



Saamarthya

CELEBRATE ABILITY. UNLEASH POTENTIAL.



annual
report
2025

diversity
and inclusion,
which are the
real grounds for
creativity, must
remain at the
center of what we do.

Marco Bizzarri



At **Saamarthya Foundation**, our mission is to ensure that every child with a disability grows up with joy, learning, and a deep sense of belonging.

We work to make early intervention and therapies accessible, inclusive, and community-driven — empowering families, educators, caregivers, and every adult in a child's life.

Through awareness, advocacy, and action, we uphold the right of every child to thrive with dignity, without barriers.

our
mission



message from the founder

As a special educator, I have spent over 30 years walking alongside children and families, and one truth has become clearer with every step: identification alone is never enough. Spotting a challenge is only the beginning. Real transformation happens when we stay with families, hand in hand, through every stage of their journey.

At **Saamarthya Foundation**, we are committed to closing the loop. This means not just offering therapies for the child, but supporting the entire family—parents, siblings, grandparents because every family member is part of the child's world. We guide, we listen, we troubleshoot, and we celebrate every small victory together. It's about creating a network of care that doesn't end at a report or a session, but extends into daily life, into routines, into hearts.

The work we do is deeply personal. I have seen parents grow from uncertainty to confidence, siblings learn empathy and patience, and children blossom when the family feels equipped and supported.

This holistic, last-mile approach is what drives us: ensuring that every child's potential is nurtured, every parent feels empowered, and no family is left in the middle of the journey.

Every day, we witness the courage and resilience of families. And every day, we are reminded that our mission is not just about intervention it's about walking with families until they feel supported, seen, and strong enough to carry forward on their own. That is the heart of **Saamarthya Foundation**: closing the loop with care, compassion, and unwavering commitment.

Dr. Shivani Pandit, Ed.D



At the core of Saamarthya Foundation's work is our **Family Resource Center (FRC)** — a space where families, children, and professionals come together to build understanding, resilience, and growth. Located in Baner, Pune, the FRC is designed not as a clinic or therapy center, but as a community hub — a warm, inclusive environment where every family feels seen, supported, and empowered.

The FRC serves as the foundation for all our programs. From **early screening and one-on-one therapies** (Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Special Education, and Counselling) to **group programs** like Social Skills, Functional Life Skills, and School Readiness, every initiative stems from the belief that development is most effective when the entire family ecosystem is supported.

Parents are an active part of the process here. They learn alongside their children with our Open Door Policy and our expressive spaces like **Sukoon Saturdays** and **Sukoon Wednesdays**. This family-centered model helps parents understand their child's unique rhythm and become confident advocates for their growth.

The FRC also hosts **community engagement sessions** such as Sensory Splash, Energy Squad,, and seasonal programs like Cooking Camps and Summer Camp, ensuring that neurodivergent children have the same opportunities for play, creativity, and friendship as their neurotypical peers.

Our **UDID Helpdesk** and **parent support services** further ensure that families have access to information, government entitlements, and the right networks of care.

The FRC is, in many ways, a microcosm of what Saamarthya stands for — **collaborative, compassionate, and committed to the last mile**. It's where families begin their journey with us, and where they return — not just for therapy, but for belonging, community, and hope.



family resource center overview



programs
and
services

SERVICES:

At Saamarthya Foundation, we believe every child's journey is unique. Through our one-on-one sessions in **Occupational Therapy, Special Education, Speech Therapy, Counselling, and our Udaan (NIOS) learning support program**, helping each child move forward at their own pace — with care, consistency, and compassion.





GROUP PROGRAMS (FRC AND ONLINE)

School Readiness Program

Neurodivergent children often need additional time and support to adjust to new environments. Our School Readiness program acts like a *dress rehearsal* for school — helping children ease into routines and transitions. Two children completed the program this year.

Parent Testimonial: *When we first brought Shreya to the Family Resource Center, she was incredibly shy and hardly spoke. In just six months, we've seen a beautiful change — she now greets her therapists with confidence and participates actively in group communication. The support and patience she receives here have truly helped her blossom*



Functional Life Skills

Born out of parent feedback, this program focuses on older children who are not enrolled in formal schooling. Each session builds everyday independence.

Social Skills Program

Children come together to learn cooperation, turn-taking, and emotional expression. A parent recently shared:

“Thank you very much for giving so much exposure to our kids. You all are doing a fantastic job. The kids are extremely comfortable with you all.”

Culinary Skills Camp

Conceptualized and led by a parent from our community, this summer's cooking camp brought together young chefs who learnt to measure, plate, mix, and even create a four-course meal — including dessert!





Tech Ninja

This program strengthens digital and motor skills — from typing and finger isolation to sitting tolerance and hand-eye coordination — helping children engage more confidently with technology.

Summer Camp

Summer breaks can be challenging for families of neurodivergent children. Our annual camp welcomes children each year for structured, fun, and therapeutic activities.

Music Therapy

In collaboration with Curly's Music Academy, our music sessions continue to bring rhythm, relaxation, and joy to the children.



Expressive Art for Kids

A creative space for children to explore their emotions through colors, textures, and imagination.



Sukoon Saturdays & Sukoon Wednesdays

Our Sukoon series is a Saamarthya signature. Saturdays offer parents a space to connect with their inner selves through expressive arts, while Wednesdays serve as a free, ongoing support group for parents of neurodivergent children.

Sensory Splash

Curated by our Occupational Therapists, this Saamarthya signature program focuses on sensory exploration. Children join each session to play, explore textures, and build regulation skills.



Energy Squad

Physical movement can be a challenge, and this program, designed by our in-house OT, helps children strengthen body awareness and coordination.



UDID Helpdesk

Our UDID Helpdesk has supported families through the application and documentation process, ensuring they access their rightful government benefits.

Club Ananda

Our online recreational club continues to thrive, bringing together participants every week for games, sharing, and community connection.

DiversiCode Workshops

In collaboration with DiversiCode, we hosted workshops on coding, Canva, and Wix website building.

ASMI Parent Training

Our hands-on parent training series — ASMI — has conducted intensive cohorts, each comprising 10 sessions for a closed group of 10 parents. Sessions focus on practical strategies for sensory integration, behaviour management, adolescence, play therapy, reading, writing, and comprehension.

Swayam Parent Training Webinars

A long-standing Saamarthy signature, Swayam continues to empower parents with knowledge and expert insights. Each month, an average of 80 parents participate in our sessions conducted in collaboration with SNIC Rehab Foundation.



impact through programs and services

Caregiver/
Teachers
Trained

2024
0

2025
350+

Pro-Bono
Beneficiaries
(Children,
Parents,
Caregivers)

2024
120+

2025
280+

Families
Supported

2024
300

2025
500+

Pro-Bono/
Scholarships
offered
for Direct
Interventions/
Therapies

2024
8

2025
23

In Person
Observations
for Early
Identification

2024
10

2025
50+

Group
Programs

2024
6

2025
16+

Beyond individual transformation, Saamarthya's strength lies in building inclusive ecosystems. Our Family Resource Center model integrates assessment, intervention, and advocacy under one roof—bridging parents, professionals, and policymakers.

In 2025, we strengthened collaborations with local schools, healthcare providers, and corporate CSR partners. Together, we piloted inclusion training programs, community awareness drives, and digital outreach campaigns. These partnerships reaffirm our belief that inclusion is not the responsibility of one organization—it's a shared societal mission.

systemic impact & partnerships



ANGANWADI - PROJECT SOBATI

Anganwadi centers play a pivotal role in nurturing the growth, health, and development of children aged 0–6 years, as well as supporting pregnant and lactating mothers, under the government’s Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme. Through this initiative, Saamarthya has been granted permission to work directly in **268 Anganwadi centers across North Pune**, with a pilot phase rolled out over **16 centers in Baner and nearby areas**. Project Sobati focuses on creating a robust ecosystem for early childhood development, particularly for children with developmental differences or special needs.

Key components of the project include:

- **Training for Anganwadi Workers & Parents**
- **Observation & Monitoring**
- **Early Identification and Early Intervention**
- **Sobati Help Desk**

By bridging the gap between Anganwadi centers, parents, and specialized services, Project Sobati ensures that no child is left behind in their early developmental journey. Through collaboration, training, and consistent monitoring, the project aims to empower Anganwadi workers and parents alike, creating a supportive ecosystem that nurtures every child’s potential.

- **15+ Anganwadi Sevikas Trained**
- **264 + Total Number of Anganwadi Children Observed**
- **22+ Total Number of Children Identified with Special Needs**
- **16+ Great Bhet – Anganwadi Visits**
- **19+ Additional Observations and Expert Home Visits**
- **18+ Direct Visits to FRC+ Guidance Provided**





Arjun is the child who inspired the **Sobati Anganwadi Project**.

Our very first home visit with him showed us not just the challenges children with developmental differences face, but also the profound impact of early support and guidance.

Arjun was diagnosed with **Global Developmental Delay (GDD)**. Our occupational therapist, began working with him through therapy sessions, while also guiding his family to continue exercises at home—a crucial part of supporting Arjun’s daily development.

Attending sessions wasn’t always easy for the family due to financial and logistical challenges. But we remained in **continuous contact**, offering guidance, encouragement, and even **raising funds** so Arjun could visit the center when travel was a barrier.

Through consistent support and outreach led by our social worker and Sobati Project lead, Arjun has now received **assistive aids** that will significantly support his growth and independence. These aids are not just equipment—they are tools that open doors to new possibilities for Arjun.

The happiness and pride on Arjun’s parents’ faces when they received the aids was indescribable. From a family unsure about the future, they now carry **confidence, hope, and a sense of agency** that radiates in every interaction.

At Saamarthyaa, we believe **support doesn’t end with therapy**.

We walk alongside families, bridging gaps caused by circumstances, finances, or awareness. Every child deserves access to tools, therapies, and opportunities to grow—no matter their background.

TARA MOBILE CRECHES

As part of our collaboration with **Tara Mobile Crèches Pune (TMC)**, Saamarthya Foundation has been leading a **capacity-building initiative** for caregivers working with children of migrant construction workers. These caregivers form the first line of connection and care for children growing up in highly mobile and resource-limited environments — and empowering them with the right knowledge can make a lasting difference.

Under this initiative, our team has conducted **intensive, full-day training sessions** for caregivers across two age groups — **0–3 years** and **3–6 years**. Each session was designed to translate early intervention concepts into hands-on, practical learning that can be applied within the everyday routines of the crèche.

Through these trainings, more than **40 caregivers** have been formally equipped to:

- **Identify developmental red flags, Build inclusive classrooms,** Understand the basics of neurodiversity and communicate sensitively with parents and support children through **positive engagement and early stimulation techniques** that fit seamlessly into their existing schedules.

Our therapists have also **observed over 30–40 children** across the Hinjewadi TMC center, identifying and creating support strategies for children who showed early developmental concerns. These findings were shared directly with caregivers, helping them implement personalized approaches in real time.

This collaboration goes beyond training — it's about creating sustainable change. By strengthening the capacities of caregivers who interact with children every day, we're helping build a model of inclusion that is **low-cost, scalable, and rooted in empathy**.



WONDER LEARNING (TEACHER WORKSHOPS)

At Saamarthya Foundation, we believe that truly inclusive classrooms are not created by curriculum alone—they are shaped by emotionally attuned, supported, and empowered educators. A teacher's emotional wellbeing directly influences how safe and inclusive their classroom can be.

During our trainings with Wonderlearning, we engaged with over 100 passionate educators—teachers, school leaders, and school owners as well as parents—to explore the powerful intersection between teacher wellbeing and Social Emotional Learning (SEL).

This wasn't a passive training. It was deeply experiential and activity-based, designed to ensure that every SEL strategy shared could be easily implemented in real-world classrooms. Our aim was simple: provide tools that don't overwhelm, but empower.

These collaborations illustrate Saamarthya's systems mindset: inclusion is not a standalone service but a networked movement—one that grows stronger through partnership.



ATMA ACCELERATOR

This year, we were selected for the prestigious Atma Accelerator, powered by Bajaj Finserv, marking a key milestone in our institutional growth journey.

Through this three year capacity-building program, we will work closely with the Atma team to strengthen strategic planning, impact measurement, and fundraising systems. This partnership reaffirms Saamarthya's commitment to building a sustainable, high-impact organization capable of driving inclusion at scale—bridging families, communities, and systems through data-driven, empathetic action.

These collaborations illustrate Saamarthya's systems mindset: inclusion is not a standalone service but a networked movement—one that grows stronger through partnership.



SIGNATURE EVENTS

SAARTHI 2025 - RESOURCE FAIR

Saamarthya Foundation hosted the Saarthi 2025 Resource Fair in June 2025, a free guidance initiative for children with developmental and learning needs, at our Family Resource Center. The event was designed to provide families with direct access to expert advice, support, and resources in a one-on-one setting.



The fair provided families not only with practical strategies and information but also a sense of reassurance and community. Parents had the opportunity to discuss their concerns openly, explore intervention options, and gain clarity on next steps for their children's holistic development.

We were thrilled to welcome over 52 registrations and 15 families in person, who availed themselves of personalized consultations tailored to their child's unique needs.

Our multidisciplinary team of specialists ensured that every family received comprehensive guidance, covering a wide range of areas including:

- **Occupational Therapy (OT)**
- **Special Education**
- **Nutrition**
- **Physiotherapy**
- **Dental Care**
- **Paediatric Neurology**
- **Financial Planning**
- **Parent Counselling**
- **UDID & Niramaya Insurance Guidance**

Events like Saarthi 2025 reflect Saamarthya's commitment to empowering families and supporting the entire ecosystem of a child's growth. By bringing together experts under one roof, we aim to remove barriers to information, provide actionable guidance, and ensure families feel confident in navigating their child's developmental journey.

Saamarthya's Open Mic

A nurturing space for children to express themselves with confidence and joy, where every voice is valued and every moment is met with warmth and encouragement.

An inclusive Open Mic Evening with Mystic Kalam, creating a supportive atmosphere where neurodivergent children and their siblings share their talents and feel truly celebrated.

Annual Storytelling Festival

The Saamarthya Storytelling Festival celebrates the power of literature and oral storytelling to build empathy, understanding, and confidence in children of all abilities. Each story highlights inclusion, representation, and a world where every child belongs.

innovation and the road ahead

Saamarthya Foundation envisions a future where early intervention is not an exception but an accessible right for every child. Our goal is to build a **robust, sustainable model** that closes the loop between identification, intervention, and inclusion—ensuring that even the most remote communities are reached.

To achieve this, we are investing in a **dedicated outbound team** trained to conduct developmental screenings, collaborate with educators, and support families in areas where access remains limited. This field network will form the backbone of an integrated system that combines data, empathy, and action.

Through Project Sobati, we aim to deepen our partnerships with Anganwadis and local schools, transforming them into community centers for awareness and early identification. Our focus is to expand geographically, strengthen capacity-building modules, and empower grassroots workers to recognize developmental differences early and effectively.

We are also committed to **building institutional capacity for inclusive education**—supporting schools to move beyond token inclusion toward genuine understanding and structural preparedness.

Parallel to these efforts, we are creating a nationwide network of Saamarthya Ambassadors—advocates, parents, and educators united by the vision of equitable access and awareness.

Our immediate milestone is **Saarthi 2026**, a resource fair for neurodivergent children and families that will bring together experts, therapists, and organizations under one roof. Saarthi represents our larger purpose: to transform isolated efforts into a connected movement for inclusion.

At Saamarthya, innovation is human-centered. It means designing systems that listen before they act and empower before they instruct—ensuring every child, family, and community has the opportunity to begin strong and thrive.



testimonials



ASMI Parent Training

A heartfelt thank you to our young trainer, Aarathi, for the engaging and thoughtful session on Body Awareness and Personal Space, and to Shivani ma'am for making this program possible.



ASMI Parent Training

The learnings have been immensely valuable—fun because of the way the sessions were conducted, and deeply thoughtful and introspective at the same time. They will surely help us support our children better in their daily lives. We truly appreciate the compassion and commitment with which you are empowering parents and children on this journey. Lots of love and best wishes to Saamarthya, and I sincerely hope this marks the beginning of a beautiful journey with you all.

Functional Skills

Shivangi liked the lacing activity we did the other day and practised at home so that she can eventually tie her shoelaces by herself!

ASMI Parent Training

I am well empowered from this ASMI program and learnt many techniques to work with my daughter to overcome her challenges. I am so grateful to Samarthyia Team, Shivani ma'am, and Aarathi ma'am for providing such an amazing workshop.



Social Skills Program at the FRC

Thank you very much for giving so much exposure to our kids. You all are doing a fantastic job. Kids are extremely comfortable with you all.

Lovely session. All kids look very comfortable with the instructors.

Sukoon Saturdays

It helps in bringing colors to life.

Sukoon Saturdays are beautifully planned and curated by Heer and as a parent I feel its a safe space for me to be me and find new perspectives....I would really want this to continue.



saamarthya team



Mayura Samal



Heer Dedhia



Aarthi Nagvenkar



Sanika Kelkar



Bhawna Pandey



Sayali Khanapurkar



Saurabh Shinde



Sakshi Sapra



Shawn Thomas

board of directors



Vivian Milroy Martin



Dr. Sandhya Joshi



Shiv Nath Tandon



Erwin de Leon, PhD



Andy Cwik



Vidyoatham Reddi



Tom Fardon

volunteers



Camille Callert



Madhu Deshmukh



Govind Kumar



G.V.S. Prasad



Chandani Punia



Namrata Thorbole



Preeti Gokhale



Jessie Lee



Michele Bedor



Krish Shringi



Yukti Makhija



Ed Greene, Ph.D



Christopher Johnstone

strategic advisors

funding partners

It takes many hearts to build a movement of care. Every contribution big or small, financial or otherwise has helped us grow, reach new families, and strengthen our promise of inclusion. Thank you for walking beside us with such faith and kindness.

Thank you for walking this path with us.





join us in
this
movement



Inclusion is possible when communities act together.
Your partnership can:

- **Fund therapy and early intervention programs for under-resourced families**
- **Sponsor training for teachers and caregivers in inclusive education**
- **Enable assistive technology and digital learning tools for children**
- **Support Saamarthya's capacity-building and advocacy initiatives**

Together, we can ensure every child not only finds a voice—but is heard.

Empower families, transform lives. By supporting Saamarthya Foundation, you're helping us bring early intervention, therapies, and guidance to children and families who need it most—regardless of background.

Be part of this journey—help us reach the last mile.



thank
you!

This year has reminded me just how fragile and beautiful the act of building hope can be. The world feels restless, faster, louder, often unkind yet within the walls of our Family Resource Centre, I've witnessed something extraordinary: people choosing to slow down, to listen, to stay.

I've seen children rewrite what progress looks like. Parents who arrived in tears now offer strength to others. A team that continues to show up with quiet conviction, even on the hardest days. These are not just stories of change they are stories of courage, patience, and love.

The FRC has grown this year not just in reach, but in depth. It has become a space where learning feels human again. Where data meets empathy, where science meets soul. Each family that walks through our doors adds a new layer of meaning to what inclusion truly is.

And so, this note is a simple thank you but one that carries the weight of a hundred moments. To every parent who trusted us, every partner who believed in the vision, and every member of our team who kept the light burning: you have shaped Saamarthya into a living example of what compassion can build.

In times when the world often feels divided, your faith reminds me that goodness can still be a collective act. Thank you for standing with us for helping create not just a foundation, but a movement toward a gentler world.

With deep gratitude,
Dr. Shivani Pandit
Founder, Saamarthya Foundation



Thank
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At Saamarthya,
we strive to build a more
inclusive society where
persons with *ASD* and
IDD are embraced,
supported, and given the
opportunity to thrive.

ART DIRECTION, DESIGN & LAYOUT
Smita Sawai, avani-design.com