Sankalp Special School, Kanpur

2020-2021 renewal
Background

- Caters to children with special needs (autism, intellectual impairment, behavioral problems, speech/language issues, developmental delays)
- 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://m.facebook.com/Sankalp-Special-School-1717996268428138/?ref=bookmarks
Current statistics

• Students - 59

• Staff
  ▪ 10 teachers for class
  ▪ 1 Speech teacher (Full time)
  ▪ 1 Physiotherapist (part time) + 1 assistant therapist (full time)
  ▪ 1 Coordinator
  ▪ 2 Supporting staff
  ▪ Psychologist
  ▪ Principal
  ▪ Helper for vocational training

• 5 Hired vans (3 of them doing double rounds)
Review 2019

- **Jan** - A program 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. We go some good publicity by this. 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 when we prepared chips and papad for Holi. We made 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. Since most of the children who could understand stage and dance had been performing at places time to time through out the year, we cancelled our Annual Day this time and decided to save the resources and efforts and invest them 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** – The school resumed after the vacations. Fresh assessments of all children were done and new targets were set to work upon. Our new psychologist joined in this month. She has many new ideas and has a fair knowledge of the subject. **She appears to be THE person who can carry on the work in my absence.** The speech teacher started coming full time from July. This was done to ensure that each child gets enough time during therapy for a better outcome.

• **August** – As always, this is the month of celebration. We celebrated Independence day, Rakhi and Janmashtami apart from other school activities. We conducted another parent’s meet this month before Rakhi and the parents purchased Rakhi’s made by our children. As promised to the parents, we started the Day Boarding services at Sankalp from 1\textsuperscript{st} August. We extended duty hours of one teacher and one supporting staff for taking care of the children in the day boarding. Also, we floated an ad on our facebook page for volunteers and interns to work with us at Sankalp. This as done with an aim of creating awareness and sensitivity in the society for special needs children and also for increasing the working hands without any substantial increase in cost (we plan to give a minimal stipend to interns who work for minimum 6 months). We also had with us, members of Academy of Pediatricians who celebrated IAP charity day at our Centre on 26\textsuperscript{th} August (birthday of Mother Teresa).

• **September** – The Rotary Club of Kanpur Classic organized an outing for our children at McDonalds on 14\textsuperscript{th} September. They also ordered 200+ paper bags which are being made at our school.
• **October** – The month of October was marked by pre-Diwali sale of the products made by our children with help from teachers. We got a net profit of Rs 23,470/- from these sales. We plan to recycle part of this amount to buy raw material for further work. We will distribute rest of it among the children who were actively involved in the vocational activities (Haven’t done this yet because we could not devise a model according to which we can divide the amount among the children. Also, I wanted to give some incentive to the teachers who put in extraordinary efforts to meet out the requirements). Diwali celebrations were marked by fancy dress competition at Sankalp. The verbal children introduced themselves and their roles on mike (as per their abilities) while the non-verbal children did a ramp walk.

• **November** – The month of November was marked by the children’s day celebration. There were fun games for children and teachers which they thoroughly enjoyed. Also, we were visited by a local political leader Sachin Tangri and his group who distributed sweets and toys among the children and donated chairs to the school. They have promised support in future too. This visit was initiated by father of one of our students. It is nice to see parents getting involved.

• **December** – We worked for very few days in December due to extreme weather conditions and ongoing political /religious turmoil in the city. We could not even make the half yearly reports of children before closing the school for the winter vacations.
Changes made in 2019

• The main focus this year was on organizing the vocational work. We were able to reach out to more people and thus promote the sales.

• We could also do some standard quality work in the vocational unit like candle making and making the paintings. We got some greeting cards printed with these paintings. We got an order for 600 cards from LIC of India for the new year. We will be giving the sales amount to the child whose paintings were chosen.

• The speech teacher is coming full time now. She was not able to give adequate attention to all children when she was coming part time.

• We started the day boarding facility for the children. It was started with 2 children and now we have 5 children in the evening session.

• All the 5 vans have commercial registration now as per the government rules. This will be more convenient for the children. Earlier, there were times when the traffic police would stop these vehicles on road for challan and the children had to sit in the van for 20-30 minutes while all this process was taking place.

• Regular parental counselling sessions have been started on one to one basis.

• We took up 3 interns from October for 6 months.

• For the first time, we expelled one child from school. He is 20 year old autistic boy with a lot of behavioural issues. He was with us since last 12 years but the parents never cooperated with the school in handling the child so we were helpless. Since we had started with a policy of accepting all children who seek our services, we allowed him to come to school till now. But finally, we decided to cancel his admission and create a space for another child who may benefit from our services.
Challenges

Again, space is our biggest concern.
The plan to use first floor space for more classes did not work. The landlord gives that space on rent for marriages and other functions. He gets bookings maximum for 3-4 days in a month but on those days, we have to shift the children downstairs which creates disturbance for all. Also, the furniture has to be shifted up and down again and again. Teaching material has to be carried up and down everyday because we can not keep a cupboard upstairs.

The possible solution is asking the landlord to give the entire space to us and not take any bookings. I haven’t talked to him about it yet but he has mentioned few times that this renting out thing is a big nuisance and not worth the money he is getting. Another solution is to acquire a land and get our own building constructed and end this quest for bigger space forever.

We have not been able to set up the online portal for sales. But I guess that can be postponed for some more time as we are planning to make more attractive and individualized packaging for the products for making them look more exclusive thereby increasing the profitability of the venture.
Future plans

• Strengthening the vocational training system that was developed last year is the target for this year.
• We plan to introduce few more traits in which to train the children.
• We also need to develop better ways for packing and presenting the items made by the children.
• We wish to be more organized in the work that we are doing and for that, we may have to re-organize few things. The teachers training has to be more result oriented. We can consider conducting assessment tests for the teachers in between.
• Classes should be more vibrant and cheerful for creating more positive vibes and thus, more improvement in children. This is also in our to do list this year.
Financials
## Current monthly expenses as on Dec 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Expense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent + Electricity bill</td>
<td>School building (24000+4000)</td>
<td>28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Van payments</td>
<td>5 vans (3 of them go on second round to bring children)</td>
<td>89,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff salaries</td>
<td>10 Teachers (39,500)</td>
<td>74,900</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 speech teacher (6800)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 physiotherapist (4800)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 physio asst. (3000)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coordinator (4000)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting Staff (5800+5000)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychologist (6000)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Principal (Honorary)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. expenses</td>
<td>Maintenance &amp; cleaning, repair work, school stationary etc.</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee received</td>
<td></td>
<td>-98,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total monthly deficit (covered by Asha)</td>
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<td>95,450</td>
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</table>
New budget for Apr 2020 - March 2021

• We plan to increase salaries of all teaching and non-teaching staff by Rs 500/- per head from this year. We had increased their salaries 2 years back.

• Asha central office handling expenses have to be added in the budget which will be 2.5% of the total amount.

• We added a supporting staff for vocational training since there is lot of cleaning and other work involved. At present this is done by teachers.
Estimated monthly budget for **Apr 2020-march 2021**

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<td></td>
<td>1 physio asst. (3500)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coordinator (4500)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supporting Staff (6300+5500+3500)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychologist (7000)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Misc. expenses</td>
<td>Maintenance &amp; cleaning, repair work, school stationary etc.</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fee received</td>
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<td>-98,150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total monthly deficit</strong></td>
<td>105,550</td>
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</table>
• So, total funds needed for one year are-

$105,550 \times 12 = 12,66,600/-$

$+ 2.5\% = 31,665/-$

$12,98,265/-$
Success Stories

• Vartika is a 7 yrs old girl with ADHD and mild mental retardation. She is with us since about 2 yrs. At time of admission, she could not sit at one place for more than 2 minutes. She did not concentrate on any activity and had disruptive behaviors like spitting, hitting, using abusive words etc. We had to get a restrain chair made specially for her. Now, she sits in class for the entire duration (only goes out for toilet and regular co-curricular activities). She has also started focusing her attention on table activities and has started doing object recognition and matching activities. The disruptive behaviors have also decreased substantially and now, she sits in class with other children (i.e. not in the restrain chair).

• Harshdeep is a 6 yr old boy with autism. He is with us since last 1 year. The parents are young and father is still studying. This was their first child and they belong to rural background family. They were told by 3-4 doctors about the diagnosis but they had no clue as to what to do further. The frustration level was very high in the mother and she was shouting and complaining about his behavior constantly. Parents were suitably counselled and the child’s training started. Now, he has become more focused and obeys orders. He gets involved in all class room group activities. He used to constantly mumble and repeat whatever he heard. This behavior is now largely under control. He can recognize and write alphabets and can correlate simple spellings with pictures like cat, bat, hat. He can write 1-50 with little prompting and can recognize hindi alphabets halfway through. The parents are also settled and satisfied and manage him well.

• Abdul Kalam is a 22 yrs old child with cerebral palsy and mild mental retardation. He can read and write to some extent and is very much enthusiastic in doing all activities that go on in the school. His painting was selected by LIC for making the greeting card.
Abhay is a 38 yrs old boy with moderate mental retardation. The parents had always kept him confined within house. They say they could not find any suitable Centre which accepted him when he was younger. They brought him to us in November. His behavior was such that we could not take him in any regular class so we have taken him up in the evening session (day boarding time after school i.e. 2.30 to 5.00 pm). He is now settling down and has started following some routine though he still wants to roam outside class all the time. Parents are relieved to see that he is settling down at some place outside house.

Swati is a 28 yrs old girl with moderate retardation and her limbs keep on shaking all the time. When she came to us one and half year back, she was very restless and kept on crying and shouting. Now, she is nicely settled and takes part in all classroom activities. She follows and obeys all orders and participates in dances. The parents have enrolled her for the day boarding because her father has developed dementia and the mother can not take care of both of them throughout the day.

Sumedh is a 16 yr old boy with moderate mental retardation. He was going to a normal school previously and so, had developed severe school phobia. The parents came to us in July for admission but he was not ready to come to school at all. So we sent one teacher to his house for home tuition (ofcourse they paid her extra!). After 3 months of home tuition, he started coming to school off and on. Now he is coming full time and is taking keen interest in painting and computer typing. He still needs a lot of motivation but he is responding very nicely.