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# 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

Today I am going to share with you the story of Rashida Siddiqi, 8 years old girl having muscular dystrophy (A condition in which group of genetic diseases cause progressive weakness and loss of muscle mass). Rashida lives with her parents and 3 siblings, somebody from her home brings her regularly to the therapy unit we run at a local school's premises. Muscular dystrophy is often detected after a while, in Rashida's case it was after the age of 6. Frequent falls, difficulty in standing and sitting were some of the indicators when her mother brought her to Prabhat.

I conducted a thorough assessment and identified that she has muscular dystrophy. I explained the condition to her mother and also to other members of the family, but they couldn't understand it much, but realized that physiotherapy is important for Rashida. Her family is very co-operative, her sister brings her daily to the therapy unit. Rashida is very sincere in doing her exercise and listens and follows my instructions very well. She is also good in academics and loves to draw. She is now able to write her name in English and Gujarati. Even during the lockdown she sincerely did her exercises and made sure someone from her family is video recording while she does it and sends them to me for my feedback. She was also a great help around the house with all the chores. Now that we have started the therapy units she does not miss a day of physiotherapy, even after we are done with her session she would just be around and wait till I close that unit and head onto another Centre. She has now been coming for physiotherapy by herself as she is familiar with the route and as it is not too far from her place, this is also teaching her to be independent and responsible at the same time.

One day Rashida was waiting for us at the therapy unit, even though the gates were closed. After half an hour she started to cry because we didn't reach there, she didn't realize it was 26<sup>th</sup> January, Republic day, a holiday for us. Someone saw her and informed her mother. Immediately the mother reached the school and realized she forgot to inform Rashida about the holiday. Her mother called me immediately and narrated the entire incident. Realizing Rashida is upset, I did a video call and spoke to her. Once she saw my face she was so happy and composed. Then she peacefully went home with her mother. Rashida has so much involvement with all of us, especially me. It is such a warm feeling and I am so happy and proud to be of service to them!

**By: K. Kavitha**  
Physiotherapist

Sister's smiley face and fun filled unclear speech, brother's ability to talk through his eyes and expressions and that too without speech, isn't that amazing?

Today I share with you about a special sibling relationship between Munni and Armaan. They visit the Centre for physiotherapy and Prabhat's special educators also conduct home visits to their place. They are a family of 5, these two children, their elder brother and their parents. The amazing fun relationship that these two siblings share keep all of us so amused here at Prabhat. They tease each other, they play and at the end of the day, they take comfort in knowing that the other is there for them!

While exercising, if Armaan starts to cry, Munni would instantly, like a matured person ask him to stop and stay strong & that soon he'll learn to sit if he does so, she would also console him by saying "see the teacher is doing this for our own good". Once while doing balancing exercises, Munni fell from a low heighted bench and started to cry. Seeing this, Armaan started to cry as well and when the physiotherapist asked him – why are you crying he said "because she is my sister and she's hurt"! Whenever they go out and Munni gets ready, he'll make a sign with his hand showing her that she looks pretty and when Armaan would get ready, Munni will instantly say "aa haaa, hero" (what a hero). I have seen this and I am astounded by the relationship they share!

When someone asks Munni, are you going to go to school? She would instantly reply "not just me even Armaan is going to the school with me". As soon as their elder brother and father return home from work, both i.e. Armaan and Munni insist that they take them out. Both of them are aware of their conditions but that doesn't ever stop them from having fun and frolic as long as the other is beside.

Both of them are very curious to learn new things. They often play role-playing games and their favorite is a student-teacher game. In which Munni will ask a question first to Armaan and knowing he wouldn't know the answer she would start explaining it to him very peacefully and calmly and try to imitate me, when I take sessions for them! The other fun game that they play, involves looking at a picture and depicting it only through facial expressions, it is quite funny to see them play this game!

There are so many wonderful examples to talk about their relationship, it is unique and full of love. It overwhelms me when I see the care they have for each other and their life seems complete!

By: 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/UCe1oxuBWMdvyCRk2EPzjIA>

- **Uttarayan:** The kite festival is one of the most awaited celebrations at Prabhat. Not having celebrated it last year, children and their families especially siblings were looking forward to a grand celebration. With the support from friends and well-wishers Prabhat was able to provide that. With colourful kites filling the clouds and laughter filling the air all around, it was joyous spectacle.
- **Distribution:** This month with the support from donors and well-wishers Prabhat was able to distribute – smart phones, ration kits, clothes, blankets, gas stove, storage containers, baskets and cooking vessels. The families Prabhat serves are all from the marginalised section of the society and these materials distributed help them lead a better life. The acknowledgement and value of the child with disability at home also improves, providing a better environment for the child to thrive in.
- **Internship:** students from Composite Regional Center, Ahmedabad visited Prabhat field areas to build an understanding of on-field work, especially counselling and community mobilisation. The hands-on exposure gives them a more intricate understanding of the needs of a child with disability and those who effect their environment – parents, siblings, neighbours, larger society. CRC is a wing of The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, Govt. of India.
- **Vocational opportunities for those with intellectual disabilities:** Studies showed that there are 31 million individuals with intellectual disability in India. Only 1% of children with disabilities have access to school in India and majority of them are debarred from full participation in their families, communities, and societies due to their disabilities. The lack of physical access to facilities, transportation, and information circumscribes them from enjoying equal opportunities in housing, employment, and health care. Prabhat has a total of 524 young adults who fall in this category and realising the need to provide them with vocational opportunities, Prabhat has been working towards building collaborations and partnerships to develop a model where the youngsters can have a safe and productive work environment.
- **Parent's awareness workshop at Arsh School:** A detailed workshop on cerebral palsy (identification, rehabilitation process, environment changes, etc.) was conducted by Prabhat's physiotherapist and special educator for a group of 12 parents, few of them were new and brought in by older parents of Prabhat. These awareness workshops help reach out to more children as with the pandemic there has been a lot of migration, these processes help the organization to build a connect with the community.
- **Psychology assessment:** The organization is cognizant of the dramatic changes that have taken place in the lives of children with disability and their families, owing to the pandemic. Thus Prabhat has been conducting various levels of assessment to understand the present mental conditions and development of the child as well as her family members, this also helps the organization to provide directed assistance if required. This month 14 children along with their parents from the *char maliya* area went through a complete psychological assessment with Dr. Jyothi.

## Snap-shot of the month



Rashida



Psychology assessment



Involving parents in every process!



Community interaction



Awareness workshop



A small effort to keep them warm in winters!

### Prabhat Education Foundation

A-4, Sujal apartment  
Opp. Satellite bungalow  
Ramdevnagar  
Ahmedabad 380015

Phone: +91-79-4890-305  
Email: [prabhat@prabhatedu.org](mailto:prabhat@prabhatedu.org)  
Website: [www.prabhateducationfoundation.org](http://www.prabhateducationfoundation.org)

