



SPJ SADHANA SCHOOL

IASE Evolving.....

The Biennial Conference of the 16th International Association of Special Education, (IASE) was held at the Sebastian Kolowa Memorial University (SEKOMU) Magamba, in Tanzania, from 14th July to 17th July 2019. The conference sought to share the best practises for “Empowering Persons with Disabilities: Developing Resilience and Inclusive Sustainable Development.”

SPJ Sadhana fielded a delegation of 5 Special Educators, who presented the school’s best practises. These were ‘An Innovative Curriculum in Special Education to Teach Banking, Promoting Life Skills’ by Ms. Jasmine Pandya and the Principal, Ms. Fionika Sanghvi; Arts-Based Therapy: An Effective Intervention in Special Education to Improve Social Awareness by Ms. Kashmira Vazifdar and Ms. Fionika Sanghvi; and An Intensive Sports Training Programme to promote Skills in a Special School by Ms. Rajashri Ghosalkar and Ms. Tejal Kothari. The Stories and Highlights from Volunteer Services Project Sites, was discussed at an Interactive Round Table Conference by Ms. Tejal Kothari; Holistic and Dynamic Integrated Development through Performing Arts involving a variety of Modalities of Communication was presented by Ms. Tejal Kothari to facilitate further dialogue and discussion amongst the participants to help enhance the holistic development of students through a multi-sensory integrated performance production.

SEKOMU, the venue of the conference is located in a scenic hill station with very low temperatures. The hospitality of the hosts was gracious and the energy of the participants was infectious. The experience of presenting a paper to a global audience was also an enriching one and papers were well received for their dynamic application based content.

All 5 Educators from SPJ Sadhana had fulfilling experiences. Ms. Pandya and Ms. Sanghvi were awarded Certificates of Recognition on Outstanding Presentation Fostering a Global Exchange of ideas and information. A Certificate of Recognition was also awarded to Ms. Kothari for her contribution to the IASE VSP (Volunteer Service Program) Interactions.

Exchanges among the participants is what make world conferences a must have experience and so it was with the IASE. Whether the work of those in privileged countries or those from countries poor on resources and technology; whether it was work from an established University or work at grass-root levels in impoverished environments, the Conference aimed at inclusiveness, whether in academic education, social understanding or psychological

perception. Everyone had something worthwhile to contribute and everyone was driven by compassion to improve the lives of those with disabilities.

Inclusiveness in academics and academic institutions has long been stressed on the national and internationalscene. However, social inclusiveness, specially in India is at times a matter of unwritten but sanctioned norms and traditions that as yet influence and even plague the family unit and communal tradition. The birth of a child is always a call to celebration, but often lineage of the special child falls prey to unwarranted suspicion. The cause no longer resides in chromozones or genes but moves on to individual incapacity and even divine displeasure. Small wonder then of the self-deprecation, anger and unjust want of atonement, of the young parents. At the other end kinsmen, under the terrible pressure of social acceptance dither between sympathy and escape. What then the solution. Perhaps inclusiveness, personal, social, unlimited; and perhaps like ‘charity’ inclusiveness could start at home. Inclusiveness suggests dialogues, co-operation and the desire to understand and if engendered is an investment for life. Certainly for the Special Child!



UPDATES FOR MAY, JUNE, JULY 2019

BEGININGS

Shopping at Big Bazar: One of the most sought after component to be taught to any young child is the experience of ‘Using Money independently’. So too for all our special learners, who love ‘SHOPPING’ just as much as the boy or girl next door.

And so Sadhana engineered another new beginning with ‘**Weekly Shopping**’ in a mall and in the school, ‘Big Bazar’ at Atria Mall sponsors “Quiet Home” every Tuesday, to accommodate the needs of the differently enabled. Sadhana School, atypically, making the most of this opportunity, has been bringing students to this select outing, one class at a time, for the “ultimate shopping experience.”

As always the first step is intensive preparation. The students need to understand fully that the activity involves a give and take – ‘your goods for my money!’ Next, the all-important question – ‘How much? The students – who have been trained through the “Let’s Talk Math” programme by Ms. Tamar Apel – are well versed with sorting, matching, comparing quantities, skip counting, mental math and –through their own experiences – have an expert eye on their ‘piece of choice’, are ‘pros’ and quietly adept with the activity. Of course, years of hard work by Ms. Kalpana Kapadia and Ms. Shilpa Kataria of the Maths Lab has garnered the knowledge and confidence, making it an enviable but delightful new ‘beginning.’



CEREMONIES & CELEBRATIONS

On 21st June 2019, International Yoga Day was celebrated in SPJ Sadhana School. The theme for the Day was “Partner Yoga” as suggested by the principal, Ms. Fionika Sanghvi. Individual fun sessions were conducted for the Formative, Intermediate and Senior Levels, where formal Yoga was interspersed with games involving Yoga postures. The students were excited and eager to participate in this entirely new way of performing Yoga.



EVENTS

On 14th May 2019, the Principal, Ms. Fionika Sanghvi, and the students, and parents of SPJ Sadhana School were invited to the **Screening of “lend me your eyes, Baltazars” a film by the Baltazar Theatre Company, Hungary** which won a prestigious award at the Jaipur International Film Festival 2018. The Film records “the journey of the professional yet mentally disabled actors of the Budapest Baltazar Theatre to India” and their challenges as they embrace “the spirituality of India.” Dora Elek, Artistic Director and Chairperson re-emphasized of SPJ Sadhana School, that it was an exceptional experience for us all to have a screening of our film in Mumbai in front of those who understand the most the undercurrents

of this documentary” SPJ Sadhana is truly honoured . The film was presented by Ms. Karishma Kapoor, a renowned actor.



On **6th June 2019**, the Principal, Ms. Fionika Sanghvi and Co-ordinators Simida Correia and Tejal Kothari attended **‘Inclusive India: A Rights Based Approach to Disability’** a seminar co-sponsored by the IMC Chambers of commerce, on Empowering the Differently Abled.

On **13th June 2019**, The Principal Ms. Fionika Sanghvi and Sports Coach Ms. Rajashri Ghosalkar met with Youth Leaders Gayatri Pore and Ms. Tanya Jhaveri of the Special Olympics Bharat, for the planning of a programme for Youth Activation geared towards **Youth Sensitization**, to be held on 6th July 2019 at SPJ Sadhana School. The programme aims at bringing awareness of the Special Child’s needs in his/her siblings, relatives and peers.



On the morning of **6th July 2019**, a **Sibling Sensitization event** organized by **Special Olympics Bharat Maharashtra** was held at **SPJ Sadhana School**. The event targeted the role of siblings in the development of students with intellectual disabilities. The forum shed light on many aspects of the venture, exploring sibling knowledge and understanding the thoughts, ideas and misconceptions of Society at larger and exhorted understanding, inclusion and a broader perspective in association with individuals with intellectual disabilities.



On **11th July, 2019** a skit expounding the importance of **Guru Purnima** was performed by the Skills Enhancement Class, during a Special Assembly held to commemorate the event. The Assembly was graced by Pawaneshwar Das Prabhuji and Srilekha Mataji of Iskon. Shreedevi Sunil of ‘Talking Turtles’, who educates through storytelling with puppets, had the students enthralled with her performance of ‘The Dot’ by Peter Reynolds.



HONOUR LIST

On 23rd June 2019 Ms. Fionika Sanghvi was honoured by the **Rotary Club of Bombay Peninsula** at their Farewell Miracle Year Program, which was held at the prestigious Cricket Club of India. She was awarded the **‘Vocational Award’ of 2019** for her ‘Exemplary Services beyond Herself’ in the cause of special Children.



ORIENTATION

Orientation activities held in the first week of school in June took off with the Formative years introducing the entire school to different modes of greetings, which are now the norm for starting the day in school. The Intermediate school displayed their skills with story-telling. The senior’s organized activities defining their particular skill sets, which were not only creative and enjoyable but served, to assess the levels of their peers and gauge general proficiency in each domain. The Therapists organized memory games which intrigued the students and started the ball rolling for the year’s theme – Visual and Auditory Memory. The week passed in learning and fun.



On 18th June 2019, Parents Orientation of Formative Years, and that of the Intermediate School was held to acquaint them with the year's activities and events and with the new Therapies introduced in school. In furtherance of this, Aqua centric (Aqua therapy) and Play pal (Play therapy) were invited to address the parents.



On 20th June 2019, parents of the new and non-graduating students were oriented by the Principal Ms. Fionika Sanghvi and the staff to the year's curriculum events and expectations. As the school extends Hydrotherapy to the students, Aqua centric which conducts water therapy was invited to participate.



On 20th June 2019, 20 students from Nirmala Niketan, visited SPJ Sadhana, and were oriented by the Counsellor Ms. Kashmira Vazifdar, for a better understanding of the role of the organization in promotion of the rights of children living with disability.



WORKSHOP

On 31st July 2019, the Staff attended an innovative workshop on ‘**Story Reading**’ conducted by **Ms. Timira Gupta**. The workshop was unique as it seeks to re-invent and revive the use of books in the classroom for young children. Ms. Gupta concentrates on content as perceived by the student, in an age appropriate way, enhanced by complementary images and sounds. On the whole, an extremely interesting workshop.

