



Saamarthya

CELEBRATE ABILITY. UNLEASH POTENTIAL.

ANNUAL
REPORT
2023





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

Marco Bizzarri

OUR MISSION AND VISION

We believe that every child with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) deserves a childhood full of joy, learning, and belonging. We believe in rights-based education for children with ASD and IDD, and that inclusion is the birthright of every child.

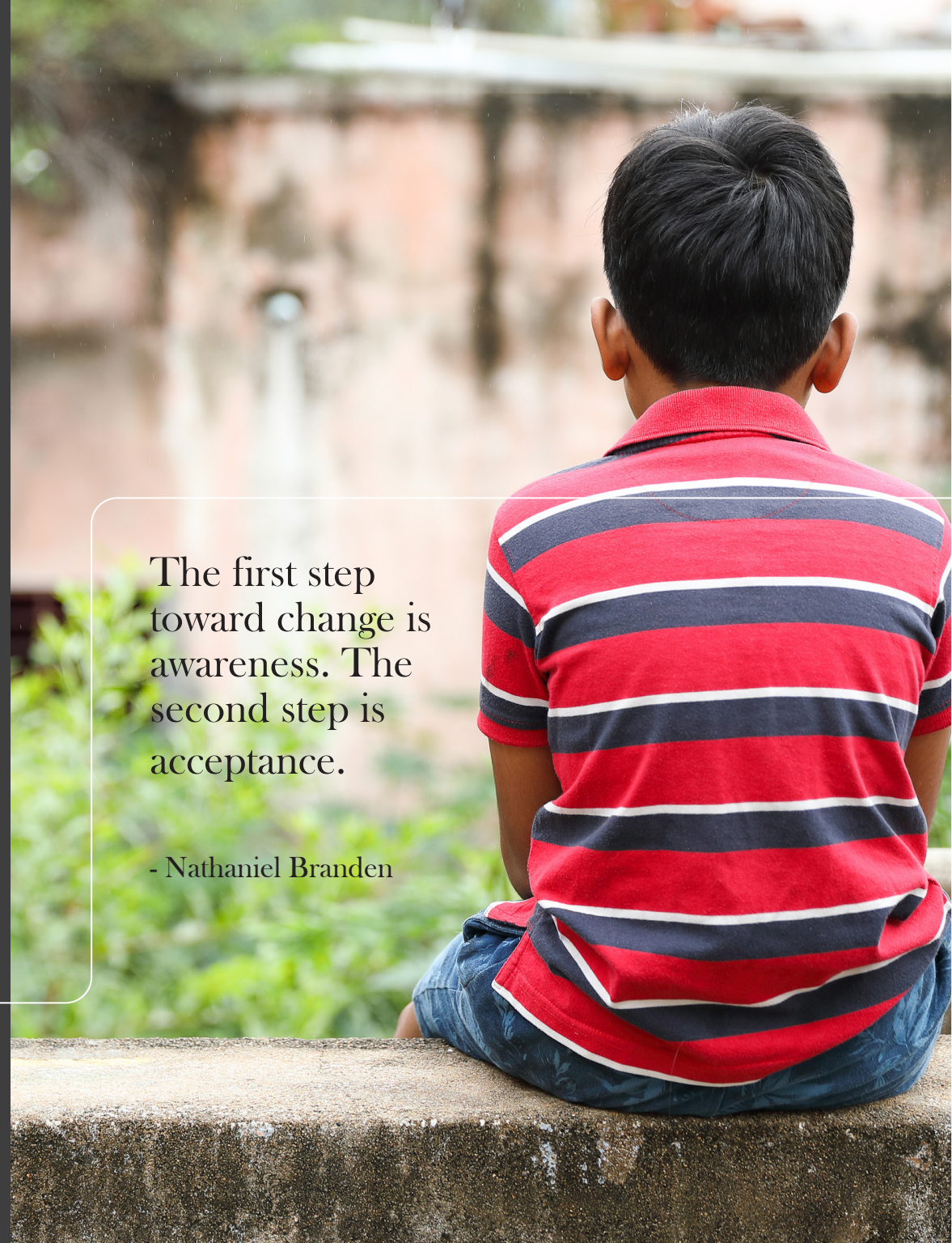
Our comprehensive three-fold approach—**awareness**, **advocacy**, and **action**—is designed to support individuals with ASD and IDD, their families, and the professionals who work with them.

Our vision is to create an inclusive and just world for anyone with ASD and IDD.

ABOUT SAAMARTHYA

Saamarthya Foundation advocates for an equitable and inclusive world for persons with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD). Saamarthya Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to making a positive impact in the lives of children with Autism and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).

Through unwavering dedication and affordable services, we at Saamarthya strive to build a more inclusive society where persons with ASD and IDD are embraced, supported, and given the opportunity to thrive.



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

- Nathaniel Branden



MESSAGE FROM THE LEADERSHIP

Dear Friends and Supporters,

I hope this message finds you well and full of hope for the future. As the Founder and Executive Director of Saamarthya, I am deeply grateful for your unwavering support and commitment to our mission.

Together, we have embarked on a remarkable journey to make a difference in the lives of children with Autism and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (IDD) and I want to share with you the incredible impact we've made and our vision for the future.

At Saamarthya, our commitment is crystal clear - we believe that every child, regardless of their abilities or challenges, deserves the opportunity to thrive, dream, and achieve their full potential. We are driven by the

belief that diversity is our greatest strength, and that by empowering children with disabilities, we can build a more inclusive, compassionate, and equitable society. Our journey has been marked by countless heartwarming moments and remarkable achievements. We've witnessed the radiant smiles of children who have taken their first steps, said their first words, or discovered their artistic talents. We've been inspired by the dedication of our staff, volunteers, and supporters who tirelessly work to create a brighter future for these children.

But our work is far from done, and the challenges that children with Autism and IDD face are as significant as ever. We are determined to double our efforts and stand with these extraordinary

children as they navigate life's journey. We are committed to providing them with the love, care, education, and opportunities they need to overcome obstacles, break down barriers, and reach for the stars.

In the coming year, we have ambitious plans to expand our programs, reach more families in need. We will continue to provide a safe and nurturing environment where every child feels valued, respected, and empowered to pursue their dreams.

But we cannot do this alone. Your support is our greatest asset. Your donations, your time, your passion, and your belief in our cause fuel our mission and enable us to create a brighter future for children with Autism and IDD.

Join us as we embrace the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Together, we can be the champions for change and the architects of a more inclusive world.

Thank you for being an essential part of our journey.

Let's continue to write a story of hope, resilience, and empowerment for the children we serve.

Together, we will make a lasting impact.

With gratitude and determination,

Dr. Shivani Pandit, Ed.D

MANJU'S JOURNEY



Step into Manju's world, a realm filled with love, challenges, and an unyielding determination to create a brighter future for her daughter, Jia. Nestled in the heart of Bhagalpur, Bihar, Manju's life is a tapestry woven with the complexities of being a homemaker, a mother, and a fierce advocate for her 8-year-old daughter diagnosed with Autism at the tender age of five.

In the midst of a joint family where acceptance is a distant echo and understanding even more elusive, Manju grapples with the weight of worry that hangs heavily over her. Her husband, unable to embrace their child's diagnosis, and family members unaware of the depth of her concerns, Manju finds solace in her relentless search for ways to support Jia.

With no haven in her neighborhood, no school with a special educator attuned to Jia's unique needs, Manju embarks on a digital quest. Her days blur into a search for interventionists who can bridge the gap, but the realization hits hard—there's no qualified Special Educator or Occupational Therapist nearby. Panic sets in, and Manju, fueled by determination, finds a tutor willing to teach Jia at home.

Yet, in this makeshift solution, a new challenge arises. The tutor, devoid of early intervention expertise, resorts to punitive measures for Jia's challenging behaviors—and those become the unwelcome companions in their home.

Amidst the chaos, a beacon of hope emerges. Through a WhatsApp group, Manju discovers Saamarthya and, with it, a lifeline to

transformative support. The journey takes a turn as she sets up a live coaching session with our interventionist, where strategies are not just discussed but intricately woven into the fabric of Manju's family routines and Jia's unique needs.

Together, they craft a visual schedule, a vivid roadmap painted in Jia's favorite colors, offering clarity and structure to each day. Manju learns how to gently introduce schedule changes, preparing Jia for the shifts with a prelude that eases the transition. Strategies for Jia to regulate her emotions in the face of unexpected changes become a cornerstone of their shared plan.

Now armed with resources and a personalized strategy, Manju navigates the journey of understanding her child's needs with newfound confidence. Each day unfolds as an opportunity to build on progress, face challenges head-on, and, above all, provide the unwavering support that Jia deserves.

In this journey with Saamarthya, Manju is not alone. She's part of a community that understands, empathizes, and empowers—a community that believes in the extraordinary potential within every child, embracing the challenges with open hearts and steadfast determination.

Together, they redefine the narrative, weaving a story of resilience, growth, and boundless love—a story where Manju, Jia, and countless others find the support they need to blossom and thrive.

SAAMARTHYA'S JOURNEY



2014



In 2014, Saamarthya, a non-profit born in the USA, committed itself to making a difference for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Intellectual Developmental Disability (IDD).

2016



By 2016, Naini Inclusive Books were launched. "Let's Play" and "Me and My Friends" featured diverse stories about children of all abilities.

2017-2018



Delhi, Hyderabad, and Srinagar witnessed book releases in 2017 and 2018, expanding the collection. "Books are Magical" resonated widely, marking growth.

2019



In 2019, Saamarthya intensified its commitment, introducing multilingual parent training in India.

2020



2020 saw a thriving global community with online sessions and passionate ambassadors.

2021



The momentum continued in 2021 with new initiatives—Club Ananda, LEND, and A-maze—innovative programs sustaining the mission.

2022



2022 brought ASMI Group sessions and the Saamarthya Learning Hub, focusing on academic and cognitive skills. The annual inclusive storytelling festival persisted, using stories as a tool for conversations about diverse perspectives, fostering empathy and friendships.

Today, Saamarthya proudly reflects on its journey, adorned with feathers in its cap, dedicated to creating an inclusive world—one child, one family at a time.

ACHIEVEMENTS TO DATE



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.
— Naini Inclusive Storytelling Participant



Approximately
3,600 children

with ASD and IDD have been able to enjoy benefits from Saamarthya's efforts and services. The testimonials from their parents help us understand where we stand and how Saamarthya is closer to achieving its vision.

We have directly impacted a total number of
408 parents



I was really impressed by whatever I saw. The dedication, feeling, and stories were remarkable. Wish you all the best for the future. Keep up the good work. Must congratulate all the children for participating and sharing their amazing artwork. For me, you are the winners!
-Naini Inclusive Storytelling Participant



"I wish all the parents get therapy from Saamarthya. I am looking forward to all their programs. It is affordable for us, and the confidence and positive energy the teachers give are so great. I also thank them for recording the sessions because I can replay them at my convenience. While teaching, several tips are given, small things that make the learning smooth and online sessions are so convenient." — ASMI Group Session Participant





2020-2023 THE YEARS IN NUMBERS

3,600

Children and Youth benefited

408

Parents benefited

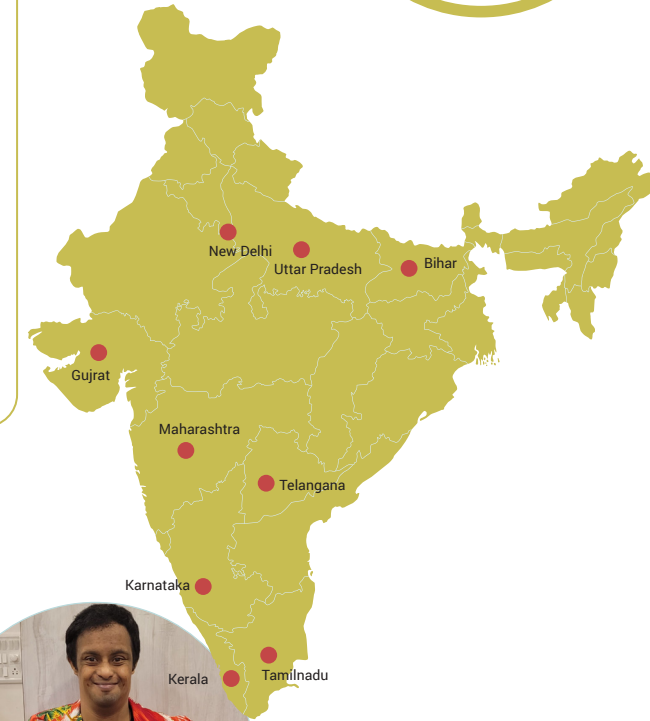
OUR PROGRAMS:

- ASMI 1:1 Intervention Program
- ASMI Group Intervention Program
- Club Ananda: Therapeutic Recreational Club
- Storytelling Sessions with Naini Inclusive Books
- Swayam Training Programs for Parents
- Parental Mental Health and Well Being

Tamira had a great time. I heard she was noticed for her drawings, and she felt very encouraged. Thanks to all the storytellers, every kid was very engaged. The Storytellers were so warm and involved. Thank you for organizing these sessions.-

- Naini Inclusive Storytelling Participant

ASMI 1:1 Intervention Program



41

Children Served

Unlocking Potential, One Child at a Time:

Our affordable online intervention support, available in Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, and English, is tailored for children with ASD, IDD, and learning disabilities. Led by qualified special educators and occupational therapists, these personalized sessions ensure a nurturing and empowering learning environment. We invite parents to invest in their child's academic journey with ASMI's commitment to providing accessible and impactful support, enhancing their educational experience.

Cities Served:

Bihar
Ranchi, Begusarai

New Delhi

Karnataka
Bangalore

Tamilnadu
Chennai, Madurai

Kerala
Calicut

Uttar Pradesh
Noida

Maharashtra
Wardha, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai, Thane

Gujarat
Ahmedabad

Telangana
Hyderabad



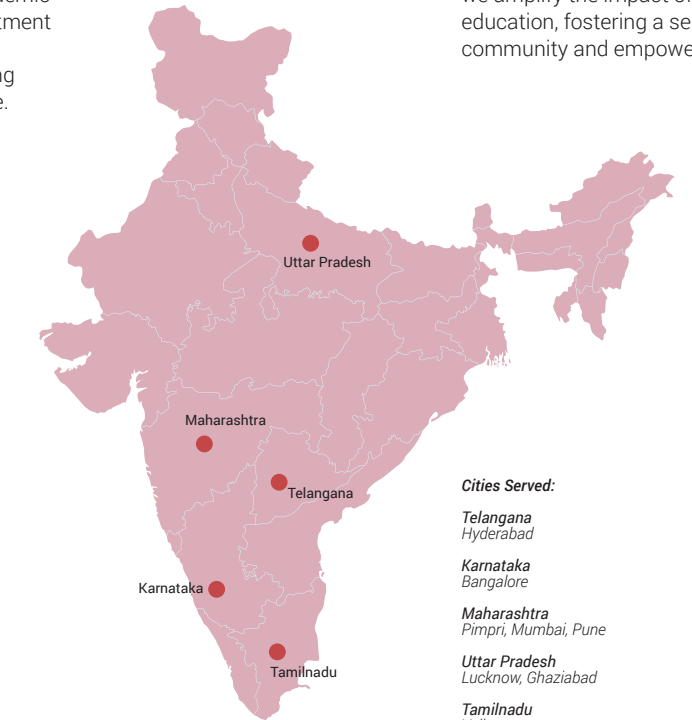
ASMI Group Intervention Program

143

Children Served

Elevating Learning Together:

Our dynamic Group Sessions are an extension of the impactful ASMI 1:1 experience. Led by the highly qualified and dedicated special educators of the Saamarthya team, these group sessions create a collaborative environment for shared growth. We unleash the collective potential of each student as we embark on a journey of learning, support, and progress. Together, we amplify the impact of education, fostering a sense of community and empowerment.



Cities Served:

Telangana
Hyderabad

Karnataka
Bangalore

Maharashtra
Pimpri, Mumbai, Pune

Uttar Pradesh
Lucknow, Ghaziabad

Tamilnadu
Vellore

3,171
Children Served

On this virtual platform, every child's unique abilities shine! We immerse little ones in a world of joy and growth with our exclusive online sessions held twice a week. Our inclusive program is thoughtfully designed to cater to children of all abilities, including those with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, cerebral palsy, and other developmental challenges.

Join us as we explore life skills, ignite creative pursuits, and foster social-emotional development in a warm and supportive virtual environment.

At Club Ananda, every child is celebrated for who they are, and together, we embark on a journey of fun, learning, and endless possibilities.

**Club Ananda:
Therapeutic
Recreational
Club**



243
Children Served

Naini Inclusive Storybooks by Saamarthya provide a valuable resource for fostering inclusivity and understanding among children. Through engaging narratives, these storybooks feature characters with diverse abilities, promoting empathy and acceptance. By showcasing the richness of individual differences,

Naini Inclusive Storybooks contribute to creating an inclusive learning environment, fostering a sense of belonging for all children, regardless of their abilities.

**Storytelling
Sessions with
Naini Inclusive
Books**

Cities Served:

New Delhi

Kerala
Calicut, Kozhikode, Eranielipalam

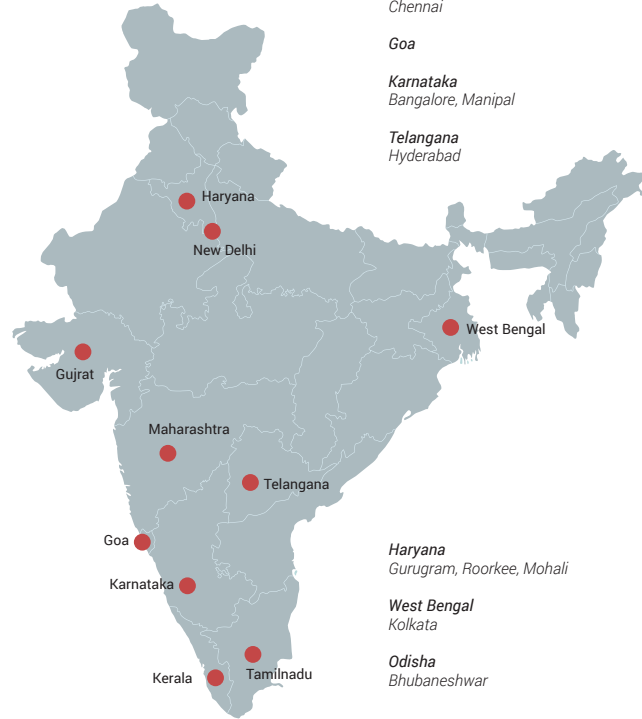
Maharashtra
Mumbai, Pune, Wardha, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Nasik

Tamil Nadu:
Chennai

Goa

Karnataka
Bangalore, Manipal

Telangana
Hyderabad



Haryana
Gurugram, Roorkee, Mohali

West Bengal
Kolkata

Odisha
Bhubaneswar

**Swayam
Training
Program for
Parents**

208
Parents Served

Empowering Parents Across India to unlock the full potential of children with ASD and IDD through our transformative Parent Training Program.

Parents join our 6-8 week online sessions available in Hindi, Marathi, Kannada, and English. They delve into comprehensive modules covering the establishment of effective routines, fostering social and cognitive skills, promoting meaningful play, and addressing challenging behaviors. With a successful track record of positively impacting over a hundred families in the past year, we are eager to forge new partnerships and broaden our impact, reaching families far and wide across India. Together, let's embark on a journey of support, understanding, and growth for both parents and their exceptional children.



Cities Served:

Maharashtra:
Wardha, Nagpur, Chandrapur, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai

Uttar Pradesh
Noida

Madhya Pradesh:
Bhopal, Indore

Bihar
Ranchi, Begusarai



"Saamarthya team is doing a great job for people like us who can't afford so much money on therapy and also lack of facilities available in my town according to my child level so hoping to be in touch with you all in future too. Thank you for all support" -

- ASMI Group Session Participant

**Parental
Mental Health
and
Well Being**

200
Parents Served

We are committed to nurturing not only the development of children but also prioritizing the mental health and well-being of parents. Our online sessions are a gift to parents, offered completely free of charge. These sessions empower parents with invaluable skills for stress management and overall well-being, fostering a harmonious balance between supporting their child's growth and prioritizing their own health and happiness.



Cities Served:

New Delhi

Rajasthan:
Jaipur

Maharashtra:
Mumbai, Pune, Wardha, Yavatmal, Nagpur, Nasik

Gujarat:
Ahmedabad, Baroda

Haryana
Gurugram

Bihar
Ranchi, Begusarai

Karnataka:
Bangalore, Manipal

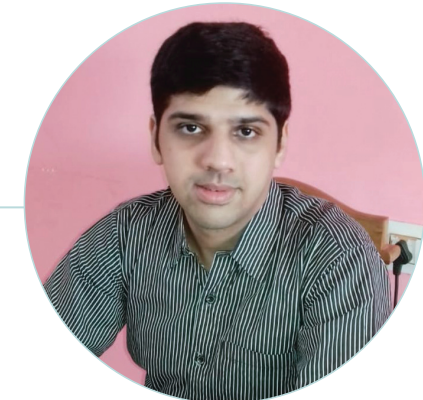
West Bengal:
Kolkata



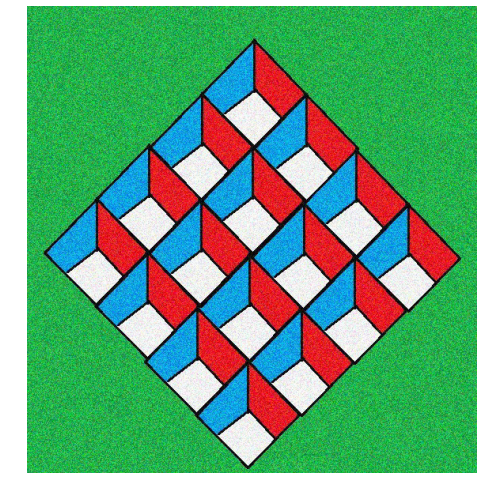
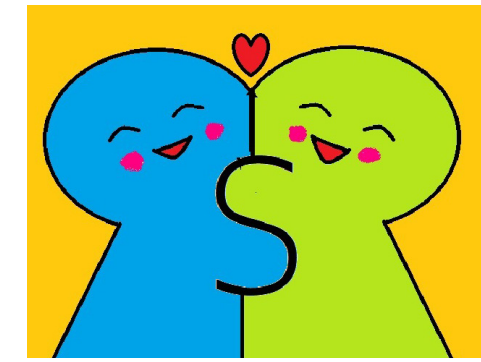
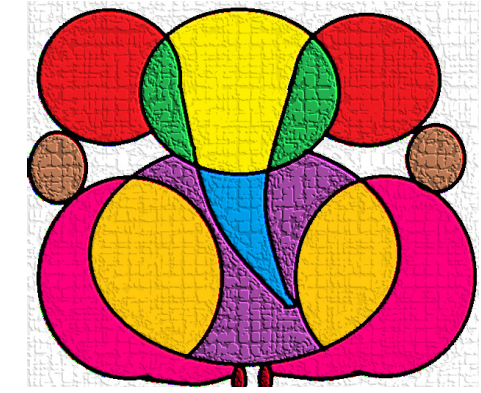
INTERNATIONAL REACH:



Saamarthya, with its unwavering commitment to fostering inclusivity and empowerment of children with Autism and Intellectual Disabilities and their families, has extended its impact beyond national borders. This year we are proud to serve a few families outside India, and we are dedicated to scaling our impact.



ART BY PRANJAL MISHRA





OUR FUTURE PLANS

Shedding light on what Saamarthya aims to achieve next and how.

According to UNESCO,
72% of the approximately 5 million children with autism and intellectual developmental disabilities **between the ages of 0–14 years** reside in smaller cities and rural areas.

A significant majority of these children are challenged in finding enriching and stimulating environments. When children don't have access to high-quality education and learning opportunities, they lose out on developing to their full potential. Many children are not receiving therapies as parents living in rural India have limited access to qualified interventionists. They oftentimes need to travel to a physical center, which takes time and effort. Even if they have access to trained therapists and centers, these options are often unaffordable leading to delays in the recognition, consultation, and final diagnosis.



To solve this issue, a Saamarthya Family Resource Center (FRC) will be established in Pune, India, to provide academic and enrichment opportunities to children and their families with access to individual child interventions, group interventions, and mental health services. Our Family Resource Center aims to create an inclusive and equitable world for children with disabilities and parents irrespective of caste, race, geography, financial background, and ability.

If you partner and invest in Saamarthya, you will transform a young child's life from isolation to joy and belonging. Your support will ensure that we continue to provide safe, inclusive learning spaces that can help children with Autism and IDD develop to their fullest. You are an equal partner in creating equity, connection, learning, belonging, and joy for ALL children.

You can be at the heart of this movement toward creating a world where children with Autism and other disabilities are seen, valued, and included.



CALL FOR ACTION



Here's how you can make a difference:

- **Donate Today:** Your financial contribution enables us to continue and expand our vital programs. Visit our website to make a one-time or recurring donation securely.
- **Spread the Word:** Share our mission with your friends, family, and social networks. Awareness is a powerful catalyst for change.
- **Volunteer Your Time:** If you have the time and skills to spare, consider joining our team of dedicated volunteers. Your expertise can make a significant impact on the lives of these children.
- **Host a Fundraiser:** Organize a fundraising event in your community or workplace. Every effort counts, and together, we can amplify our impact.
- **Corporate Partnerships:** Explore opportunities for corporate partnerships. Your organization's support can make a meaningful difference in the lives of these children.

By taking action today, you become a part of a community that believes in the potential of every child, regardless of their abilities. Join us in creating a world where every child can flourish and where inclusivity and compassion prevail.

Visit www.saamarthya.org/fundraisers or scan QR code below to contribute or learn more about the various ways you can get involved.



Today, we invite you to be a part of this transformative journey. Your support has the potential to create lasting change in the lives of these extraordinary children. With your contribution, we can expand our educational support programs, develop more inclusive resources, and reach even more families in need.

WITH GRATITUDE



Board Of Directors

We wish to thank our Board of Directors for their unwavering commitment and tireless dedication to the mission of Saamarthya Foundation. Their visionary leadership has been the guiding force behind our collective efforts to serve children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD).



Vivian Milroy Martin
Adjunct Faculty,
Carlson School of Business,
University of Minnesota



Shiv Nath Tandon
Senior Leader, Aveda



Regina Hepp
Principal & Co-Founder,
Rejuvi Venture



Vidyotham Reddi
Director, Innovation
Technology and Quality,
General Mills

Strategic Advisors

In the tapestry of compassion and service that defines Saamarthya, their roles as stewards of our mission have been pivotal. Their strategic insights, compassionate understanding, and unwavering support have not only shaped the trajectory of our foundation but have also touched the lives of countless children and their families.



Erwin de Leone, Ph.D.
Chief Diversity Officer &
Faculty, Columbia University



Camille Catlett
Investigator, Child
Development Institute,
University of North Carolina



G.V.S Prasad
Executive Director,
CFBT Education Services



Jessie Lee
Adjunct Faculty,
Columbia University



Ed Greene, Ph.D.
President,
Ed Greene Educational
Connections



Chandani Punia
Innovation and Design Leader,
Lecturer, Columbia University



Christopher Johnstone
Associate Professor,
University of Minnesota



Michele Bedor
Director of Early Learning,
Wayzata Public Schools

Donors and Corporate Sponsors

We wish to thank our corporate sponsor - Appfire, our family foundation - Fleishhacker Foundation, and donors for their generosity and unwavering support of Saamarthya Foundation's mission to serve children with disabilities. Their commitment to our cause empowers us to provide essential services for children with ASD and IDD, making a lasting difference in their lives. We thank them for being instrumental in fostering a more inclusive and supportive community.

**FLEISHHACKER
FOUNDATION**



Our Partners

We extend our deepest gratitude to our invaluable partners at Saamarthya Foundation. Their unwavering support fuels our mission, allowing us to make a meaningful impact in the lives of children with ASD and IDD. We thank them for standing with us in creating a more inclusive and compassionate world.



Volunteers and Committe Members

To our dedicated volunteers and passion committee members, who generously share their time, skills, and compassion, your enthusiasm and commitment to making a difference in the lives of these exceptional children inspire us daily.



CONCLUSION

We would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our community, whose unwavering support plays a pivotal role in helping us realize Saamarthya's mission and drive our growth. Their contributions have been instrumental in our journey towards creating a more inclusive and accessible world for all.

The support from our donors, sponsors and volunteers is not only financial but it is a symbol of trust and partnership, which we are truly grateful for. This commitment from them has helped us to keep our flock flying together.

Saamarthya Foundation is more than an organization; it is a community bound by a shared vision of creating a world where every child with Autism and Developmental Disability has the opportunity to thrive. Thank you for being integral to this vision, for being the catalysts of change, and for being the driving force behind every smile, every success, and every story of progress.

Together, we form the heart and soul of the Saamarthya Foundation. Our collective efforts create a ripple effect that touches the lives of the children and families we serve. The impact of your kindness and generosity extends far beyond the tangible, creating a legacy of hope, empathy, and positive change.

- Best Wishes
- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| DR. SHIVANI PANDIT, Ed.D
Founder - CEO | VANESSA NORONHA
Program Coordinator | AARTHI NAGVENKAR
Senior Program Manager |
| KRITHIKAA GRANDHE
Program Manager | AMBIKA RAMANATHAN
Occupational Therapist | KATHAREEN DAVID
Social Media Intern |



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.

