

## **Programme providing rehabilitative services to children with intellectual disabilities**

**Samerth Talim Kendra - Day care center  
for children with intellectual disabilities in Ahmedabad**

**Activity report from July 2021 – December 2021**

**Proposal for the year 2022**



**Animal assisted therapy**



**Early intervention class**

**A. Background:** Samerth Talim Kendra was established in the year 2007 with 3 children, in the western slums of Ahmedabad. Today, it has grown to actively work with 98 children on a regular basis and has reached out to more than 400 children over the years. These are children and adults facing intellectual disability of more than 50% ranging from Down's Syndrome, Mental retardation, Autism, Cerebral Palsy etc.

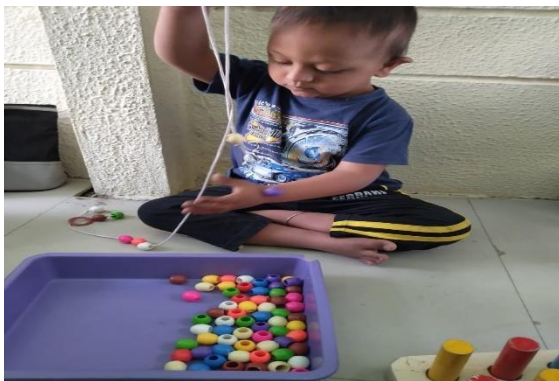
These children are provided need based physio therapy, speech therapy, psychotherapy, consultation with experts (Neuro Physician, Eyes/Nose/Throat specialist etc). Apart from therapists our special educators work with them to develop plan for their education which follows through four stages – 1. Life Skill activity (includes activities that are important to learn to become independent 2. Social Interaction skills 3. Basic literacy and numeracy skills 4. Social interaction, Negotiation and pre vocational/ vocational training based on their age.

**B. Classification of children at the Talim Kendra as on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021**

Sr. No.	Disability	Girls	Boys	Total
1	Cerebral Palsy	04	08	12
2	Mental Retardation	14	48	62
3	Development delay	01	01	02
4	Hearing Impairment	-	02	02
5	Low vision	-	01	01
6	Physical Disability	01	01	02
7	Autism	01	01	02
8	Speech Issues	01	02	03
9	Cerebral Palsy with Mental Retardation	04	04	08
10	Down Syndrome	02	01	03
11	Micro Syphilis	-	01	01
	<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>98</b>

More than 80% of the children have 50% and above disability as diagnosed by Government doctors at the Civil Hospital. Once a child enrolls at Samerth Talim Kendra, s/he undergoes a complete checkup and gets certified by government authorities so that they are eligible for entitlements formulated especially for the persons with disabilities. An individual action plan is then developed includes check up by various therapists, specialists and developing a detailed case history. Currently the children are divided into four groups based on their age and level of disability. Apart from them we have the early intervention group, which has children ranging from 3 to 8 years. The idea is to start early and help children and manage their disabilities with grace and confidence. To help them become independent to the extent possible and integrate well in the mainstream society.

**C. Activities:** The past year has been a mixed bag; we have reached out to our children through various strategies. In the early months we were yet to restart the centre, but started reaching out to children in their homes – the physio & speech therapists started reaching out to children at their homes. The special educators would work with them independently at a separate time. Later, March onwards when the third wave struck, we went back to the online mode, we were better prepared now with our new tablets and the experience of 2020 behind us and for the next three months all therapies and special education continued online – one to one basis over whatsapp calls.



**Physiotherapy was undertaken with 78 children**

**Special education – online with all 98 every 3 days in the last 6 months**



Centre activities

One on one speech therapy undertaken after October

August onwards when things started looking up – we started the centre, staggered the children. Every day 50 children would come to the centre in two batches – so 25 children at a time. Proper social distance was maintained, along with regular temperature checkup. Masks were compulsory for all. We had visits to neuro pediatrician and psychologists in the month of February based on which a few children had to be prescribed medicines. They have had regular follow up with the doctors and have shown progress.

By September – October, when the Covid threat had diminished to an extent – we started out door therapies such as animal assisted therapy with Qi to Happiness. As an experiment we worked with 17 children for the next 3 months – they would go to the Qi premises once every week for 2 hours, they were also provided lunch there. A detailed action plan of each of these children was developed with a mix of physical activities, activities with dogs as well as with their psychotherapist. Initially it took a lot of convincing, since the parents were very skeptical about their children being



with dogs. To their minds, dog behavior was compared to that of street dogs and the concept that they could be gentle and be of any support to their already vulnerable children was inexplicable.



**Ayaan with down syndrome taking Malai for walk**



**STK children eating together at Qi**

Initially we started with the 3 dogs (Golden Retrievers named – Malai, Maska and Kulfi ) coming to the centre. The space was too small – but the 4 parents who had agreed and trusted our judgement to work with their children were also present during the therapy. Along with them were other parents – curious community members for whom the whole concept seemed extremely alien. But little by little – the dogs won each one of them and currently we have listed another 28 children – whose parents want to start animal assisted therapy for their children.

The children groom the dogs, take them on a walk, feed them – and with them develop their own habits to eat on their own, groom themselves and try and push themselves to walk longer duration along with the dogs.

Apart from the Animal Assisted therapy, we could continue to provide monthly nutrition kits to our children – and this proved to be a strong support to their parents to put healthy food on their table. We could also partner with Akshaya Patra and provide meals hot meals (part of their COVID programme) for the month of December.

We are pleased to report that we have an individual donor who is now supporting to build a sensory room at the centre. A sensory room had been a long-standing requirement for our children – especially young kids, but due to high capital costs involved, we were working with basic equipment. The support helps us convert one of our rooms into a proper sensory room with decent equipment and support for sensory therapist for an year.



**Vocational training**



**Nutrition distribution**

Baal Dan (US) and GCSRA (Gujarat Corporate Social Responsibility Authority) a Gujarat government body will be supporting in providing nutritious snack and vocational centre at the Samerth Talim Kendra respectively till March 2022. We hope they will continue their support after this



**Individual kits given to all children based on their needs**

Added with Asha support for the base programme, this helps the Talim Kendra to become a robust centre and helps in providing support to various aspects of the child's journey towards engaging constructively to the mainstream society.

## **D Proposal for 2022**

### **What we want to do?**

This year's proposal is one filled with hope. We are hopeful that we will be able to manage the pandemic and undertake more outdoor activities, more one on one

therapies, monitor the growth of our children in person and overall make the journey more fruitful.

Our aim is to reach out to 98 children and adults with intellectual disabilities through our need based rehabilitative services as well as support 22 adults from Samerth Talim Kendra to be trained at the vocational centre and become financially independent to the extent possible.

### **What will be the strategy?**

#### **a. Need based Therapies and focus on level wise special education**

We plan to focus on Physio, Speech and Sensory therapies and special education as well as include more children for Animal Assisted therapy with Qi to Happiness. Out of the registered 98 children 78 children need Physio, 72 children require Speech, 63 children require Sensory and 45 children have registered for Animal Assisted therapy. All 98 children will receive special education according to Individual Education Plan every alternate day. We currently have 4 special educators focusing on 25 children each. Each child based on his/her needs will receive physio/ speech/ sensory therapy once every 3 days. We hope to have 2 speech therapists, 2 physio therapists and one sensory therapist. Parents of the children will be regularly trained to continue therapy at their homes. The animal assisted therapy will be undertaken once a week.

Physiotherapy	Speech Therapy	Sensory Therapy	Animal Assisted Therapy	Special Education
78	72	63	45	98

Each child will have an individual quarter goal, linked to each therapy. These goals will be made in conjunction with the parent, special educator and therapist. The same goals will be evaluated at the end of each quarter, revised based on the progress. Thus plan for every child will defined based on his / her current percentage of disability and expert understanding on their learning and adaptability curve.

#### **b. Capacity building of special educators**

Along with the above, the focus this year is training our special educators on understanding child psychology, team building, leadership skills and also understanding self and using their EQ to better work with the children. The educators have been with us for a few years and the last two years has taken a toll on their

morale and emotional wellbeing. We believe a broad understanding in the areas mentioned above as well as looking within themselves would help in making them more confident leaders. They spend the entire day with children with disabilities and the uncertainties of the pandemic with stresses associated with the nature of their job have raised an urgent need to look into their own mental health and as an organization we are committed to support them through the same.

All the special educators undergo training in psychology during their time at the university. But we have realized that there are certain nuances that they find difficult to manage when they start working. With many of our Kendra children now coming into their teenage years, their needs from their educators have also changed. The trainings will focus on the changing needs – according to disabilities and various strategies to manage them. What to expect and accept as natural phenomenon and help children cope without anxiety and shame.

The need for a workshop on team building and leadership skills has been more pronounced as the number of children increase, the team grew from a 2 member STK team to currently 5 teachers and 4 therapists – 9 people. This requires synergy and open communication within the team and hence the idea to work with experts and help them become more open and accepting leaders.

### **c. Leverage support from other institutions and donors**

Children will continue to receive nutrition supported by Baal Dan and the vocational centre will work with 22 children and their families on beadwork, paper plate making and photocopying.

The beadwork enterprise has grown in the past two years. We have been able to set up stalls in various prestigious festivals. This included online platforms such as I tokri. It has provided much needed economic support to the families of our STK adults. We hope to upgrade our products, train more families with children with disabilities in the skill set and expand our market further.

We hope to continue our work on COVID redressal programmes, including providing ration, vaccination, enterprise loans for Kendra families. We also plan to fundraise

We will continue to strengthen parent's groups, set up specialists' visits based on the needs of the children.



**Budget Proposal:**

Supported by: Asha for Education					
Project Name: SAMERTH TALIM KENDRA, Ahmedabad					
Project Implemented by: Samerth Charitable Trust					
Project period 01/01/2022 to 31/12/2022					
Sr · N o.	Details	Unit cost	Unit	Month s	Total for 12 months (year 1)
	Activity				
1	Regular travel of team to children's residences ( this includes travel of 4 special educators and 4 therapists)	800	24	12	230,400
2	Speech therapist cost -2 to cater to individual children at their homes ( 660 per speech therapist per day) (660*2)	1,320	24	12	380,160
3	Physiotherapist cost -2 to cater to individual children at their homes ( 660 per day per physiotherapist) (660*2)	1,320	24	12	380,160
4	Training by experts on child psychology, team building and emotional intelligence ( one training for one day in each quarter) (Trainer cost plus food and travel cost per training is 10000)	30,000	4	1	120,000
5	Disability specialist working with children on AAC ( Augmentative Alternative Communication)	22,000	1	12	264,000
6	Special educators working directly with 20 children each (divided in groups based on their capabilities)	18,000	4	12	864,000
7	Travel cost for 45 children to avail animal assisted therapy at Qi to Happiness premises. The therapy is free for the children - Samerth has to bear the travel cost to their centre which is specially developed for therapy. The total travel cost for one batch of children to go to their centre is 4000/- ( hire	12,000	4	10	480,000

	cost for mini bus for 15 kids). For 3 batches the cost is 12000 every week. Thus the cost 48,000 per month.				
	<b>Admin cost</b>				
8	Part Rent and Electricity per month & internet connection	28,500	1	12	342,000
<b>Sub Total</b>					<b>3,060,720</b>
	<b>Closing Balance as on 31st December 2021</b>				<b>386446</b>
	<b>Final Approved Budget 2022</b>				<b>2,675,000</b>