19-20th, 2019. and Delhi July 04-05th, 2019

The event sparked a lot of enthusiasm and generated widespread interest in Abilympics.

Messages by Changemakers

"We have several sectors creating skills needed in the country. What we need is skilling for inclusive growth. As part of CSR we started skilling people to encourage them to come out of their villages and work but the challenges continue to remain. We need to organize attitude training and skilling has to start much earlier for differently abled people."

~Rajashree Natarajan, COO, Cognizant Foundation

"Unlike earlier, the attrition rate is considered lower now. Commitment to a goal and regular training are essential as revealed in the surveys conducted by us. We have to treat any persons with challenges a company hires with respect and dignity"

~Gayathri Ramamurthy, India Diversity and Inclusion Lead, Capgemini

"We tend to recruit people who are like us or who like us. There is a paramount need to look at differently abled in a different way. We are labeling them as underproductive resources but as per our experience so far they are more productive once they get into positive contributory system."

~Simi Chaudhary-Talent Management, Development and Diversity Inclusion

"A three prolonged approach will be needed at the corporate level to provide employment to the differently abled. Awareness at the senior project manager and middle level is vital for providing suitable employment to the differently abled"

~Gayathri Mohan, Head CSR, Sopra Steria

Let's Learn more about Disability

Refer to a person's disability only when it is related to what you are talking about. For example, don't ask "What's wrong with you?" Don't refer to people in general or generic terms such as "the girl in the wheelchair."

When talking about places with accommodations for people with disabilities, use the term "accessible" rather than "disabled" or "handicapped." For example, refer to an "accessible" parking space rather than a "disabled" or "handicapped" parking space or "an accessible bathroom stall" rather than "a handicapped bathroom stall."

Use the term "disability," and take the following terms out of your vocabulary when talking about or talking to people with disabilities. Don't use the terms "handicapped," "cripple," "crippled," "victim," "retarded," "stricken," "poor," "unfortunate".

Just because someone has a disability, it doesn't mean he/she is "courageous," "brave," "special," or "superhuman." People with disabilities are the same as everyone else. It is not unusual for someone with a disability to have talents, skills, and abilities.

It is okay to use words or phrases such as "disabled," "disability," or "people with disabilities" when talking about disability issues. Ask the people you are with which term they prefer if they have a disability.

When talking about people without disabilities, it is okay to say "people without disabilities." But do not refer to them as "normal" or "healthy." These terms can make people with disabilities feel as though there is something wrong with them and that they are "abnormal."

Do not use "wheelchair bound" – wheelchair is an assisted device which greatly assists in mobility, and is a personal space (in fact quite liberating for many and also an identity too). Only say wheelchair user.

Do not say someone is suffering from a disability. Disability has nothing to do with a person's impairment and is not a disease or ailment. Disability is simply put – inevitable part of human diversity. So just say the person has a disability.

Source: Email retrieved from Disability Confidence in partnership with DfID, UK and Skills Council for Persons with Disabilities (SCPwD), Government of India.

Center Celebrations- Women's Day



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