

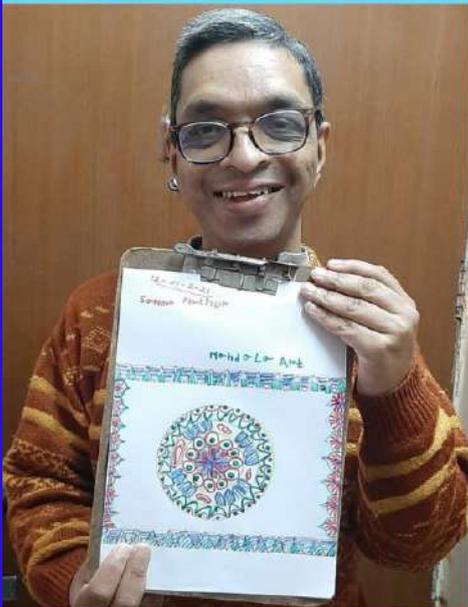
Celebrating Simple Joys



Volume : 29

Indradhanush

E-Newsletter (January- March 2021)



To welcome year 2021 before starting the online sessions after winter break, a weeklong winter fest was organised in which all our friends participated with full masti & dhamaal. Day one: simple sharing about how they spent their vacation & new year celebration. Day two: art is fun, let's learn to draw mandala art. Day three: Lohri celebration with music, dance & fancy dress. Day four: art & craft, let's learn and make beautiful artifact together with Ms Romi Soin. Day five: sharing knowledge & observation.

Link of Lohri celebration during winter fest: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EpYUQYg7EcE>



From Director's Desk

"The oak is the strongest tree in the forest, but the willow bends and adapts.

When the fires and storms hit, it is the willow that survives."

— Kara Barbieri, *White Stag*

A ray of hope started shining as the Pandemic seemed to be dying away and we started planning for a blended Learning program for our students (a mix of online & onsite learning). Leadership team held monthly meetings along with Program coordinators to continuously review the mode of training programs in changing scenario. To upkeep the motivation of everyone, blended learning mode was developed which included a major review in time table as now teachers were expected to give both online and onsite training in a single day to different set of students. We were also receiving fresh applications for admission from parents. Again, a blended mode of assessments was planned for doing assessments of new candidate. The biggest challenge being faced during this quarter was the Burn out effect on students, teachers and parents. It was evident from the regular requests being received from some parents and students to open the facility full time. Teachers were also missing face to face interaction and positivity of students. At the same time other parents were very sceptical of sending their wards to Muskaan for Face-to-Face program. We created an atmosphere of safety for students coming to Muskaan by putting posters at all strategic places regarding Covid Safety guidelines and conducted training sessions to make them aware of these guidelines.

We realigned the focus of the staff training and worked very closely with them in structuring the environment at Muskaan for students to come for production work. At the same time some students were also provided raw materials to Work from Home. Training programs were conducted for parents to support students during the work they were taking home as students are used to working in an assembly line and they would need support at home. This work was supported by teachers in their online sessions. Quality guidelines were always touched upon in all online classes.

The shining rays started dimming by mid-March when cases of covid started increasing and we had to once again rethink about our onsite program and work. All the plans had to be changed again and we had to shift to complete online mode once again as safety of everyone was of utmost importance to us.

Amidst all this our residential facility shifted its base from Dera Gaon to Vasant Kunj. We had thought that it would take time for our residents to adjust to new place of living though they accommodated and made themselves comfortable only in a week's time. Simultaneously all systems were also put in place and this facility started functioning efficiently once again in 10 days' time. The campus at Muskaan suddenly became alive once again with presence of our friends 24*7.

It has been a vibrant quarter as lot of new changes were introduced in programs, systems to accommodate the need of the hour again and again though one thing remain constant- "The soaring spirit of Muskaan Team". The last one year was full of challenges though it has given us a lot of reassurance that Our team of students, teachers, parents, Board members, volunteers and Donors will always rise to the occasion and overcome any challenge in journey of Muskaan towards new paradigms.

Links of Muskaan website & social media Platforms

<http://muskaan-paepid.org/>

<https://www.facebook.com/MuskaanPAEPID/>

<https://www.instagram.com/muskaanpaepid/>

<https://in.linkedin.com/company/muskaan-paepid>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC17GmEfKIPYF2Oq43oi2Efw>

Our Products

Production & Marketing During spread of Pandemic

By Ms. Mridula Sakle

Muskaan work centre started working again towards production of products as there was a little relief around due to less Covid-19 cases being reported. Some students started coming to Muskaan thrice a week for production of Food products. These products are made under strict guidelines laid by FSSAI. Production started with making Mathi, Namakara, Lemon pickle and Lemon squash. Customers were waiting for Mathi and Namakapra and were happy to get fresh products regularly. A group of students worked on grinding Masala and packing. During this quarter every year there is production of squashes for the coming summer months. Two types of squashes were made – Lemon and Narangi. Both these squashes are made in a traditional way and no preservative is used. They are very easy to use as process to make a cooling drink is very easy. These squashes are a favourite of young children as they can make them on their own and also by their mothers as their children's drinks are without preservative and hygienically made.

It was not only that the Food units were busy with production but workers of Stationary unit were also busy in making slip pads for Gulati Foods. They also received an order to make 1700 gift bags for a wedding. This order was completed on time by workers. Some of them worked from home and some came to Muskaan to complete the order. This order helped in motivating students during these challenging times.

Some customers came to Muskaan to buy products but most of the marketing was done through online store. More customers felt comfortable receiving products in the safe environment of their homes. Home deliveries were done following all the safety guidelines of using masks & shields, sanitization of vehicles and maintain appropriate distance. There were more orders for squashes, pickles, masalas, Mathi and Namakpara. There were orders for Haldi as it was being used with milk to build immunity.



Parent Interaction / training Programs held in this Quarter

21st January: Session on “Understanding Intellectual Disability and it’s Impact on Adult hood” with Dr Shanti Auluck. Can watch this on YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eKV8BZPk3Xo&t=221s>

11th February: Interaction with East Delhi Center for restarting the program in new location

22nd February: Session on “Challenges of Parents, Professionals, & Persons with Disabilities” with Dr Shanti Auluck Can watch this on YouTube Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2DjCffoRU_0&t=4551s

15th March: Parent Teacher Meeting Work center

The Journey

My Journey with Ritesh Kishore during this Pandemic

By Mr.Surender Singh



My friend Ritesh Kishore, a 37 year old gentleman with Down Syndrome working at Lemon Tree Hotel. He was born in Mumbai and started his schooling there. After some time his family shifted to Delhi where his educational journey started with Saraswati Puri Nursery school at lady Irwin college continued to Laxman Public school and Four Steps. I met him first time during Special Olympics Delhi Games in 2003, I remember meeting a young shy boy but very hard working and focussed.

After long time I met him again in Lemon tree hotel aerocity in their coffee shop, where he joined as a trainee a week before when I joined lemon tree as a mentor from Muskaan to support Lemon tree in on job training of persons with ID (since Muskaan started in Partnership with Lemon tree hotels for employment of PWID. Took overall responsibility to sensetize, customize training, and also give support to the employees of Lemon tree in understanding PWID). Fortunately I was looking after this assignment . In this

process I met him once again the same young shy Ritesh working with dedication and always ready to learn new skills. He joined our group along with all the trainees of Muskaan for on the job training. He took some time to jell with all of us . In initial period we had very limited interaction, he never come forward to interact with me or anyone else but slowly- slwoly he started opening up and became an important member of our group. From 2014 to before lockdown one he has changed a lot but still has some hazitation in interacting with new people or in a big gathering specially in a new enviornment. As a Mentor I always felt that he has the capacity to be a good spokes person and can become an impactful self advocate who can raise voice for himself and for the cause, Just need some additional capacity building and a platform. But I was amazed to see the other dimenssion of his personality when online classes started during lockdown due to pandemic. When the group was given oppurtunity to conduct the session he was the one who came forward and never the less he has conducted the christmas event successfully. Afterwards he start taking responsiblity to Host the event, giving presentation on different topics, always ready to share his thoughts, Ideas and plan with in the group. He is the one who knows how to use the gadgets well and how to behave / basic etiquettes during the Virtual meetings.

One more things which I really want to share with everyone about him that during this period another important change I have observed that whenever he came with some kind of problem /queries, interestingly he only gave the idea/ paln to solve it. During this pendamic period his self confidence towards has improved a lot. His family members and relatives were also surprised and full of appreciation for him to see his changed personality- a new Ritesh .

Another interesting change happened suddenly, before pendamic, he was not taking part of any kind of household activity, kitchen ,cooking activity at home, but during the lockdown period when we started taking session about every member should contribute in the household work as sharing is caring and also after observing my videos he started to take part in all kind of household activities and started taking lots of new responsibility (shared by his parents proudly about the change of attitude).

He also has some dreams like anyone else. His dream are, To have his own house

To get married with a beautiful girl.

To have his own car.

To get promotion as a Hotel Manager.....

I can say very proudly that ***"I am his Buddy and he is my Best Buddy"***..... We both enjoy to talk together and he show his care, concern and love to me.

A Report

Art of life is constant readjustment: Changes brought in working during Pandemic

By Ms. Neera Chawla

With the advent of the pandemic and the subsequent lockdown, Muskaan was forced to resort to digital mediums to reach out to students and families to support them to adjust to the sudden change.

This also resulted in the need to find ways to continue the students' training as the focus of Muskaan has always been its students. The challenge was to develop and integrate a technical infrastructure in place to facilitate the teaching and learning, which was initially happening on WhatsApp video calls as the lock down started.

There was a need to get a more reliable and capable technical architecture in order to increase functionalities and efficiency. The following digital transformations were researched and implemented-

1. Use of various Tech devices by Students- Tablets, Smart phones, Laptops, Scanners, Copier & Printers. Tabs were introduced to the students' learning pedagogy right before the lockdown. The outcome of the same was highly encouraging. It motivated us to introduce this mode of learning to all students. This idea could not be fully implemented due to the lockdown, but subsequently Tabs were used by staff and students (issued by Muskaan for students who did not have a medium to attend online classes) to conduct and attend online classes.
2. Training of students on above devices for cognitive skill enhancement & Vocational training/Employment. To substitute the communication system with a formal infrastructure, we verified and activated the Google for Non-profits account for Muskaan, which gives organisational product plans for multiple Google products: G-suite, You tube, Google Ad grants for Nonprofits. After configuring various administrative setting to adapt and enable it to Muskaan, official IDs, using Muskaan's domain on G-suite, were created and distributed to all teachers, employees and students. An internal collaboration and information sharing system was established.
3. Use of technology by Staff members to increase efficiency in their work
To onboard the teachers and employees, parents & trainees of Muskaan on the newly created infrastructure and the resource library,
 - Conducted around four technical training session for all teachers and staff
 - Conducted around seven training sessions for all the parents
 - Provided technical support to teachers, students and parents to use the newly created technical infrastructure (as desired) .Presently teachers own and drive the online classes independently, meanwhile also providing back feedback to the IT team, thus informing the future technical roadmap of Muskaan
4. Digitization of Curriculum: Since the classes were happening online, a new pedagogy was needed to impactfully drive learning amongst students. Thus, a lot of teaching -learning material was created to be used in the online medium. This material was created on different topics as well as on the different format of communication. The formats are;
 - a) Flashcards- 48 flashcards on various topics (Academics, Sports, Recreation, Personal Adequacy, Communication, cognition & motor skills) are present in the library
 - b) Videos: Curation of around 31 videos on above areas created and stored in the library.

- c) Social Stories: Around 10 social stories to deliver learning on social behavior & safety.
- d) Work-sheets: Around 21 worksheets based on flashcard and social stories for assessment.

All the above material along with links to relevant external resources are provided in a structured and systematic form, through google shared drives & resource map on google sheet. The above material is also shared with parents through links, to keep them updated and equipped with the resources. Regular online assessments are conducted to judge the impact of the pedagogy on students and understand the effectiveness of the resources. Based on these assessments and teachers' feedback, the material is updated and expanded.

5. Digital Resource Library: Muskaan has created multiple digital libraries with various resources for different target audiences.
 - Student Resource Library- This contains all the teaching learning material created by Muskaan teachers and curated by researching external available sources. This material aims to improve the learning outcomes among the students and provide a reliable and verified repository for teachers to pick from when teaching new concepts. Implemented on Shared Drives on Google.
 - Teacher Resource Library- This library contains resources like training videos, webinars and other links and videos that can be used for teachers' training and skill development.
6. Effective use of Website and Social media platforms for awareness generation
To make the online presence of Muskaan more effective and widespread, multiple measures taken to improve the social media and website content & strategies.
 - Initially Muskaan was on Facebook and Instagram. These platforms have been extensively used for awareness purposes and branding of Muskaan. With the use of platforms like G-Suite (Google Meet) and Zoom, major events could be conducted online. Also, YouTube live streaming of the events was tried and successfully executed.
 - Muskaan also added LinkedIn to its social media platforms. It is being developed and used for formal purposes and networking. Currently, the free version of each of these is being used, which comes with limited functionalities. Updating them to paid versions like Facebook for Business will give us many additional options such as Shops on Instagram (to create an online store for Muskaan's products), boost posts on the platform for reaching a wider audience etc.
 - New content and campaigns on existing social media accounts was developed and made more accessible such as: a radio series on intellectual disability: Podcast on you tube (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC17GmEfKIPYF2Oq43oi2Efw>), Vacancy for job & admission on LinkedIn & Facebook, A month long campaign on FB & Instagram to mark Down syndrome day, Restructure and redesigning of website to make it more attractive & friendly,
7. Sale through Vyapaar app an online store. We are ready to deliver our products on your door step like any other outlet. A browsable store with all Muskaan Products with pictures, price & description easy to place order online. Link for Vyapar app [Online Store \(vyaparapp.in\)](https://vyaparapp.in/store/MuskaanPAEPID202022)
<https://vyaparapp.in/store/MuskaanPAEPID202022>

My journey of digital transformation during pandemic

Ms. Bani Kanojia

My journey of digital started when I joined Muskaan because before that I was working on-campus in a residential setup.

I was afraid if I can work online but fortunately got all support from each & every member of lovely Muskaan family in every step, how to take the session, how to communicate with parents, students & how to establish rapport. But everyone was so cooperative and helped me a lot and now students also jelled with me and enjoy my sessions thoroughly.

Thank you Muskaan family 😊

The magic of Talk -My Amazing Journey

Ms. Reena Tiwari

One very important area of Muskaan curriculum is to develop communication. Communication is not just about telling each other. But it is important to talk about understanding, mutual social interaction and emotional skills. Then student functioning does not matter whatsoever. This is how I got the opportunity to work on the communication of some students.

There are many students in this journey. But today I will share about one such student. Which is part of the Art & Activity Centre. Hemaseul with whom I had no direct interaction. Suddenly I got a chance to session with her. Knowing that Hemaseul used to connect only with her unit teacher. That was too before lockdown. But talking to her through online, at least one period, keeping her busy in conversation, diverting her tantrums, supporting the family to connect with her teacher for some time without them. It was not easy to talk to Hemaseul in the beginning because she was not ready to answer anything. She used to sit holding her mother's hand. If I ask anything, she would get angry and refuse for the session. At that time my first objective was to connect Hemaseul with me. I just had to listen to her, even if she was angry.

So, our new relationship started with the anger of Hemaseul. And especially the ways of diverting her temper. Which I came to know by inadvertently observing her Behaviour, such as talking on the topic of the party. But that was not enough for me. Because it was her rigid behaviour pattern that we just talked only about four things of food. So, we both came to the party game. Every day, something new had to be done to divert Hemaseul from her normal rigid behaviour pattern and to engage in those new things with her. Which makes her aware for any content, and acceptance for me. Hamesul's mother greatly supported in all these changes. In particular, prepare her for the session on time, set it up, help her in the answer whenever it was needed, and especially when mother is said to leave the session with any genuine excuses.

The result of all this is that today Hemaseul waits for her interactive communication session. She participates most happily in three to four activities in one period such as storytelling, show & tell, action word game, Guess game, simple fun questionnaire activity, picture story, game of body language and memory game. She enjoys the most in body language and tongue twister games. She can remember five to six sentences at a time. I felt the happiest when one day Hemaseul made her own story. Which was something like this **"There were four tigers. They used to live in the house of Reena Ma'am. And at night Hemaseul went to Ma'am's house to meet with the Tigers, everyone watched TV, then ate rice and Paneer and slept well"**.

Even today, when Hemaseul meets after weekends, she gets a little angry. But in a few minutes, she easily diverts. I am glad that Hemaseul learned that online sessions can be taken without the presence of her mother. And now the most important thing is that we become so busy in our talks that we do not even know about the end of the session...

My journey of digital transformation during pandemic

Ms. Pooja Bhati

जब कोरोना वायरस ज्यादा फैलने लगा तो हम सब को अचानक से पता चला कि हम सब को घर से काम करना है। हम सब ने शुरुआत में व्हाट्सएप वीडियो कॉल के द्वारा अपनी क्लास लेना शुरू किया, उस समय मेरे पास कोई ऐसा शिक्षण सामग्री उपलब्ध नहीं था जिसकी मदद से हम अपने फ्रेंड्स के साथ ऑनलाइन क्लास ले सके। शुरुआत में हमें काफी देर तक इंटरनेट पर कुछ ना कुछ टीचिंग लर्निंग सामग्री देखते और कुछ ऐसा ढूँढने की कोशिश करते हैं, जिससे हमारे फ्रेंड्स को कुछ दिलचस्प एवं सार्थक सिखा सके, साथ ही ये कि ये सब उनके रोज की जिंदगी में कुछ काम आ सके। धीरे-धीरे नेट से कुछ ऐसी फोटोस, वीडियो मिली जो हमारे फ्रेंड्स के लिए काफी अच्छी और मददगार भी साबित हुई। पर ऐसे करने से समय की बहुत बर्बादी हुई, कभी कभी ऐसा होता था की पूरा दिन निकल जाता था और कुछ ठीक ढंग का TLM नहीं मिलता था और हम यह सब कार्य अपने फोन पर कर रहे थे जिस वजह से हम काफी सारी चीज़ ऐसी थी जो नहीं कर पा रहे थे। फिर एक दिन हमें मुस्कान की तरफ से एक टैबलेट मिला जिसने हमारी काफी सारी परेशानी को हल किया, उस टैबलेट की मदद से हमने कुछ टीचिंग लर्निंग सामग्री भी बनाया जिसने हमारे क्लास को और मजेदार बना दिया। जब हम इस टेक्नालजी को समझे और उसके ऊपर काम किया तो चीजें दिन ब दिन और अच्छी होती गई और हमारे दोस्तों को इससे काफी मदद भी मिली। साथ हमारे क्लास लेने का तरीका भी बदला जिससे हमारे फ्रेंड्स जो व्हाट्सएप कॉल पर एक छोटे से हिस्से फोटो देखते और सीखते हैं अब वही फोटो वह अपने फोन की आधे स्क्रीन पर देख रहे थे , जो पहले से ज्यादा बड़ी और क्लियर थी। फिर धीरे धीरे सभी मुस्कान की टीचर्स ने मिलकर एक डिजिटल पुस्तकालय तैयार किया जिसको मुस्कान की सभी टीचर्स इस्तेमाल कर सकते थे और अपनी अपनी क्लास ले सकते थे। जब हम सब ने मिल कर डिजिटल पुस्तकालय बनाया उसके बाद हम सब का काफी समय बचने लगा। जो समय हम नेट से TLM ढूँढते थे अब वो समय हम न्यू TLM बनने में लगते हैं। इस तरह हमने इस महामारी के समय में digitally grow किया जो हमारे दोस्तों के लिए और हमारे लिए बहुत मददगार रहा।

Reflection

Interns: Three students from Narsee Monjee College of Commerce and Economics, Mumbai done their internship Virtually during this quarter.

Prior to the session, I thought we would face coordination issues in the online environment. But the students were very cooperative and nobody spoke out of turn. The students made sure that they were on mute when others were speaking/performing activities and this enabled healthy class participation. We got the chance to speak with everyone from the Employment Class and engage them in various activities. I was amazed at the enthusiasm with which they participated in the activities. At the end of the session, we were thanked by many students and I was grateful to know that they enjoyed the activities. I would like to thank all the members of Muskaan, especially Surinder Sir for giving us the opportunity to host this session for our friends.

ASHUTOSH SHANBHANG



This is the first time we directly interacted with the students and also solely managed the class. We had seen Surinder sir conducting a fun filled session and so wanted to match the level. The amount of enthusiasm the students had was overwhelming. By yesterday's session they had started raising hands to answer and muting themselves when not asked to talk. Their simple coordination made it easy for us to conduct the activities. Towards the end, they got super excited and kept telling us how much fun they had, making me realise again, that one should look for happiness in the little things in life also.

ISHI MAHAJAN



Parents remarks

Mother of Preet Inder Soin, Ms. Romy Soin

Trust is most important reason why I feel Muskaan is a safe working environment for my child. They walk the talk when the staff says they will maintain social distancing and observe other the Covid 19 protocols like wearing masks and using sanitizers. I have personally been there many occasions without prior intimation to be pleasantly surprised by the strictness observed. No place can be 100% safe, not even our homes! Training our children on safety norms is the way forward since institutions have their limitations.

Before the session, I was so scared that how will I and my friends Ishi and Ashutosh will manage the session without the help of the facilitators. But all fear went away when we start interacting with them. The students were so disciplined and enthusiast that we could not feel that we are interacting with them for the first time and that too in the virtual mode. The one hour session got passed in like some minutes. We all enjoyed a lot with our friends at Muskaan or we can say Stars of Muskaan and it was very memorable session for three of us. We wish all the stars a shining and bright future ahead. In the End, I would Like to thanks all the dignitaries of Muskaan NGO to have such a faith that we can organise the sessions independently and giving us this wonderful opportunity

SHASHANK GARG



Mother of Tushar Mrs. Honey Sachdeva

Tushar is very much interested in working and earning money. Work from Home gave him this opportunity and he gained confidence and perfection in making envelops. He felt good that he was also working from home as his other family members. We strongly recommend continuing this and supporting students to be productive during these difficult times.

A Report

Our friends at assisted living facility during pandemic

By Ms. Seema Chadha

We are all aware that there was a period of complete lockdown in Delhi from 24th March 2020 due to COVID 19. In this situation no staff from outside the Assisted living complex were allowed to come to provide their services. Therefore, most of the residents returned to their Guardians/families before lockdown started, though four residents continued living at the facility because their parents were not alive.

By July'20 COVID management guidelines for partial opening of the lockdown were issued by the Government so we offered our other Staff members coming from the community to shift to the campus and their boarding-lodging and food was taken care by Muskaan. This arrangement was worked out to ensure safety of the residents and staff. But, 3 of our staff members could not avail of this option and resigned. As the project was planned to be shifted to the Vasant Kunj center, we hired staff on temporary basis. With this arrangement 5 more residents rejoined the facility after taking RT-PCR test in July'21. Now, we had 9 residents (5 female and 4 male). All interaction with outside environment was restricted and SOP was prepared for daily purchases, staff going out of campus or for guardians. These were followed very strictly.

We would like to share functioning of the Assisted Living Project in COVID 19 pandemic

Assisted living project continued to provide

Healthy Diet: We provided hygienically prepared meals to the residents. Diet of each resident is decided keeping in consideration their medical specific requirements.

We followed strict hygiene rules while preparing food or serving. On the onset of COVID 19 we prepared an SOP to clean and store the fresh purchases of daily need. SOP for kitchen staff included frequent washing of hands, cleaning space, not touching your body parts frequently and use of hand sanitizer. To build the immunity of the resident we introduced black tea with Amla juice, Ginger and honey during their tea time along with serving healthy snacks like sprouts, fruits and green vegetables (Organic vegetables were grown within the complex). Enough arrangements were made for supply of the grocery and disinfecting them. SOP for COVID prevention for staff, residents and staff families staying on the campus.

Medical & nursing care: During the complete lockdown period supplies of regular medicines for the residents was ensured. Monthly mobile Medical Van service didn't continue but we consulted the doctor and started giving supplements like Vitamin B complex with zinc, calcium, multi vitamins to all the residents. Daily temperature testing and oxygen level testing is still continued with periodical checking of weight, BP, Heart rate and Sugar is practiced.



We organized periodical COVID RT PCR testing camps for the residents and staff at the Centre. Between Oct.'20 till March'21 four such camps were organized (Pl. find the Pictures attached)

One of the guardians arranged an outside agency to sanitize the campus and provided supplies of disinfectant solutions. Sanitization of the resident's area was done twice a day and weekly the entire campus was sanitized. Rotary club Vasant Kunj donated foot operated hand sanitizing machine, face shields and face masks.

Training on life skills and personal care with Advancement in age: Staff engaged the residents in the activities to generate awareness on What is COVID 19? How it spreads?, what measures can prevent them from getting infection? Provided training and practice on how to wear a mask, gloves and face shields? The staff prepared the worksheets/flash

cards, and used tube videos to impart training on wearing mask, frequent washing of hands and maintaining distance. All our residents are completely aware of the situation and practicing preventive measures. Periodical session through life skill cognitive enrichment topics like measurement, cooking, money concept added with fun activities were conducted. Videos of the sessions were made and sent to the guardians at home. They were also involved in winding up of the project from Dera Village.



We guided our teachers to keep a regular contact with residents/students & families to help them in preparing structured and meaningful routine/activities for every day. The motivation for this was to post pictures and videos while residents/students are engaged in household activities. These were posted on What's App groups created for regular communication between teachers & parents. Initially it was at a low pace though with encouragement from teachers and also seeing other students' pictures gradually all parents started posting pictures & videos of their ward. However, through this it was ensured that each family started thinking of involving them in meaningful activities so that residents/students felt valued in the family for their contribution at such times. In this process residents are also trained to take simple responsibilities like arranging for meal time, winding up, watering the plants, kitchen activities, drying laundry and folding clothes, taking care of the parents etc. To the guardians surprise the wards settled very well in the home environment.

Vocational skills and employment

Even our Vocational training cum employment centre, located in Vasant Kunj, was also closed as per government directives. Therefore, our residents too couldn't go to the vocational training / employment centre to work. We arranged few domestic and art & craft activities for the residents that included flower drying for Holi herbal colours, Solar drying of leafy vegetables like methi, pudina, onion etc. Different Art & Craft activities like embroidery on matte cloth as Table runner, making bowls by recycling the newspaper, making



Eco friendly Dustbin liners with newspaper etc. Engaging them in housekeeping activities like doing laundry, making beds and dusting their rooms.



Since the Lockdown continued, we started to hold online training sessions, video conference with our teachers to guide them how to plan and conduct online sessions by use of What's App/Google meet/G Suit/Zoom only as all of them do not have access to other tech devices at home.

Recreation Activities/ outings:

Celebrations like birthdays and festivals kept them residents motivated. We celebrated Diwali, Christmas and Holi. Whereas, for people at home they were made to participative virtually. No outings could take place.



Counseling of Residents and families:

There was anxiety and fear in the whole environment. Everyone was home bound and this was a very challenging situation for our residents who went back to their guardians. Since accommodating to any



change in regular routine is difficult for them (if not informed well in time). This situation came as an emergency with no time for us to prepare them. Long period of stay of residents with their families had its own kind of challenges.

Due to restricted movement of residents within the campus and not attending their vocational cum employment center made them anxious as they were not able to meet their friends. Our staff members living on campus took care of their emotional and social

needs by creating fun activities and enabling them to talk to their friends and family on Google duo and what's app video. Senior teachers also interacted with resident frequently to help them cop up with their emotional needs.

Construction of Additional space at Muskaan's existing centre at Vasant kunj shifting of the project

Assisted Living facility was created in year 2012 as an initiative by Muskaan and National Trust, a statutory body of Ministry of Social welfare and empowerment. The objective was to create a model Assisted living facility for lifelong care of the Adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who do not have support from family or need a place to live a dignified life after parent's death. A MPCC centre at Dera village was allotted to National Trust for creating and establishing such service for 10 years ending in 2017. With great pleasure we can share that we succeeded in developing such facility and was sure that Delhi government will extend the lease for at least 30 years so that sustainability can be ensured. The Assisted Living facility of Muskaan was much talked about in disability sector in Delhi as well all over India. However, buckling under the pressure of villagers the Delhi government could not extend it for long time and permitted us to stay there till April 2021 only so that Muskaan could make an alternative arrangement to relocate our assisted living facility.



Executive committee of Muskaan decided to build the accommodation in Muskaan premises, Vasant Kunj itself. The whole process of designing, getting MCD approvals and engaging a building contractor was done and in January 2020 the construction of additional space at our existing building was started. It meant construction of 400 sq. metres of building, putting up 2 new stair cases and widening of 2 existing staircases, installation of lift and firefighting system as per the new MCD guidelines for building construction. The whole process got disrupted and delayed for almost 6 months due to lockdown in COVID 19 situation. By December '20 accommodation for male and female residents and kitchen cum dining space was ready and in January'21 we shifted our project to the

residential wing, Vasant Kunj. It has separate accommodation for men and women and attached toilets, Kitchen cum Dining room along with accommodation for project in-charge and warden's family.

The new accommodation required realignment of training/recreational program for residents and work schedule of caretaking Staff. We had 9 residents living at the facility and only four service staff continued their services. Our housekeeping staff for cleaning and laundry and part time cook didn't continue their job due to distance. Therefore, our existing part time cook extended her services as a full time cook and a new housekeeping staff was hired for cleaning and laundry work. We have not increased the number of staff as

yet and took support of existing support staff/ care takers of Muskaan to manage services. We resumed our services from 1st of February'21 onwards with 8 residents. One more resident joined us in March'21 as he lost his only family member, mother on 22nd March'21. He doesn't have any other close relative. As per the wishes of parents/guardians, rest of the residents will join back after vaccination. Most of them have taken first dose of Vaccine and will join back by May/June'21 after 2nd shot of vaccine. As we didn't have full strength (17) of residents living at the facility till March'21 end therefore grant under a few heads remains underutilized.

Impact of these initiatives: This pandemic situation brought lots of changes in professional approach. Everyone the beneficiaries, parents and Staff are pushed to adopt to technology-based communication/working. Catching up the available technology starting with Google duo/what's app video conferencing and gradually learning use of Google meet/G suit/ WebEx/ Zoom. Interaction with families/residents thru virtual platforms was initially difficult but slowly we all got use to.

By shifting the Assisted Living facility to Vasant Kunj, we have ensured stability and future security for all the residents as the uncertainty of lease extension by Delhi Govt. was affecting our long-term plans. Families including our students are happy with the change. They shared positive feedback regarding getting support from Muskaan during this period of crisis.

Community Support

During the year Assisted Living facility was supported by

1. The construction of new Assisted living wing at Vasant Kunj was largely supported by Indorama Charitable Trust (Rs. 37lakhs), Muskaan India Inc. (Rs. 37 lakhs), Smt. Savitri & Shri S.S. Palta Memorial Charitable Trust (Rs. 12 lakhs), Ahluwalia Construction group (Rs. 25 lakhs), Inner wheel Club (Rs. 6.5 lakhs) British High Commission Charity India (Rs. 4lakhs), Indorama Trust (Rs. 1 Lakh)
2. Received a grant of Rs. 31.5 lakhs from H.T. Parekh Foundation (HDFC Bank) towards capital and operational expenses for 6 months
3. Main Tendue (a French Embassy Charity India) has continued to support resident's kitchen grocery needs worth Rs. 1.65 lakhs and Rs. 1 lakh for the construction

Muskaan is full of gratitude to our funders/Donors/volunteers for their kind support, that made it possible for us to pull through difficult circumstances. It has enabled us to provide full attention to our services to the residents and their families.



Vaccination (Facts & Myths) & Notifications regarding PWD

By Ms. Namrata Sujnani

Vaccine

- It is a preparation which builds immunity against a particular disease.



It's an Injection not a droplet



Available COVID-19 Vaccines



Sputnik V



Covaxin



Covishield

Why do we need to get vaccinated?

- To protect oneself from Covid infection
- To save lives
- To eradicate diseases
- To protect others from the infection by prevention of the infection

How does Covid 19 vaccine work?

- Injection helps in producing antibody to fight against COVID-19 virus.
- Given in 2 doses - 2nd injection is administered after a gap of 1-3 month from the first injection.
- Vaccine injection is given in the shoulder muscle, usually the non-dominant hand

Side Effects

- Injection site pain
- Fever
- Body/muscle pain
- Heavy arm

Vaccine Contraindications (Reasons why one should avoid the vaccination) Please consult your doctor if any of these exist..

- People in age group below 18yrs (Since vaccine for children are still in the process of trials)
- Pregnant and Lactating mothers.
- Allergic reaction to a previous dose.
- Active COVID symptoms
- Acutely unwell/hospitalised patients due to any illness.
- Special precaution in persons with history of bleeding or coagulation disorder.

Myths and facts

- Immediate Re-infection :- NO
- Putting lemon juice/mustard oil in nostrils prevents COVID-19 infection :- NO
- Covid vaccine alters DNA :- NO
- Testing positive after Vaccination : NO, not due to the vaccine.
- Death after 2 yrs of vaccination :- NO
- Don't get vaccinated during menstrual cycle : NO
- Can't get pregnant after vaccination :- NO
- 5G mobile networks spread covid infection - NO

Let's Get Vaccinated

- Register yourself on Cowinpartal trough Cowin app/ arogyasetu app etc
- Take the appointment through app depends upon the availability of slot
- Get vaccinated on the vaccination center aloted at the given time slot wait for 30 mins and return to your home take rest if needed take paracetamol
- take the 2nd dose with same process after the desired time period

I GOT MY COVID-19 VACCINE TODAY !



As per RPD Act 2016 persons with any form of disabilities don't have to stand in que for medical treatment/ vaccination. Ministry of health has issued this directive. If you take your ward to hospital for vaccination carry this notification with cowin registration & appointment along with aadhar card/ card.



F.No. 34-03/2021-DD-III

भारतसरकार/ Government of India

दिव्यांगजनसशक्तिकरणविभाग

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)

सामाजिकन्यायऔरअधिकारितामंत्रालय/ Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

पॉचवातल, बीविंग, पंडितदीनदयालअंत्योदयभवन, सीजीओकॉम्प्लेक्स, लोधीरोड, नईदिल्ली - 110003

5th Floor, B Wing, Pt. DeendayalAntyodayaBhawan, CGO Complex, New Delhi-110003

Dated: 26.04.2021

OFFICE MEMORENDUM

Subject: Priority and preference to Persons with Disabilities in testing, treatment and vaccination of corona virus - reg

The undersigned is directed to forward therewith a copy of representation dated 22.04.2021 received from National Federation of Blind, Delhi alleging that PwDs including persons with visual impairments have to stand in long queue for the purpose of testing, vaccination and treatment for COVID19 induced ailments.

2. In this regard, attention is invited to Section 25 (1)(c) of the RPwD Act, 2016 which mandates priority in attendance and treatment. M/o Health and Family Welfare is therefore requested to issue appropriate instructions to State/UT health authorities and healthcare institutions under its control to ensure that special provisions be made in COVID 19 testing, vaccination and treatment centers for priority in attending to and treatment of PwDs.


(D.K. Panda)

Under Secretary to the Govt. of India
Tel: 24369059

Encl: As Above

M/o Health and Family Welfare
[Shri Lav Agarwal, Joint Secretary]
NirmanBhawan, New Delhi -11
Email: alav@ias.nic.in

CC to:
National Federation of the Blind, Delhi, email: nfbsec.g@gmail.com

Celebrations

Re-imagining Festivities amidst the Pandemic

By Ms Shreya Gerg

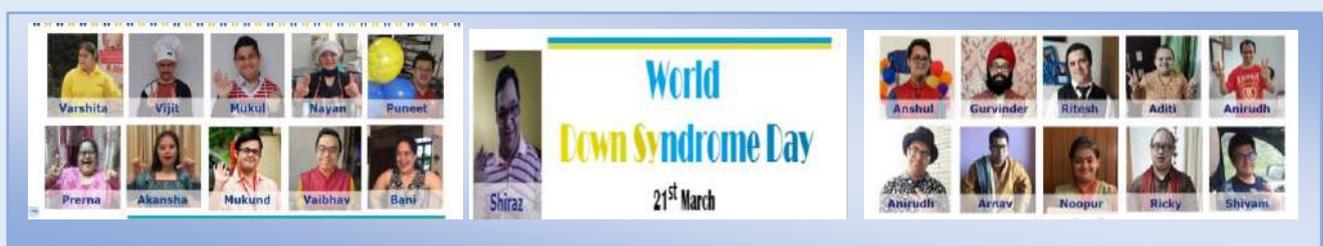
At Muskaan, we have always celebrated each festival and occasion with pomp and joy, spreading positivity, light and love. In 2020, when the world was dealing with many changes, due to the global COVID pandemic, Muskaan too was adapting and learning new ways to stay connected with its students, teachers and other family members. Amidst these difficulties, we still managed to spread smiles by shifting our celebrations online. Festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, and Lohri and occasions such as World Disability Day were all celebrated through an online medium and all students took part, singing and dancing. The team behind these sessions worked hard to make sure that we keep the Muskaan spirit alive, despite the challenging times.

The Down Syndrome Day of 2021 (21st March) was a special occasion for Muskaan as we decided to kick things to the next level and launched a one-month long social media campaign to raise awareness about the cause, and also increase the Muskaan brand name. The campaign was designed to show the multi-faceted personalities of our friends with down syndrome in Muskaan and highlight their capabilities and achievements. It was implemented to reach the maximum possible audience and pique their interest in the content. The theme chosen for the campaign was 21 stars of 2021 and videos introducing 21 Muskaan students (with Down Syndrome) were created and shared with the world. In a larger context, we tend to focus more on the disability rather than the person, which is a very narrow-minded and limited view to see any individual. To break this construct, the (~1 min) videos showcased the skills, interests, and aspirations of each of the selected students to bring out various aspects about them, other than the disability. Along with these videos, other informational and myth-breaking content was also published as pictures. The medium used were Facebook and Instagram. The campaign received great response from the users and successfully reached out to many new groups and areas.

While this campaign was intended for the outside world, Muskaan also wanted to celebrate the day internally with its family of students, parents, staff, and executive and other members. Since the Down Syndrome Day was close to Holi, we decided to throw a combined "Vasant Utsav" to come together (after a long period of virtual interactions only) and enjoy the jolly mood of the spring season*. The fest was held in Muskaan, Vasant Kunj campus, which was decorated in blue and yellow colours, in support of the Down Syndrome Day. The attractions included many different food stalls, game booths, selfie-point, dance floor, movie screening, and more. Parents and teachers came together to put-up these stalls and organize the festivities. It was a fun-filled day of reconnecting with each other and remembering the old days (pre-COVID) of celebrations in Muskaan.

The past year has been difficult for the entire world; we have had to re-imagine our ways of interacting with each other, rediscover solutions to work remotely from our homes, innovate methods of imparting knowledge and training, and understand the importance of maintaining our well-being and that of others as well. Muskaan, too, has adapted itself to continue working efficiently amidst these challenges. Maintaining our culture of spreading joy and celebrating together has helped keep the organization's core values intact and unchanged, despite the changing time

***All necessary COVID precautionary measures including (but not limited to) sanitizing hands and wearing masks were observed by all individuals present, at all times.**







Add: Muskaan, Plot no. 3, Sector-B, Pocket-2, Vasant Kunj, New Delhi: 110070 Contact no: 41761873/74.