Sankalp Special School, Kanpur

2019 Mid Year Update
Background

• Caters to children with special needs (autism, behavioral problems, learning disabilities, speech/language issues, mentally challenged)

• Project’s goal is to nurture these kids with targeted attention and therapy so eventually they become self-sufficient
  – Individual progress plans for each child, 5-7 children per teacher, Physio/Speech/Behavioral therapy

• Supported by Asha-SV since Fall 2009
  – Asha Stars project: Like any other Asha-SV project except the funds sent are only those that have been directly donated to the project.
  – Asha Kanpur oversees the project (funds are sent to Asha Kanpur, they do the disbursals and monitor funds utilization); they also try to raise funds locally

• FB page - https://facebook.com/Sankalp-Special-School-1717996268428138/?ref=bookmarks
Current statistics

- Students - 60
- Staff
  - 10 teachers for class
  - 1 Speech teacher (now working full time as she was not able to attend to the needs of all children in 2 hours. We could either keep another teacher assistant to help her in her work or increase her time. We preferred the later option because this way, she could get extra 2000/- and this was economical for us too as we can not get any teacher in 2000/-. Also, this speech teacher is not good at team work so we thought keeping another person might cause conflicts and thus adversely affect the work)
  - 1 Physiotherapist (part time) + 1 assistant therapist (full time)
  - 1 Coordinator
  - 2 Supporting staff
  - 1 Psychologist (new starting July 2019)
  - Principal
- 5 Hired vans
Review 2019 – Mid year

**Jan** - A program was held at Sankalp by "Saksham", the NGO who helped with making of the disability cards. In this, they invited some of the reputed people of city to hand over the UDID cards to parents. This gave us publicity. One of the dignitaries who came was Mrs Neetu Singh, daughter of current MP, Satyadev Pachauri from Kanpur. She owns a huge restaurant/banquet and promised to host a picnic for our children. However, this never materialized because of poor weather for few days after their visit and after that, General elections were announced so she got busy with her father's electoral work. Another highlight was that we were invited to PSIT, a renowned private engineering college of Kanpur in their Republic Day celebration. About 16 children and 5 teachers went there and interacted with their staff, students and performed a dance in their cultural event.

**Feb** – this is the month where we prepared chips and papad for Holi. The weather remained very unpredictable throughout the month so the could not progress desirably, but still, by the end, we could make chips and papad of about 150 kg potatoes and all were sold, along with our regular laiyya, chiwda, namak para and mathri namkeens. People liked this so much that the teachers couldn't get anything for their homes.

**Mar** – this month began with the annual Rotary function where we participated along with 9 other schools of Kanpur. Our children’s performance was liked and appreciated by all as always. Holi celebration was also done as always. We cancelled our annual day this year because it takes lot of efforts and monetary resources (approx 25000/-)! Since most of the children who could understand stage and dance had been performing at places time to time throughout the year, so we thought we could save the resources and efforts and invest those elsewhere.
Apr — apart from regular work, the highlight for this month was the Parent's meeting. We organized a meeting for parents of children who are above 16yrs. We discussed about the needs of older children and ways to meet those needs, three important decisions were taken -

1. We will meet every 1st Sunday of month, talk and discuss relevant matters. This way, we can share our worries, ideas, resources and come up with practical solutions
2. Every one will purchase the household items that the children are making when they come for these meetings. This way, a constant outlet will be ensured and vocational work can continue on a routine basis rather than waiting for organizing a sale stall somewhere
3. A day boarding facility will be started in school from July so that working mothers get some respite. The parents will obviously pay extra for this

May - First parent's meeting was held and response was very good. We could not hold the meeting on first Sunday so planned it for second Sunday. As it was mother's day, we invited all parents. We sold goods worth around 3000/-Rs. Reports were given on 25th May and 54 parents came for it out of total 57. We never got such an overwhelming response in last 12 years!

June — Holidays..

July - School opened for children from 1st July (teachers start coming from 26th June for reorganizing the classes, teaching material etc.) Swati Malhotra came on the same day for submitting her resume. Dr. Deepti’s father passed away on 2nd July, so she could not carry out the plans she had for that month but Swati joined on 16th July and after that, she is doing a lot of new things. She has made a presentation of what she wants to and it looks awesome.
Highlights/Future Plans

• Few of Dr. Deepti’s friends, in Delhi, have made a group and each of them have decided to contribute 1000/- per month to Sankalp. They have been sending this amount since April. We have made a WhatsApp group where Dr. Deepti keeps posting school photos and regular updates to keep them motivated.

• One of the person from this group is a life coach. He offered free sessions for the teachers at Sankalp. So he did these sessions telephonically. It was not very useful for most but 3-4 teachers felt the benefit. Dr. Deepti is the one who got the maximum benefit!

• Some new things that Swati has planned to start -
  1. Parental counseling sessions
  
  2. Making paintings (we made it on regular paper till now but from Sept, we will start making canvas paintings which can then be framed and auctioned. I plan to put up exhibitions at various places. As you must have seen in her ppt, the paintings are too good!)

  3. We have put up an ad for interns in our fb page. In future, we plan to have 2-3 interns at a time. This will increase our man power without increasing cost. Plus it will help in increasing awareness about Sankalp and about the children in the society. Internships will be of 15 days - 6 months duration. Those who work for 6 months will get a stipend too. One girl (who is already related to Asha) has responded to this ad and has an interview scheduled this month.

  4. Plan to take up volunteers to increase the manpower.
5. Swati started taking regular teaching sessions for the teachers on Saturdays. Her way of presentation is somewhat different than Dr. Deepti’s and she is taking up some new topics. So for now, we are not planning to get any external trainer/training done for teachers.

6. Swati has also planned to set up a sales portal through our website and has started working towards it. She said she needs a laptop for faster work because her home computer remains occupied usually and she doesn't get enough space and time to work for it at school. Dr. Deepti is looking out for options to get this either repairing hers or getting it from IIT Kanpur.

7. Commercial registrations of school vans is in progress. It is costing extra 40000/- Rs per van per year which amounts to 2 lakh per year for 5 vans for us. Dr. Deepti conveyed this to parents and they have agreed to increase their fee amount as per their convenience. She doesn’t know the exact amount yet but Asha will have to pay not more than 700/- per month per van extra - means an added expense of Rs 3500/- per month or 42000/- per year.

8. We have started a day boarding facility for the children from this month. Only two children have enrolled for this till now but we hope something good comes out of it too! Parents had demanded this in the parents meeting but they are not registering for this because we could not provide conveyance facility in evening.