

# Roshni

A monthly newsletter by Prabhat Education Foundation

## 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

Muskaan as she is lovingly called at the Centre, has been with Prabhat since she was 10 years old. A child who will not come to you immediately when you visit, but will keep a keen eye on all that is happening around! She has down syndrome along with moderate mental retardation coupled with behavioural and speech issues. But the behavioural was mostly because she is the youngest in the house with three older siblings, who would let her do as she pleased, so there was a lot of tantrum of various degrees displayed by her initially. These tantrums were dangerous as well as she was getting physically strong and could cause harm to herself or others. We counselled her mother and siblings to control this behavior. At the Centre she displayed very unpleasant behaviour and refused to mingle with anyone. Her tantrums involved just sitting in a place refusing to move no matter what you say or do. But she soon realized that she was missing out on a lot of activities and fun sessions because of this. I vividly remember one incident where we were working with beads and everyone was on their own making something out of all the craft material, she started pushing her other classmates, which then irritated them as well and distracted the entire class. I reprimanded her once or twice, she did not listen, I then told her in a stern voice, that I refuse to do any activity with you today as you are disturbing and troubling others. After 10 minutes she came back to me and said "teacher am sorry, I want to do activities with you"!

Muskaan loves dancing and has some very favourite people at the Centre, am happy to say am one of them! She is very possessive of her friends. She has also become much more responsible and takes care of the younger children at the Centre, makes sure they assemble and sit in the classrooms before the teachers come in.

During the lockdown her mother and siblings said that it has been so helpful that Muskaan has been able to take care of herself. She keeps inquiring about the Centre and is happy to meet her teacher and her friends online. There is a lot of emotional and social development that happens during a physical meeting of the child with teachers and peers, and that plays a huge role in the holistic development of not just CWSN but everyone. Prabhat is hoping that the day comes soon, when we are able to hug our children and give them the comfort they need!

Laxmi Vishwakarma  
Craft teacher



*“Part of being a person is about helping others”*

Today we share the story of Mukhtiyar Bhai an integral member of the Prabhat family. He drives an auto rickshaw and ferried Prabhat children to and fro from the Centre. Providing transportation is vital so that children can be regular at the Centre, as majority of the parents do not have any form of transportation to drop their children off. Mukhtiyar bhai has been with Prabhat for over 5 years, he came to us when he had just bought an auto and was looking for work. He said he could ferry the children, but then he realized they were children with special needs, so he became a little apprehensive, we assured him that we would provide him the necessary training. After 10 days long training Mukhtiyar bhai was ready to bring the children. A parents and child orientation was also done to introduce the new driver to them, so that they are comfortable with sending their children and even the child is comfortable coming with him. One month on the job and he seemed to be enjoying his routine, he was in charge of picking and dropping 4 children Monday-Friday. Eventually he started making small modifications in his auto to make the ride more comfortable for the children. His auto was always stacked with snacks and water. Since then he has become an integral part of Prabhat and has gone beyond just ferrying the children, he has been around every time Prabhat had to shift a Centre, lugging the things in his auto and getting other people also to help out. He has also helped the organization in CBR outreach work especially creating awareness on social security schemes. Over the years of work, he developed the skill of identifying children with special needs and has guided many parents to visit the Prabhat Centre for rehabilitation. Even during the lockdown all last year, Mukhtiyar bhai was greatly involved in Prabhat’s relief work. He distributed ration, food and care packages to everyone in the community, despite having to care for people at home as well. Prabhat also made sure that Mukhtiyar bhai and his family always had food and all essentials during the entire phase of the lockdown. Prabhat’s CBR model is one that is truly - for, by and off the community! We salute heroes like Mukhtiyar bhai and thank him for all that he has done for the organization!

By: Kishore Vaghela  
Field coordinator



Prabhat’s little Gattu showing what he’s been busy with!

**School program:** Under the school program Prabhat caters primarily to children mainstreamed by the organization, which means children who have mild or moderate level of disabilities - rehabilitated, prepared and admitted to mainstream (regular) schools. In a normal scenario Prabhat's special educators provide these children with remedial classes regularly. Since the pandemic has hit, the school program team have been working round the clock to find appropriate curriculum based learning material (audio-video) for the mainstreamed students. The team has also been keeping a close check on their progress. The online sessions and the appropriate materials distributed have also been helping their siblings and other children from the neighbourhood, so ideally when the sessions take place, the special educator asks the siblings and a couple of neighbourhood children of the same age to join in. What happens with this is, children are engaged, learning together, and children in the same household don't feel left out. This intervention has had very positive impact. This months the focus (especially for grade4-6) was introduction on body parts. While doing these sessions Prabhat also included lessons on self-safety and good touch-bad touch. Prabhat has been largely concerned about this, due to the vulnerability of the children it serves and thus has been actively working upon it for the past few years (around 53% of Indian children (under the age of 18) reported experiencing different kinds of abuse, which included inappropriate touching and assault -<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0253717620951391>). Children are also asked to share information with other children in their neighbourhood, thus creating awareness and reaching out.

**Assistive services:** The team at Prabhat has been working relentlessly to ease out some situations for the community during the pandemic. Majority of the people Prabhat serves are struggling financially and are out of work. The assistive services provide relief in terms of accessing ration at a subsidised cost from the public distribution system (PDS), the pension schemes for the child or adult with disability, transport passes, etc. This month had some good news for Prabhat's community, through the announcement made by the central government where people and children with 75% disability can now access various social security schemes as compared to the earlier 80%.



**Study and research:** To understand the impact of the pandemic on mainstreamed children the team has undertaken a study, which will evaluate their mental, emotional, social quotient along with their academic progress. A small sample size has been selected as of now. The analysis and result thereof will help Prabhat prioritize and channelize efforts. An over-all covid impact study which was conducted last year by Prabhat, had showcased the resilience of the community through this difficult phase and particular families which required concentrated and specialised support have been provided with. We are happy to inform that those 10 families identified are doing well and have been able to embrace the challenges of the second wave.

**Donation in kind:** With the love and support of well-wishers and donors, this month as well Prabhat has been able to provide many useful material to the families. Especially material received specifically for speech therapy. Therapy materials like these make online video therapy sessions easy and effective. Apart from this Prabhat was able to provide clothes, toys, books, mobile phones, etc.

## Snap-shot of the month



Awareness on various social security schemes



We need no building to reach out!



We thank you for donating in kind!



Hearing aids distributed

