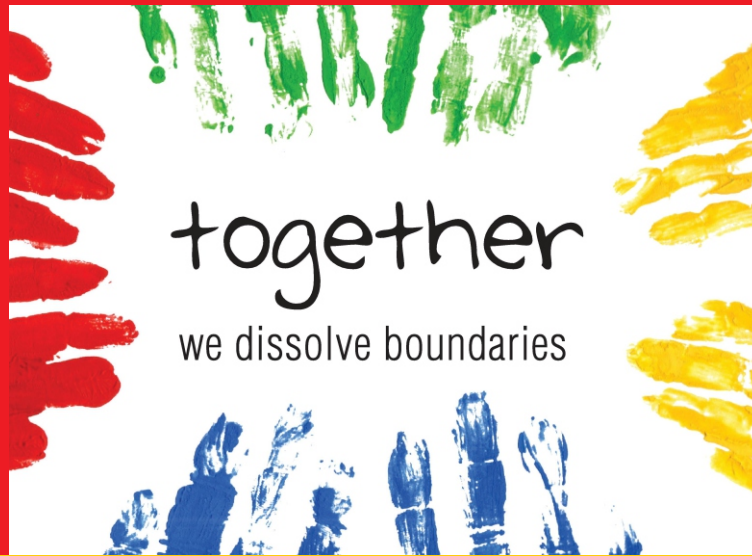


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Together Foundation
skill development for people with special needs
learn. work. enjoy. be.



the first shop
managed by people
with special needs

Together Foundation

Annual report
2017 - 18

Introduction

Together Foundation is a not for profit organisation and a public charitable trust. The organisation was founded by Sangeetha and V Chakrapani, parents to two teenage girls experiencing autism. Together runs a training centre that works with young people with autism and other intellectual disabilities. We run a bakery that is FSSAI certified, paper plate manufacturing unit, paper bag design unit and have launched the first shop that trains and employs people with intellectual disabilities. Our teaching programme is based on getting students ready for independent living, after the lifetime of parents - language and communication, kitchen management, personal hygiene, leisure activities, computer skills and vocational training. We are very particular about creating a safe and relaxed environment for our students. The centre is under 24 hour CCTV surveillance and the students interaction with adults and among themselves is constantly monitored.

- **Work timings** - Monday to Friday - 9:00am to 4:30pm
- **Weekend** - Vocational activities - Sat & Sun, 9:30-12noon
- **Registered Public Charitable Trust (E-32042(B))**
- **Bakery FSSAI registration** no. No. 21516021000078 under the Food Safety and Standard Act, 2006
- **Shop** registered under the Maharashtra Shop and Establishments Act, 1948
- **Income Tax Exemption** under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act, 1961
No.CIT(E)/80G/2074/2018-19

Board of Trustees

Sangeetha Chakrapani, V.Chakrapani, Dr.Y.K.Amdekar, Dr.Anjali Tendulkar, Ms.Sheela Sinha.

Founded in 2016, in the past two years, Together has grown in all directions. Training in new skill areas have begun, new students have joined while a couple of them moved out for various reasons. Corporate volunteers have entered this space and a whole lot of public awareness has been created through a series of exhibitions and sales.

Students

Together works with a team of 15 students with different challenges including autism, Down syndrome, mental retardation, ADHD, giant axonal neuropathy and slow learners. Each student has his/her own programme based on individual needs. Students who required training in life skills are now more independent in daily living skills and have moved on to a full time vocational training programme. Another group of students are now ready to work independently in a sheltered environment. (eg. workshops, bakery, shop).

Staff Members

Apart from the founder, Sangeetha Chakrapani who has conceptualised and monitors the teaching programme, we have 1 coordinator, 3 special educators, 1 trainee chef and 1 support staff. Rinal Karvat, an experienced chef and Sheela Sinha, senior professional from the field of disabilities function as consultants.

Our Training Programme

The teaching programme is entirely functional and based on skills that students will use in their daily lives. Goals were set and assessments were done. Assessment videos were also sent to parents every three months.

1. Life skills

The students were trained in the following areas of life skills at a level appropriate for them. The goal was to make them as independent as possible in daily life.

Personal hygiene	Kitchen work
Independence in washroom	Cleaning, washing
Cleaning, washing, scrubbing	Cutting, chopping
Grooming	Basic snacks
Folding clothes	Food preparation
Period management	

2.Vocational Training

Bakery [FSSAI certified]

Our Bakery program is divided into 4 teaching modules, which the teachers follow. Students not only learn to bake but acquire many other skills like measuring, counting, weighing and different kinds of packaging and labelling. The biggest achievement of this year in the bakery section was that 3 of our students are now fully independent in making products like tea cakes, muffins, chocolates and chocolate discs. The 10 other students have also come a long way during this year and with a little prompting are able to complete bakery support activities. The products they all learned to prepare during this year are Triple chocolate cookies, chocolate discs, plain chocolates, oats & raisins cookies, almond laddoos, tea cakes and Nutella muffins.

Paper Plate manufacturing

We acquired a paper plate making machine this year. Most of the students in the functional group have learned to manufacture and pack paper plates, with minimal assistance.

Value addition to Paper bag

Through the year, we have experimented with different kinds of block printing on gift paper bags. Students have learned to use specially made blocks, dip them in colour to make designs on the bags and to thread a cord through the bags.

Job work

Through the year, the students were trained in doing job work which we received from corporates. This work included assembling labels and threading them together for corporate clients.

Shop Management

This has been this year's star addition to our programme. A shop stocked with our products and some snacks freshly made by the students themselves was inaugurated in the beginning of the year by Mr Subhash Desai, Honourable Minister - Industries and Mining, Govt of Maharashtra . Five students have been systematically trained to take care of different jobs in the shop as per their potential - interacting with customers, organising products in the shop, maintaining labels and charts, keeping a stock record and money management at different levels.

Computer Literacy

Most of our students have been initiated into basic computer skills. Four of them use the computer for Data Entry pertaining to the centre's work. The computers are used a lot for the leisure programme. Students are encouraged and helped to make folders with their favourite movies, music and games: the goal being to spend at least a couple of hours independently in leisure time.

3. Training in Communication and Social skills

- We planned and conducted special language and communication teaching programmes for
- each student, especially non-verbal ones. Receptive as well as expressive communication
- skills were enhanced using the following Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC) Modes
 - Pictures & photographs (presented through books and files)
 - Sign language
 - Pointing and using objects
 - Power point presentations,
- Teaching safety - we have worked on topics like My Body, privacy, good touch, bad touch, using a series of pictures and power point presentations.
- We had training sessions focused on social greetings and conversations, appropriate social behaviour, using mediums like face-time and Skype.

4. Leisure activities

Students are taught different kinds of leisure activities. We have a variety of board games that focus on colours, sorting, matching and word building. Computer and iPad are also used by the children.

5. Socio-Cultural Activities & Talk Time

We have a unique way of celebrating all important events, birthdays and festivals. Students had a chance to participate and more importantly, to communicate about it with festivals like Diwali, Ganpati and Christmas. Students not only learned socially appropriate behaviour but also got initiated into interactions with people in community such as shop keepers, staff at the restaurant and people managing public transport.

Every such celebration is linked with Talk Time, using the projector screen and larger than life visuals - a wonderfully successful programme. Each student is encouraged to talk / point / sign and discuss his / her participation in that event.

6. Participation of Parents

We have always considered parents to be our partners. They are always welcome to observe their sons/daughters sessions and discuss their concerns with the teachers. Parents actively participate in all events and the parent group recently organised an extremely successful full day outdoor trip to a resort.

7. Creating Public Awareness

a) Sales and Exhibitions

The students of Together Foundation, accompanied by teachers and co-workers have participated in a variety of sales and exhibitions that has helped them to connect with society.

Exhibitions were organised at the following establishments:

Societies – Lokhandwala, Kalpataru , Powai , Oberoi , Raheja.

Corporate – Pfizer, Titan, HSBC Bank -Juhu.

Exhibitions – Sol School Mela, Inorbit Mall.

In-house sales – Ganpati Mela, Diwali sale, Christmas sale, Paper bag exhibition.

b) Participation in TEDx

Sangeetha Chakrapani, founder and co-worker of Together Foundation presented her thoughts and experiences with autism, reaching out to members of the public.

TEDx DJSCE on 20th January 2018. TEDx Bandra on 20th May 2018.

c) Corporate & Community visits

We have had the privilege of hosting teams of professionals from organisations that wished to contribute and participate in our work.

-Pfizer

-Wells Fargo Bank

-Om Vinayak Bharat Gas

-Kalpataru Society

-Powai Ladies group



8. Staff Development

Training programmes attended by our teachers ;

- Seminar on Autism at Saifee hospital – attended by Crystal Pereira, Special Educator
- Workshop on writing skills conducted at Ummeed Child Development Centre – attended by Gurunath Chougale, Special Educator and Candice Saldanha, Coordinator
- Workshop on communication at Together Foundation was conducted by VidyaSagar, Chennai, that works for children with multiple disabilities.

9. Taking Support and Giving Support

- Together Foundation thanks leading professionals and special needs experts for their guidance - Dr.Vibha Krishnamurthy, Dr.Vrajesh Udani, Dr.Samir Dalwai, Dr.Anjali Joshi, Ms.Nirupa Bhangar, Ms.Parul Kumtha, Ms.Jaya Rangarajan.
- Together Foundation has conducted detailed life skills and vocational training programme orientation for the following -

All Stars, Pune

The Anchorage, Mumbai

Together has reached out to several families who have visited us to take inputs for appropriate training, home programmes, communication programmes for children with disabilities.

10. Sponsorship for deserving students

Thanks to our benefactors, we have been able to offer part sponsorship of fees for a few students depending on their financial background and their requirement. Irrespective of fee structure, every student is provided all the training that is required.

The year ended on a joyous note with a parents and teachers get together.

Our work has been based on the strong belief that every individual has a right to grow in the direction which brings out the best in him/her. We invite you all along with us on this path of growth. Your support is our strength.

Annexure 1 – Products made and sold by Together 2017-18 (Approx.figures)

Cookies – 4871 cookies

Tea Cakes – 162

Nutella Muffins – 411

Date and Almond Laddoos- 1935

Paper Bags – 300

Paper Plates – 20000



Together students earn stipends for the products that are made and sold at the centre.

Annexure 2 - Donors

Together Foundation is a public charitable trust and donations to Together Foundation are exempted under 80-G Act of 1961.

Together is deeply grateful to the following people for helping us reach out to families with disabilities.

Donors

Dr. Anjali Tendulkar

HDFC Life

HDFC Ergo

Elastochemia Impex Pvt Ltd

Mr. V.Chakrapani

Ms. Priti Singh

Ms. Roopa Natrajan

ACG Worldwide

Mr. Jagadishan Chandrashekar

Mr. Ananthakrishnan

Ms. Jaya Rangarajan

Mr. Rajagopalan Ranganathan

Mr. S.Parthasarathy

Mr. Shailesh Sukhthankar

Ms. Seema Nayak

Mr. G.G.K.Charyulu

Mrs. & Mr. Ghosh

Mr. S. Lakshminarayanan



Annexure 3 - Helping Hands

Together Foundation is deeply grateful to

1.Kiran Khalap, Managing Director, chorophyll brand consultancy private limited for creating the brand identity of Together and creating the ideological pathway for our work.

2.Dhiren Kanwar, Managing Director, Puratos India Ltd. for hosting the students of Together Foundation at their corporate office and imparting training in baking to us.

3. Johny Joseph, Director, Creative Handicrafts for giving the students of Together Foundation an opportunity to learn work skills through the organisation

4. Zubin Driver, Harish Tiwari for a series of 4 films they made on the work being done by Together Foundation for people with autism.

5. Tata Pro Engage – Professionals from the TATA group of companies who volunteer with Together Foundation as a part of the Pro Engage Project.

6. Chef Mrudula Putcha, The Humble Pie for setting the framework for the bakery at Together Foundation

7. Seema Nayak for guiding the organisation in reaching out to the community and preparing communication for the same.



Together's Local Business Initiatives !

Our students make products at the centre,
set up a sales counter in their community and earn!



the first shop
managed by people
with special needs



Benita Benny,
student of
Together Foundation
is holding a
SUMMER SALE of
Fresh Bakery Products



Contact: Mrs. Benny
+91 98205 77371
124/3A, kalpatharu

Krishna, Lakshmi, Jayanthi and Jayashree.

Three sisters and a brother.

We have created *together*, a brand that invites everyone to dissolve boundaries between gifted children and not-gifted children, special children and not-so-special children, children who speak and children who communicate without speaking, children of one god and children of lesser gods.

“We don’t see things as they are, we see them as we are”
said a famous author.

So come. Meet us. Join us. See us as we are.

www.togethersee.wordpress.com



Together Foundation

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