

# 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

From a distressed parent who brought her 15 year old son who couldn't speak, to a child who now goes shopping! Rutvik (name changed) has grown well and has shown remarkable all-round development. He has mild intellectual disability and came to Prabhat 7 years back, as an introvert child. We designed his activities to inculcate more group tasks, which involved doing puzzles with other children, clay work, craft etc. He wasn't too keen but just sat there not putting in much effort. As time passed by and faces became familiar to Rutvik, he started gradually participating, some of our other vocal and confident children were given the task of involving Rutvik, and with all gusto they did. These sessions started opening up his speech as well. A number of times children with disabilities are coddled at home, this usually happens because parents want to provide comfort to the child and do not want them to stress, but it sometimes has adverse effects on the child, who does not learn to be independent along with developing behavioural issues. To improve his speech, Rutvik was given specific therapy and activities like - blowing air out of his mouth, inflating balloons, blowing candles along with light massage on his neck by the therapist, this process facilitates opening the vocal chords. Gradually his speech got much clearer, he was able to communicate and that gave him such confidence and happiness.

We all knew Rutvik is a good dancer but a little shy, so would avoid doing it during celebrations. Once during some festival celebration at the Centre all the children were dancing and enjoying, we saw Rutvik sitting with a few other children in a corner, while we were discussing ways of getting him to participate, he suddenly got up and started doing some amazing steps, we were all a little shocked, he then came to me and said "Ma'am, this is my favourite song, come dance with me"! I started laughing seeing his excitement and got sucked into all the fun. He taught me and everyone at the Centre some very fun steps, that day was a blast! Since then, he is the informal dance teacher at the Danilimda Centre, only on one condition as long as it's his favourite songs!

Rutvik has become a delight at home as well, the power of communication has really transformed him. We have been meeting online, unfortunately as Prabhat has not been able to set up a Centre in Danilimda post lockdown, those children are still being catered to online. Rutvik is happy as long as he can see all of us and his friends over video call once in a while!

Sejal Anand  
Special Educator



**Contentment is not an easy state of mind to be in or even find**, but through Prabhat we are able to find many such examples of contented souls. Today I will share with you the life and love of siblings – Anuj and Anushka (name changed). The story starts with a 9 year old boy, who is happy and ‘content’ having his elder sister at arms distance where he can touch and feel her! Anuj is a child with hearing, speech and visual impairment. One of the most challenging disabilities, Helen Keller has been a remarkable example and inspiration for all of us, with taking into stride the challenges brought on with this form of disability and championing it! I was introduced to Anuj about 5-6 years back, his home is a warm and welcoming place. I still remember the moment I was going to touch Anuj, his elder sister Anushka stopped me and said “Madam I will take your hand and run it on Anuj’s arm, then he will know you are trustworthy”! I was a little stumped to say the least, to hear these words from a young girl, but then realized that it depicts how much she cares and how protective she is of her brother! I just spent weeks observing Anuj and his life at home, it was amazing to see how in-charge Anushka was with him, she was the one responsible to keep him engaged, sometimes also feed him when he was fussy and telling him stories, yes you heard me right-stories, she has devised her own to narrate these wonderful stories by drawing on his arms! Apart from this, she has also been teaching him life skills. When Anushka touches the toothbrush to Anuj, he gets up, moves alongside the wall touching it towards the bathroom. In the same manner as soon as Anushka touches the towel to Anuj, he comes to know that it's bath time. After Anuj finishes drink milk, Anushka puts his hand on her shoulder and leads him to the kitchen to teach him to keep the glass on the counter. It would have been easier for Anushka to take the glass by herself, but the family including Anuj have realized the importance of Anuj becoming self-reliant.

‘There are people who find happiness in the smallest of things’, and a rope shaped to be a swing is the source of happiness for Anuj. Whenever Anuj wants to swing, he brings Anushka holding her hand towards the wall where the swing is hung and raises his hand, Anushka knows he wants to swing now, so she sets it up for him. He even climbs and stands on this rope and swings high, all the while Anushka holds him and tries to bring him down, keeping the balance with one hand, Anuj pushes her with his other hand, gesturing Anushka to stop slowing him down, this goes on for a while, until Anuj decides to just sit and swing peacefully.

When Anuj wants to play with his toys, he'll bang his hands on the pillow to call Anushka and then will hold her hand and draw a wheelbarrow (Chakardi). Smart Anushka will immediately understand that he wants his toys to play with and brings them and also joins in playing along with him. Together they play a lot. In the evening, both of them go out for a walk near their house. Anuj is not devoid of tricks or ways to irritate his sister, sometimes on their evening walks, he would hold onto Anushka’s hair instead of her hand and then Anushka would get so irritated and after a while when he knows he has sufficiently bugged her, he would unclasp his hands and pat Anushka’s cheek so to say ‘come on I was just teasing you’! That’s the lovely relationship Anuj and Anushka share, she does not feel sorry for her brother or do all these things in pity for him, she says ‘she loves doing it’ and would have done all this for him even without his disabilities.

**If the world is full of such young mighty Anushka, there is a beacon of hope, that the world might be a better place to live in!**

Jagruti Desai  
Special Educator



[https://www.instagram.com/prabhat\\_education\\_foundation/](https://www.instagram.com/prabhat_education_foundation/)



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



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe1oxuBWMDvyCRk2EPzila>

- **New beginnings:** Beral market has been an area Prabhat worked in on an on-off basis, the population being very volatile, systems could not be set, but it has been an area of concern for Prabhat as there is high number of migrant population there and it is also one of the most cut off and deprived locations of Ahmedabad. The team conducted a two day survey to identify children and people with disabilities. 40 children and people were identified with varied levels of developmental delays and disability. Owing to the high numbers, Prabhat decided to set-up a dehlu (a small space in the community to cater to the needs) again, in a suitable location. Out of the 40 identified, 25 children with disability have started coming to the dehlu. The team is working towards increasing community engagement and getting more children to come to the dehlu, by regular counselling with the parents. The dehlu spaces might be small, but the quality of every activity remains the same.
- **Fun/Learning/ therapy:** This month a combination of various activities were done to provide learning with fun and also therapy. A concern of eye-hand coordination was identified with several children after they came back to the offline mode, thus sessions revolving around improving this have been formulated, like - non-fire cooking, clay, puzzles, flash cards, outdoor balancing activities, etc.
- **Distribution:** Prabhat is blessed to have patrons who have supported the organization with provisions which help these families lead better lives. Prabhat makes it a point to organize distribution camps based on the needs identified regularly. This month - ration, along with clothes and toys and under the warmth project The riverside School distributed blankets.
- **Festival:** Prabhat takes every opportunity to turn it into a time of learning and fun. This month was reverberating with the warmth of the Christmas spirit. Children danced along popular carols. We had Santa of all shapes and sizes visiting with goodies and off course transforming the space to indulge a little more in the festivities, children painted on the walls, made cards, decorated it with bells and whistles. It was indeed a very merry time the children had!
- **Assessment camps:** We are still struggling with coming to the normalcy that we knew and taking into consideration the changing situation which is stressful, we wanted those with disability to worry a little less at least about mobility. Prabhat organized assessment camps, so as to fulfil the aid and appliance needs of people and children with disability. The camps were organized at 2 different locations in order to avoid overcrowding. A total of 95 children and people were assessed by psychologist, physiotherapist, speech specialist and a special educator. Majority of those assessed were below the age of 14 and 80% of them were boys. The most common disability identified were MR and CP. Based on the assessment, they would be provided with the necessary aid and appliance in the consequent months. Information on various social security schemes was also provided at the camp, the access to these schemes help those with limited means and disability to lead a better life.

There are these heart touching moments that take place, which make you believe that there is love and care all around us! As our three little children were getting back with their teacher in a cab from an event. The cab driver Prafulbhai, was so charmed by them, that he decided and insisted on treating the kids to pani puri (one of the most enjoyable snack), ice cream and juice. They gobbled it all up! Prafulbhai was so joyous that he got the opportunity to do this!

We are happy to announce that Prabhat has received the FCRA renewal in December 2021 for the next five years.

## Snap-shot of the month



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