



August 2020

Issue No.9

Roshni

Reaching Out to Serve Humanity with New Initiative

About Prabhat

The Prabhat Education Foundation reflects a journey that began in 2003 through the identification and nurturing of children with learning difficulties struggling in mainstream schools. In time, Realizing the need for education and learning of this group and particularly of children, Prabhat conceptualized an institutional facility to provide systematic learning and rehabilitation services that could be accessible for those challenged by poverty and mobility. Working with and through local communities is Prabhat's hallmark.

What started as a modest beginning, with one child in 2007, has now reached to 3000 persons with special needs in Ahmedabad as well as to their families, neighbours and communities.

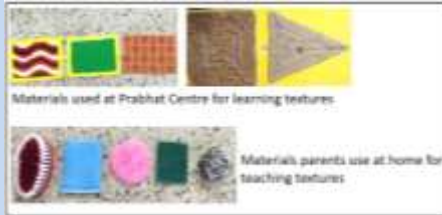
An experience

Hasmukh bhai and his wife were trying to have a child for a long time, after many years they got a news of a one day old baby who was up for adoption and they thought this was it, they went and saw him and it was love at first sight, they knew he belonged to them. After all the legal adoption procedures were completed, they got little Karthik back home, joy, excitement filled the air. Days went by, Karthik though was growing but his developmental milestones were not being met, like the parents realized he was not able to control his arms and legs. After a while they took him to doctor who after diagnosis told them that Karthik had slow mental development along with cerebral palsy. Hasmukh bhai and his wife were dejected but their love for Karthik remained the same. They decided to take him for further treatment which their extended family was not pleased with and asked them to either decide between them or the child, and they did what any parent would do, continued to be Karthik's parents. They left home and started living by themselves.

They found a therapy Centre and started taking him there and that's where they heard about Prabhat. They visited the Centre closest to their residence and were surprised to see that there was a facility which catered to children with so many different disabilities! They saw Karthik's face light up seeing all the colourful things around, seeing so many children busy with toys and what not, it was then, they decided to admit him to Prabhat. So Karthik joined Prabhat at the age of 8, his parents were overjoyed that he was a part of a school like institution. Karthik was very regular and showed tremendous progress at the Centre also because of the congenial and loving environment he had at home. His parents have been very supportive and proactive at Prabhat.

Unfortunately, Karthik's father Hasmukh bhai passed away during the lockdown. Karthik does not express much, but the sadness is visible in his eyes, the teachers have been calling him up and speaking to him regularly. Prabhat as an organization is extending all the support that it can. We salute Hasmukh bhai and his wife who went beyond all odds to embrace a child with special needs and give him the love he deserved!

They say necessity is the mother of invention and Prabhat's Home-based rehabilitation is a fine example of this inventing and re-inventing. With limited resources and small spaces making use of what is easily available is the best and sustainable option. Prabhat realized this, early on while working in the community, that providing materials will only go on for a short period of time, but utilising what the household has at home helps the intervention to function smoothly. Like for learning numbers Devika uses vegetables, which also doubles up for learning shapes, smell, taste and colours. This makes the learning more functional and less dependent on Prabhat's service providers. Prabhat has always stressed on making learning an integral part of the daily routine of the house, as a family member cleans the house the child can learn how many sweeps it takes to clean one room, how much water is used to swab the entire house, etc. These learning mechanism have been developed and customized as per the surroundings of the child.




A rolling pin doubles up as a therapy tool!

A survey conducted in April 2020, by the Indian Psychiatric Society, showed that out of 1,685 participants, 40% were suffering from common mental health disorders, such as anxiety, and depression, due to the pandemic.

Covid impact survey at Prabhat: a survey with 504 families of Prabhat was conducted over a period of 20 days. The objective of the survey was to understand the impact of the pandemic on the children and families of Prabhat, especially their mental well-being. The survey was done over the phone, majority (58%) of the respondents were mothers. Some key highlights from the study - 93% of them had only one child with special needs at home. 89% respondents said that their child with special needs did not have any behavioural change apart from boredom during the lockdown, some of the others did complain of anxiety and fear and some did not respond to this question. It was heartening to see that 68% respondents were **hopeful** of the future and 64% said they are **very prepared** for the future. Food and medical advice is the most prevalent need among the respondent, health and finances were the factors they are most concerned about. Anxiety was also a common feeling among a few respondents. The survey has showed the resilience of the community and have highlighted few needs and also the needs of few particular families which require the organization's special attention, which will now be worked upon. The final report is underway and will be available on: www.prabhateducationfoundation.org.

All hands-on deck: A total of **150** students from Ahmedabad University have embarked on the journey of making simple mundane task **fun and interesting** for children! The college students were oriented about Prabhat through a virtual platform after which they had several rounds of discussion with the Prabhat team, understanding the organization and the child. This is a first such experience for Prabhat where so many students are volunteering at the same time and that to online! To ease the operation, groups have been formed and it is working very well with regular feedback and interaction between the team and the students. It is very interesting to see so many ideas from young minds! The final material prepared will be circulated among the children and videos will be uploaded on Prabhat's you tube channel.

You can see more of Prabhat's stories at:

 <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe1oxuBWMdyCRk2EPzzjIA>

 https://www.instagram.com/prabhat_education_foundation/

 <https://www.facebook.com/Prabhateducationfoundation/>

Learning continues: In order to provide qualitative service to children and their families the team attends to children on a rotational basis. This month the team has been able to reach out to 392 students under the school program (mainstream school students), 22 children from the Home-based rehabilitation and 20 from Prabhat Centres. Reaching out includes - follow up, one on one video calls combined with learning sessions, counselling and guidance for parents and siblings. Apart from this all children associated with Prabhat are sent learning materials regularly (as audio-video content) customised as per their ability.

Towards better mobility: Assistive services have been an integral part of Prabhat's working. The services extended under this includes procurement of important documents for accessing government benefits for children and people with special needs. Procuring aids and appliances from the government also essentially requires having these documents. To lessen the procedural burden for the families Prabhat extends this service and also provides a complete physical assessment to make the process of accessing appliances easy. This is almost a three months long process, this month Prabhat finally received the aids and appliances for the applications submitted pre lockdown. The products received include folding wheel chair, cerebral palsy chair, multi MR kit, etc. from the government distribution centre Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO). The products will be distributed among the beneficiaries who have been identified through a thorough assessment process.

Capacity building: Learning of the team is an important element of the organization's growth. This month with the large number of volunteers working virtually the team learnt how to prioritize, provide feedback and organize work on several online platforms. Customizing (virtual) learning material for children of Prabhat also requires several rounds of ideating along with creativity to keep the material interesting for the children. This has particularly been challenging, as the team has been used to working with children face to face, online provision of similar work has been quite a learning for them, but the team has powered through and has been churning out impressive material for them. Apart from this there are trainings within the team on various aspects of disability. Prabhat is now planning to organize regular training and discussion sessions with trainers across the country and even outside, presenting to the team a broader perspective of handling children with special needs during these uncertain times and also for preparing them for when the children might start coming back to the Centres.

Setting up the new normal: Prabhat is finally meeting parents on a rotational basis at the Centre since the beginning of August 2020. These face to face meetings is helping understand the child's progress emotionally, mentally and also physically. These meetings are also to provide assurance to the parents that the organization is there for them and things are getting hopeful. Protocols of sanitization and social distancing are being strictly maintained.

Campaign: Though these times have brought with it a lot of confusion and challenges, it has also brought in opportunities. One such opportunity for Prabhat this month includes a fund-raising campaign in collaboration with Drishti Media, Ahmedabad (<https://www.drishtimedia.org/>). A 20 days campaign which highlighted the plight of economically marginalized families with focus on those with a special needs child at home during this pandemic. The campaign ended with the launch of *Goonga Phelwan* a movie on the journey of a hearing-impaired wrestler. The campaign has allowed the organization to reunite with a lot of old supporters and friends of Prabhat.



अनावश्यक मुसाफरी से बचें।



बार-बार छूने वाली जगहों को नियमित रूप से साफ और कीटाणुमुक्त करें।



जो लोग COVID-19 से एफेक्टेड हैं और उनकी देखभाल करनेवाले उन लोगों के साथ भेदभाव न करें।



हाथ से बनाये कॉटन के मास्क पहने जो वाँश करके फिर से इस्तमाल कर सकते हैं।



Karthik with his father



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