

# 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

Lakshmi is a 3 year old child who suffered due to lack of oxygen at the time of birth, which caused delayed physical growth and other complications. She started getting epileptic attacks soon after. Her parents were extremely concerned and took her for a detailed consultation to a well-known pediatrician. Upon his examination he advised the parents to start physiotherapy for her, for which he referred Prabhat Education Foundation's Centre as it was near to their place. Lakshmi was around 2 years when she came to the Centre and I along with a Special Educator did a complete assessment which included physical, mental and sensory development. She could not sit and did not have any neck control. Extra precautions need to be taken while doing therapy for children without neck control. On closer examination in the following days, I realized she could not turn to either side (left or right) which was a resultant of lack of control on her back. I prepared a detailed plan in consultation with other experts at the Centre and started with her physiotherapy along with sensory integration exercises. Lakshmi is a very quiet child and cooperates well during her sessions. After 6 months of physiotherapy and other exercises she can now sit with support and is trying to turn on her sides. There are proven benefits of early intervention, we are glad that Lakshmi's parents did not wait for long to identify and take measures to meet experts and get the required guidance and counsel, which has proven very beneficial for Lakshmi. The pandemic and the lockdown affected all of us in ways which cannot be explained. I was extremely concerned about the children who were coming for the physiotherapy sessions, I feared they would regress without regular therapy. But with Lakshmi, I was very pleased to know that her parents were taking extra and making her do all the exercises at home which has only bolstered her development. I am happy to see her back again at the Centre, it fills me with a sense of contentment and joy to be working with the children again.

Manish Mistry  
Physiotherapist



“There are many things a regular person cannot do, but I can” this is the indomitable spirit of our Awid bhai. A young 32 year old who has orthopaedic paralysis, but that has never stopped him from taking life head on. A dotting father to 3 children. Awid bhai has been a strong community support for Prabhat, every instance where the organization needed help he has been there, keeping aside his own health concerns, he has been instrumental for Prabhat to reach out to many more people with challenges in the community. To quote a few of his dedicated efforts, during the lockdown when Prabhat was struggling to reach out to the communities, Awid bhai came to the rescue and took charge of distributing food packets and ration on behalf of Prabhat in various communities, he also managed to sew and distribute mask during the pandemic. Prabhat has a tradition of presenting packs of diyas to all its well-wishers, friends and supporters as a token of thanks during Diwali. This is usually done involving the children at the Centres, but as 2020 goes this was not possible, so parents helped the organization this time. Awid bhai also contributed towards this. He is an expert tailor and helped Prabhat make the packaging bags for diyas, yes the same bags you use now to keep your ornaments! He has never let the 80% of his disability ever get to him, he is an inspiration to all of us and integral partner in Prabhat’s outreach. We at Prabhat salute him and thank him with all our heart for being our ambassador.

Kishore Vaghela  
Special educator



**More reasons to smile:** Yes, the smiles at Prabhat have become a little longer, especially those of our physiotherapist, as the children have started visiting the Centre for physiotherapy following strict covid-19 protocols. Physiotherapy is an essential part of rehabilitation for a child with special needs, thus parents throughout the lockdown were encouraged to keep doing the exercises with the children. Now with Centres opening up children are able to access physiotherapy from experts with good equipment.

**Building towards improved health:** 2020, in particular, has made the menstrual hygiene-related concern all the more critical, given the current COVID-19 pandemic context. As per the NFHS-4 data, only 56% of the women use sanitary pads or tampons or in combination in India. During COVID-19 times, only 15% of women had access to menstrual health products such as sanitary pads. In remote areas, people have to travel 10 to 40 km to get the sanitary pads, aggravated with limited mobility, transportation, and physical distancing measures. Women using clothes have reported not being able to wash it with clean water and soap or put it out to dry in sunlight, deterring their usage of hygienic sanitary and menstrual health products and also, potentially leading to various reproductive tract infections. Hence, there is a need to not only make the sanitary products available to girls and women at economical rates but also address the taboos and myths associated with it, by providing them with accurate and timely information. This month Prabhat partnered with Oowomaniya to make this information available to them, at a time when this topic is not touched upon. Series of awareness workshops were conducted with over 500 women and teenage girls from urban slums where Prabhat works.

**Virtual Speech therapy training:** Ms. Birgit Martin an expert speech therapist from Germany, continues conducting speech therapy sessions for the team of Prabhat. The second training focussed on voice, from where it is generated and improving mouth functions to reduce drooling among children. Ms. Martin dedicates a lot of work to present difficult topics in an easily understandable manner, with live examples. The training conducted this month was especially interesting as a live case study was taken-up, along with role playing for better understanding of the exercises. The team as well as parents are benefitting a lot from these sessions and we are grateful to Ms. Martin for taking time out and building on the capacities of the team.

**Forging new friendships:** Prabhat's students are building new friendships with students from the Red Bricks School, Ahmedabad. For now, the meetings are happening online, the students from Red Bricks are from grade 9,10 and 11. They are collaborating with Prabhat to work on a project to develop teaching and learning material, which will make the task of teaching and understanding a little easier for the child as well as the teacher.

**Ek din Prabhat ke naam:** This momentous day is back at Prabhat and our children have no end to their joy. Mr. Dhaval Jamnadas and his family made it a memorable Uttarayan for the children of Prabhat. They organized games and our very own Jagrutiben sang some beautiful numbers. Children went back with their hands full with kites and sweets and a heart full of joy.

**Republic Day celebration:** For Prabhat's children Republic day is India's birthday, so definitely a time for fun and celebration and why not! So on this joyous occasion Prabhat's children got to celebrate it in a fun way by being awed by the tricks of a magician, being fascinated with games and finally filling their tummies with some pizzas. A heartfelt thanks to Ms. Priya and Mr. Chinmay Aggarwal, aProCH and U.S. Pizza for bringing in so much fun and excitement for the children after such a long period of lull.

**Assistive services:** Continued this month as well, the field team was busy with filling in forms and collecting documents from the families of children with special needs that Prabhat serves. This month forms along with first round of health assessment for aids and appliances was conducted, forms for availing public transport schemes and UDID were filled.

**Towards a warm winter:** The wonderful team from Riverside School shared much needed warmth by distribution of blankets to the families of Prabhat. A heartfelt thank you to the Riverside School for the constant support and love!

**Team lunch:** A sunny winter afternoon calls for long conversations and wonderful spicy food and that's just what the team enjoyed. The team enjoyed a much-needed time of fun, laughter and relaxation after a really long time of paving through obstacles that the pandemic brought with it. Prabhat is glad that the winter team lunch ritual could be carried out this year as well!

**Learning continues:** As we mentioned in the last newsletter, the school program team have started offline sessions with children who are a part of the Resource rooms (children from Prabhat who have been mainstreamed). As Prabhat works with over 25 schools in the community, the team tries to cover 2 schools every day, meeting over 30 children in a month. Each session is scheduled for two hours where a new topic is introduced and assignments based on it are given. The previous sessions assignments are also looked over and queries answered. Parents are encouraged to be a part of these sessions, as at home rigour is also an important part to bridge any learning gap which may have occurred. All covid-19 protocols are in place when the students are called for these sessions.





## Snap-shot of the month



Physiotherapy begins at the Prabhat Centre



It is not the material things that matter, but the love and warmth we receive!



Uttarayan made special!



Republic day fun!



Understanding your body and respecting it!



Lakshmi Vishwakarma makes Prabhat proud. She won an award for her contribution in the field of disability!