

Yes, know she responds to sounds... - Story of Aastha

Aastha was born with bilateral profound hearing loss, and thus was indifferent when her parents used to call her. They started noticing it, and tried their own tests at home, such as banging doors, clapping, making sounds, but were inconclusive. They assumed, she must be ignoring, as it is not that easy to accept that your own child is having some disability.

His father shares, *"I use to cradle her in my arms and stare for hours wondering whether she could hear me or not. And, she used to amuse me with her pleasant bright smile."*

One day the parents determined to get her consulted, and in tune to their fear she was suspected to be deaf. They went for diagnostics and it was confirmed that she was having bilateral profound hearing loss. They were shattered, but clubbed all their strengths and determined to make her life simple and happy, as they always wished for. They started exploring possible solutions, and this brought her to Sarthak Early Intervention Centre, Aastha was enrolled, and therapist started exploring her preferred way of communication, through visual learning, i.e., signs or with the support of hearing aids.

And, soon her speech therapy was started with basic auditory skills training. In the initial phase, Aastha used to shut her ears and showed her reluctance to sound. But slowly with continuous efforts she started responding and reacting to sounds. She is also enrolled in special education where she learns through listening and responds. She is very active and plays with other children as well. And, now when her father comes to pick her and call her name she responds to sound and smiles.

A Big Yes for Red..... story of Rajat

Identifying colours and developing association between objects is not a very big deal for children, in general. But for a child having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder it is a rare sight and worth celebration for therapist and family. And, we literally felt over amused and enthusiast, when Rajat started showing reluctance to travel by green or orange colour buses (Non-Air-conditioned and over-crowded ones) and forced his grand-father to hop on a red colour bus being an air-Conditioned one.

When he came to us, almost a year before, Hyperactivity, Inattention, and Impulsivity all the three symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, were prominently visible in his actions and behaviour.

As a start he underwent some medication under psychiatric guidance to control his hyperactivity which led to lethargy and dullness in his behaviours. Then through regular behavioural and occupational therapies his stubbornness and inattention were worked upon. Blend of parental involvement, therapeutic intervention and supporting environment was helpful in bringing significant changes in him. And, we feel really great to observe his progressive understanding of alphabets, counting, colors, shapes and lot many other things.

These are the beginner's steps and Rajat has a very long way to go with this great persona and charm.

Silence to Vibrancy... story of Munna

Munna now speaks sentences & goes to a mainstream school and follows regular curriculum. But, it all did not come as a natural course to him. The story goes back to two and a half years, when we, Sarthak Antakshep Kendra team were conducting a community survey. We met with the family of this really vibrant little boy. The family was going through a tough time due to constant struggle to manage the daily courses of their lives and to provide an independent and healthy future to their child, Munna.

Munna was diagnosed with bilateral moderate to severe hearing loss and was suggested for cochlear implant and regular speech therapy. But, being from an average socio-economic stature regular speech therapy was proving to be a little hefty for the family. Besides, impact was not so visible.

We intimated the family about our center in Paschim Vihar, where free of cost therapies are provided for children facing various developmental concerns and asked them to visit our centre. Family got really amused on knowing about our organization and promised to pay a visit. When Munna was brought to our centre, his complete case history was conducted, analysing various details, and assessments. Thereafter, therapeutic intervention was started with initial auditory stimulation and using various play methods Munna was encouraged to vocalize.

Dedicated efforts of our team and his family resulted in one-word utterances by him within six months. It was further followed with understanding and speaking of alphabets and numbers and three to four-word phrases, thereafter. And, now he goes to school, learns with his classmates and lives a carefree childhood.

Myra, responding to therapy

Sarthak is also involved in early identification, prevention & intervention to check developmental delays and intellectual disability in the early stages. One of such initiatives is about a little girl named Myra. When Myra was brought to Sarthak's Antakshep Kendra, she was facing various concerns such as late physical development (delayed crawling and walking), discomfort and fear to external stimuli. At Sarthak, Myra was diagnosed to be facing development delays and her intervention therapies were started at earliest. Parents were also counselled to make them active participants in Myra's steps towards development. Myra is now responding well to her speech therapy class and is being provided therapies to make her adapt to external surroundings.

Little Myra

5-Year-old Mahi goes to school, plays with her friends, and tell her mother in detail, how was her day at school and lives a carefree life like any other child of her age. It was not the case when she first visited Early Intervention Centre with her mother, few years before. She was

completely non responsive and used to prefer staying isolated, as shared by her mother. The screening and assessments suggested symptoms of Autism Spectrum Disorder, and accordingly therapeutic intervention was initiated with parent's support.

