

# SAAMARTHYA FOUNDATION

Celebrate Ability, Unleash Potential



## 2021: A look back

As another eventful year draws to a close, we invite you to join us in looking back on all that we have achieved together.

Created By: Rucha Bagkar & Ruta Bagkar (Saamarthya Ambassadors)

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“Whoever touches the life of the child touches the most sensitive point of a whole, which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future.”

Maria Montessori



## Our Focus on Empowering parents

### Virtual Parent Training Programs

We conducted and delivered our signature parent training program, to over **100** parents from all over India exclusively in Hindi and Marathi. Our Hindi training was organized in collaboration with Nayi Disha Resource Centre where we provided 8 week-long intensive training sessions to families across India - from Dehradun and Bhopal to Srinagar and Patna. We successfully delivered training to 5 parent cohorts. Similarly, our Marathi Cohort, in association with SNIC Rehab Foundation, reached families from Nagpur, Akola, and Dhule, among others.

Parents from smaller towns and cities often don't have access to high-quality training, particularly available in their native language. Our mission was to create and deliver our content in Hindi and Marathi so we could reach as many families who could access our training without the language barrier.

Overcoming technical and practical challenges, we were able to empower parents of children with IDD and ASD, so as to help them learn and implement strategies to teach their children new skills.

Our content is designed by Dr. Pandit to be comprehensive and research-based so that parents have access to all the important and right information as it relates to child development and early intervention.

We received overwhelmingly positive feedback from all the parents who report that these intensive training sessions have helped them learn and implement strategies at home. All the parents report feeling more confident and empowered in teaching their children new skills. This is such a validation of the effectiveness and impact of our parent training content and approach!

## Launched Our Signature Program

### Club Ananda For children with Disabilities

This Teacher's Day, we also launched a brand new initiative 'Club Ananda', with the aim of providing high-quality programming to support children with disabilities and their unique developmental and learning needs. As part of our club, we organized engaging sessions on a variety of topics like arts and crafts, exercise, cooking, and many more - all of which aimed at developing fine and gross motor skills, movement, creativity, and other valuable skills. The overwhelmingly positive response we've received from the kids and parents only motivates us to keep on going!



## Launched Storytelling Events

### Focus on Empathy and Inclusion

- Children's Day Storytelling Event (virtual)
- Storytelling and Book Donation at a Pune school
- Annual Inclusive Books Festival (virtual)

Inclusion, equality, and accessibility are important values that must be inculcated in young minds right from the beginning, in order to create a better, more inclusive world for the future. With this aim in mind, we partnered up with authors, storytellers, and numerous schools from all over India to organize online as well as in-person storytelling events which gave a platform to inclusive children's stories with diverse characters. **These stories reached more than 500 children**, creating awareness and starting some much-needed conversations about disability and inclusion among these young minds.



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“Play is our brain's favorite way of learning.”

- Diane Ackerman

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The human species  
thinks in metaphors  
and learns through  
stories.

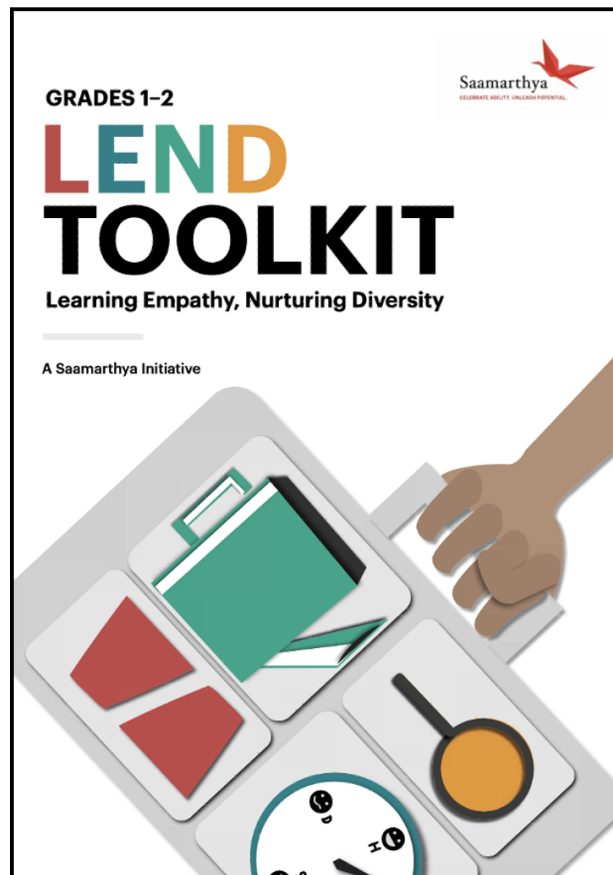
- Mary  
Catherine  
Bateson

## Launched Our Empathy Curriculum

### Focus on Social-Emotional Development: LEND Toolkit

We believe that equipping teachers with relevant skills and resources is necessary to foster positive and inclusive environments in which children of all backgrounds and abilities can thrive. Our LEND toolkit is designed for educators of grades 1-5 to implement an empathy curriculum in their classrooms.

The curriculum focuses on developing social-emotional and communication skills, thereby encouraging students to cultivate an understanding and kindness for others as well as for themselves. The accompanying toolkit provides educators with a range of activities, strategies, and resources to use. Interested schools and organizations can book a session for their teachers.



## Our Public Awareness Campaigns

### Social Media Campaigns

With the aim to throw a **'spotlight on ability'**, we interviewed 11 people with disabilities from different walks of life and asked them to share their professional journey and unique talents with us. From creative pottery and animation artists to passionate cooks and bakers, this was a chance to celebrate the work of PwDs while showcasing inclusive work environments. This campaign also helped increase the visibility of a lot of small business owned by PwDs!

With the ever-increasing need for trained professionals in the field of disability support, it becomes even more important to guide them in their search for the perfect career. In collaboration with DreamPath Foundation, we signed up for this mission of educating youngsters about the eligibility and scope of a variety of courses in the disability sector. Through an engaging story and even a fun word-search puzzle, we introduced numerous professions practised in this field of countless opportunities!

Inclusion is one of the key aspects in the discourse around disability. With **'Minclusion Mondays'**, our goal was to create awareness about disability inclusion in daily life. Through a series of short video-clips and simple posts, we put forth some useful points to keep in mind when interacting with a PwD in simple settings such as supermarkets, parks, weddings, etc., which can help people be more mindful and inclusive.

Apart from these, our other social media campaigns and initiatives include: **Article Series on Disabilities** (informative articles on some of the disabilities listed in the RPWD Act, 2016), **Saamarthya Weekly** (weekly series on important news in the disability sector), **Employment of PwDs** (awareness campaign with key facts & figures and policies on PwD employment in India).



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The first step toward change is awareness. The second step is acceptance.

- Nathaniel  
Branden

“

I hear and I forget.  
I see and I remember.  
I do and I understand.

- Confucius



# Learning together

## Our Virutal Events

From June to August, under our signature **'Ananda Camp Series'** in collaboration with SNIC Rehab Foundation, we organized several free online camps for children with disabilities. With a duration of around 10 days each, these camps provided developmental and learning opportunities to 200+ kids.

We conducted various activities focusing on areas such as life skills, basic computer skills and cognitive skills.

Some other events included the **'Swayam' Series** wherein we organized yoga sessions and mental health webinars for parents of children with disabilities, as well as a few art sessions for kids under **'Ananda' series**.

Presented in association with SNIC Rehab Foundation and hosted by financial expert Mr. Rahul Kelapure, our **'Samruddhi' financial planning series** focused on financial planning for parents of children with disabilities and their adult siblings. Throughout the year, we facilitated monthly webinars on specific topics that gave practical and applicable tools to families to plan better for the future of their loved ones. The series offered an in-depth analysis of topics as varied as mutual funds, insurance policies, guardianship and more.

# A New Look

## Revamped Website & Logos

With immense pleasure and pride, we present to you the updated logos for our organization and other initiatives, designed by Parv Tiwari and the Upai Team. We also partnered up with Upai to revamp our website, transforming it into an interactive platform and learning space for all. Check it out [here!](#)



## Support our cause!

[Donate](#)[Contact](#)[Partner](#)[Volunteer](#)

## Follow us!

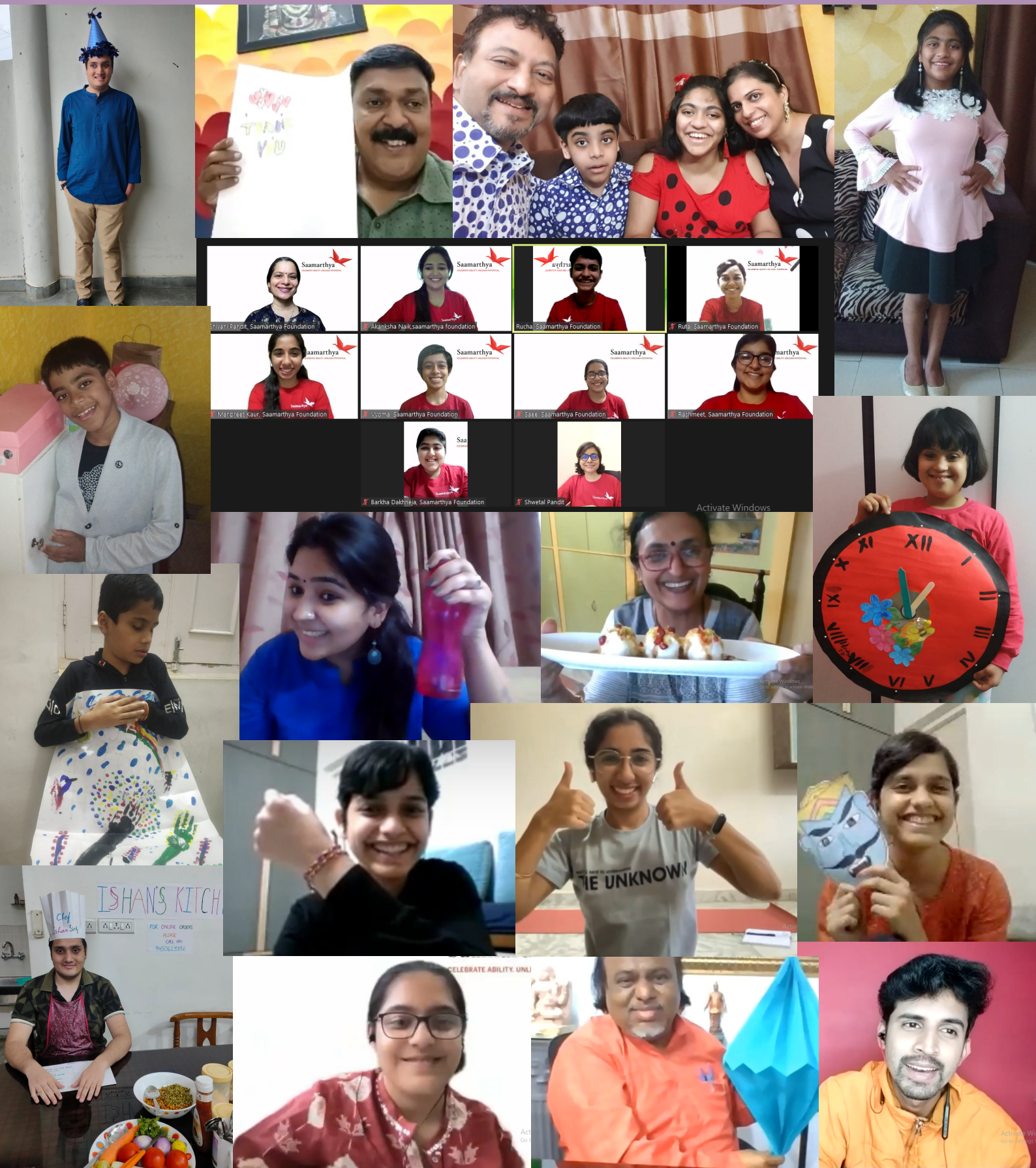


## 2022: A step forward

We hope that the coming year will bring us all even more happiness, inclusivity and equality! With our deepest gratitude for all your love and unwavering support, we wish you a very Happy New Year!

# The evergrowing Saamarthy family!

Here's to many more milestones!





# PARENT TESTIMONIALS

"Saamarthya Foundation under the able leadership of Dr. Shivani Pandit has been doing a remarkable job for training children to be relatively independent. Despite the pandemic, the Saamarthya team has touched the lives of numerous individuals across India and Abroad. This has been by way of means like various online workshops, training sessions, etc. Club Ananda recently launched by Foundation has been the icing on the cake. It has not only empowered children but likewise parents as well.

We the Rodrigues family have been witnessing this being a part of most of the online sessions whether it's computers, cooking, fitness, etc. We look forward to every session of yours which is so well conducted ably by your team. More power to you and best wishes so you may reach from strength to strength in your ultimate goal to provide evidence-based professional development and advocacy resources to persons who are differently-abled".

(Bryne and Janice Rodrigues, Mumbai, India)

"The session on creating and using visual supports to support learning at home was very beneficial."

(Parent Training Participant)

"I learnt to use the child's interest and understand his strengths to teach him effectively"

(Parent Training Participant)

The camp was very informative and creative. In a virtual environment, this was the best thing that could be done. Covered a large spectrum of activities"

( Club Ananda Participant)



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## Thanks to our lil' artist!

All the artwork featured in this newsletter has been created by Pranav Aggarwal. We are grateful to Pranav for sharing his art!

Pranav is a 9-year-old child with Down Syndrome, from Gurugram, India who loves to play with colors in unconventional ways. His art is featured on multiple platforms and he has participated in many national and international art exhibitions, including the Deep Down Arts Exhibition, Mexico.

Follow and support his work!  
Facebook: [@littleartgallerypranav](#)  
Instagram : [@littleartistpranav](#)

