

Newsletter

Apr | May | June
2024

Bubbles | Pragati



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Art Camp & Video Presentation Day



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On 10th April, Bubbles held its Art Camp and Parents Video Presentation Day.



Video presentations are essential for parents of autistic children, as these children often find it challenging to communicate their school experiences. By providing visual insights into their learning and performance, parents can better understand their child's progress, strengths, and areas needing support. These videos help bridge the communication gap, fostering a stronger home-school connection and ensuring parents are actively engaged in their child's education.

Birthdays



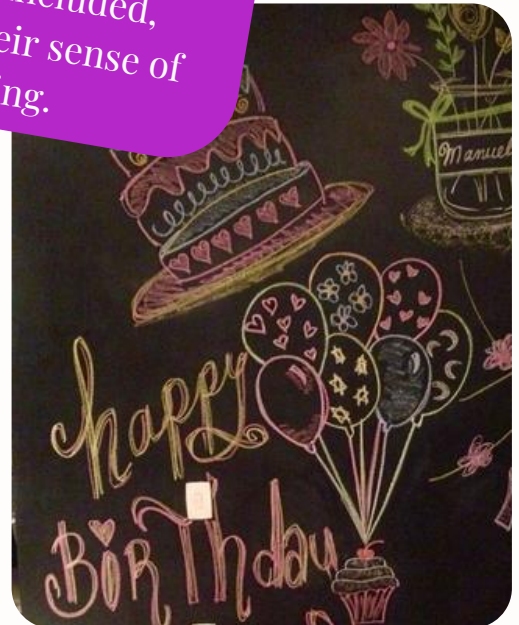
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at Bubbles



Birthdays at school play a crucial role in supporting autistic children's social interaction and self-esteem. Celebrating their special day at school also makes them feel valued and included, enhancing their sense of belonging.



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Isaac, Raghav, Aleena, Vidya all celebrated their birthdays in the month of April.

We had a lot of kids who celebrated their birthday in May vacations with family having fun...

Adira, Jaishnavi, Anurag, Mokshith, Parth, Charu and Tanav.



Birthdays



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at Bubbles

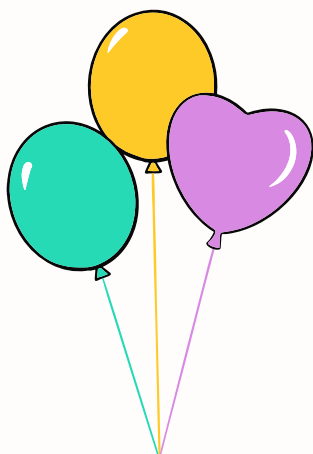


“

Vivaan, Bhadra and Ami all celebrated their birthdays in the month of June.

🌟 Bubbles Centre for Autism, part of the Biswa Gouri Charitable Trust, celebrates birthdays with purpose. 🎂💕 These gatherings foster social interactions, teaching children essential skills like turn-taking and patience. 🤝 The sensory-friendly environment promotes emotional regulation, while the positive experience boosts motivation and confidence. 🌸🎉 Overall, Bubbles' birthday celebrations create a nurturing space for growth. 🌈🌟

Imagine friends huddled together, giggles weaving through the air like delicate threads. They cut, glue, and decorate—fine motor skills dancing to life. But it's not just about paper and glitter; it's about hearts connecting. In this cozy cocoon, social interactions bloom—whispers of secrets, shared memories, and the art of collaboration. And when the day arrives, the card, adorned with love, becomes a beacon of joy.



Birthdays



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at Pragati



April

Suddarshan

Rishit

Hema

Saif Uddin

Mikayeel



May

Zayed

Sai Nitbin

Mary Cecilia

Jaswanth

Sanjana



June

Yashas

Vinod

Kunnal

Ananya

Sreeraj Menon

Anirudh



Celebrating the Harvest Season



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Ugadi Gudi Padwa Vaisakhi



The celebration of the harvest season and the onset of a new year. Marking a time of prosperity, renewal, and gratitude for the bountiful crops.

These festivals bring communities together to share food, joy, and cultural traditions, emphasizing the importance of unity, gratitude, and new beginnings.



Vishu Puthandu Cheti Chand

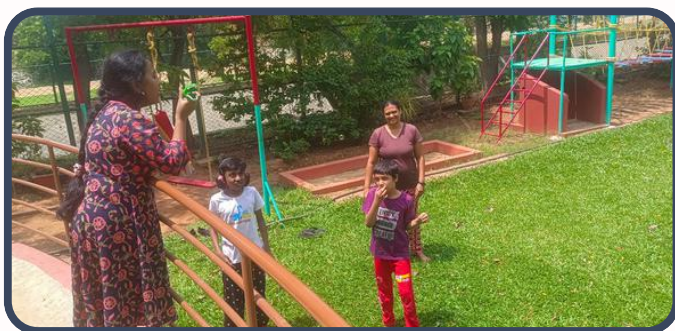


Navreh Rongali Bihu Nabo Barsho

Summer Camp



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During the summer holidays from *13th till 24th May*, parents initiated a summer camp. There were loads of activities planned but it was the children who decided the activities that they wanted to do! The children, the parents and everyone else had a lot of fun. It was an unqualified success.



St. John's Hospital Commemorates Dr. Ashok with Workshop at BGCT



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On May 10th, doctors from the Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Department at St. John's Hospital visited the Bubbles Group of Charitable Trust (BGCT) to hold a workshop for parents and teachers, in memory of the late Dr. Ashok. A respected professor of psychiatry at St. John's, Dr. Ashok was known for advocating family involvement in the care of children with developmental and mental health challenges.

The workshop, open to all parents associated with BGCT, focused on supporting neurodivergent children, particularly those with autism. It featured discussions on effective communication, managing behavioral issues, and creating supportive home and school environments. Parents had the opportunity to raise concerns about their children's specific challenges, and the doctors provided personalized guidance and practical strategies.

Dr. Ashok's holistic approach, emphasizing collaboration between families, educators, and healthcare professionals, shaped the workshop's content. This event also served as a tribute to his legacy, highlighting his impact on the field of child psychiatry and his dedication to compassionate care.



The workshop also highlighted the ongoing partnership between St. John's Hospital and the Trust. This collaboration aims to enhance the well-being of children in the community, continuing Dr. Ashok's mission of comprehensive, family-centered care.

Arts-Based Therapy (ABT)



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Art-Based Therapy (ABT) uses various art forms—drawing, movement, music, drama, and play—to enhance children’s social and emotional skills. At BGCT, ABT sessions are facilitated by Aparna, a practitioner who guides the children while allowing them to direct their own experiences within a structured framework.



Art-based therapy sessions at the Bubbles Centre for Autism focus on group cohesion, following instructions, spontaneity in communication, turn-taking, and allowing participants to express themselves authentically. Through creative activities, individuals connect, learn, and explore their emotions in a supportive environment. 🎨🌟

Overall, ABT at BGCT supports children’s social and emotional development through creative expression, enhancing self-awareness, confidence, and group cohesion in a nurturing environment.

Storytelling and enactments, often combined with music or art, provide multiple ways for children to express themselves. Each session ends with the song "This Little Light of Mine," which signals the close of the session and reinforces the message that every child’s unique qualities are valued.



Capacity Building Sessions



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At BGCT, capacity building is further enriched by in-house training and visits from guest speakers.



Capacity Building Sessions

Why Capacity Building is Crucial for Parents and Teachers

Capacity building sessions are key for both parents and teachers, equipping them with essential skills and knowledge. For parents, these sessions offer strategies to better support their child's development and address challenges effectively. Teachers gain insights into the latest educational methods and classroom management techniques, enhancing their ability to meet diverse student needs.



Smrithy Rajesh led a workshops at the Bubbles Centre for Autism, for both parents and teachers. Parent's workshop highlighted the benefits of a structured home environment for children with autism.



She shared practical strategies such as visual schedules and consistent routines to reduce anxiety and improve communication. The interactive session allowed parents to exchange experiences and emphasized the gradual nature of creating a structured environment.

Techniques like visual aids and collaboration between teachers and parents were also discussed to support inclusive and nurturing educational settings.



The workshop focused on equipping educators with effective strategies to create structured and supportive classroom environments for students with autism.

Capacity Building Teacher Sessions

Jeetin Rangher, as a multidisciplinary artist has a keen interest in the interplay of nature, society, culture and how they influence human behaviour and expression.



Highlights of the workshop:

- ★ **Art and Cognitive Approaches Integration:**
Combining art and cognitive strategies can enhance special education.
- ★ **Hands-On Art Therapy:**
Participants engaged in art therapy activities to experience the therapeutic benefits of art making firsthand.
- ★ **Mindfulness and Breathwork Session:**
Demonstrated how mindfulness and breathwork can improve emotional regulation and focus for both students and teachers.



Highlights of the session:



- ★ **Empowerment of Teachers:**
The session helped teachers understand how to empower every child, regardless of their challenges, to become responsible members of society.
- ★ **Enhanced Curriculum Development:**
The session equipped BGCT teachers with insights into creating and implementing an open-based education syllabus, tailored to support diverse learning needs and improve teaching effectiveness.



Dr Rita James is the Founder- Director of Asha Kiran, a special needs school. She is the academic advisor for BGCT.

Capacity Building Teacher Sessions



The sensory integration training provided by Dr. Bijal Modi has greatly enhanced the skills of our teachers at Bubbles.



These training sessions help teachers gain essential skills to effectively manage sensory needs. Additionally, the development of sensory kits for each class ensures that our teachers have the necessary tools to provide appropriate sensory diets for students as needed.

20th and 21st May 2024



Dr. Shoba Srinath is our medical advisor. She is senior professor retired from Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry unit of NIMHANS, Bangalore



She conducted a workshop for the staff of BGCT on behavioural management.



Literacy Awareness Through Technology

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Dr. Preeja Balan recently spoke to BGCT staff about "Literacy Awareness Through Technology," emphasizing how technology enhances literacy skills in today's digital age.



Digital literacy is crucial for

1. Future Readiness
2. Enhanced Learning
3. Accessibility
4. Independence
5. Safety and Responsibility
6. Communication Skills



Building Strong Professional Relationships: A Workshop by Dr. Nikhat Fathima



Dr. Nikhat Fathima recently led a workshop for Bubbles staff on improving personal and professional relationships, especially with parents. The session covered effective communication, setting boundaries, and fostering mutual respect. The workshop aimed to equip staff with skills to manage complex dynamics, benefiting the entire community.

*Strong relationships between staff & parents foster trust, support, and collaboration, enhancing student well-being & outcomes.
Effective communication and mutual respect create a nurturing environment and resolve conflicts.*



Compliance - CPP & POSH



Every year **Meena Jain** holds a symposium for the teachers of Bubbles and Pragati.

She is a certified POSH trainer cum consultant expert with a vast experience who wears various hats like corporate trainer, psychologist, psychotherapist amongst others.

She guides them as regards with **CPP (Child Protection Policy)** and **POSH (Prevention of Sexual Harrassment)**



“

This training is mandatory for all the employees of BGCT.

Open House

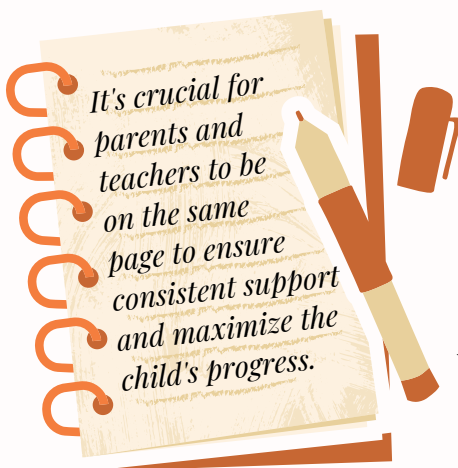
The first Open House of the academic year was held on Saturday, the 29th, and it was a full house, with several parents attending virtually. Ms. Dhanu John began by summarizing the workshops and orientations teachers received in April, May, and June, and she highlighted the milestones achieved by some children during the summer holidays.



The role of Bubbles was clearly outlined, highlighting its offerings in Special Education, Occupational Therapy, Speech Therapy, Digital Literacy, and Art-Based Therapy.

Parents were informed about the different therapy options and their levels.

A timeline of the evolution of Digital Literacy at Bubbles was shared, showing current levels. Speech Therapy focuses on building vocabulary with core words, using expressions, gestures, and the **Avaz app**.



The meet ended on a positive note with plans for parent, father, and sibling support groups. Parents were informed about the Child Protection Committee and encouraged to ask questions about emergency procedures. Attendees were excited about planning activities for August 15th, involving both children and parents.

Details to follow in the next newsletter.





पत्रिका
MY CITY
CINEWEB & CELEBS
बसंती महतो ने जीता कांस्य...

#AutisticPrideDay एथलेटिक्स में नाम रोशन करने वाले बच्चों की मोटिवेशनल स्टोरी
स्पेशल साई ने जीते पांच गोल्ड कोच ने मना किया तो पिता बने ट्रेनर

अंबर को भी स्पोर्ट्स में रुचि

बच्चे को सिखाने के लिए पापा ने सीखी स्वीमिंग

18/06/2024 | Raipur City | Page : 15
Source : <https://epaper.patrika.com/>



Gagandeep aka Deepu made his parents and his school proud when he won the bronze medal for roller skating on 18th June 2024 @ Autistic Pride day.

69

He is an active participant in his classes and responds very well to visuals.

Mime Show

28th June 2024



“



Pramod and Kunal mime artists came from Mumbai. Mime is a non verbal way of communication and this is what the students from Bubbles and Pragati correlated with.

The audience participated wholly with the artists and got their views across. It was a completely interactive session with the students being animated participants.



Overnight stays

28th and 29th June



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“ Students of Pragati had an overnight camp in their building premises



They made their own beds!



The students helped in cooking the dinner



What is an overnight camp without a bonfire, dance and music?!

This is a very important step towards life skill training. It helps the young adults to deal with separation anxiety, becoming independent and overall for their emotional regulation.



Next day they all went for a walk in the park.

Field Visits

1st June

Visit to Snehadhara Foundation



The Snehadhara Foundation in Nelamangla establishes inclusive art practices, fostering spaces where each individual feels a sense of belonging and plays a role in community building.



One of the programs held is Sangam, which is a meeting of hearts and minds. Under its aegis it is a day where adolescents and adults with special needs meet their peers in a social setting for a day to make new friends, explore social interactions and participate in art, play and other activities.



“

Pragati students went to visit in June and they had a most enjoyable, fulfilling day as evident from the pictures.

Exhibitions



Vistar- Bhoom



WESCO



CISCO

Explore the creativity and talents of our students at Pragati featuring handmade crafts and unique artworks. Every purchase supports our mission of fostering inclusion and empowerment.



Bubbles - Open House

These are a few snapshots of the different pop stalls that Pragati has put up in various places.

Visitors at BGCT



Kavita Krishnamurthy and Sharada Rajaram are the founders of The CanBridge Academy, Chennai, which trains young adults to be forward ready.

Their staff visited Pragati for an exposure visit to learn best practices for helping young adults navigate the future world.



“

They were keen to know how Pragati is making the young adults self sufficient and independent.



On June 25, 2024, students from different universities visited Pragati, a center for neurodivergent children, through the "Common Purpose" student leadership program. Common Purpose is a global not-for-profit aiming to develop people who can cross cultural, institutional, and social boundaries in work and society.



The visit aimed to foster cross-cultural learning, leadership skills, and team-building. Students learned how Pragati integrates students on the autism spectrum into mainstream society. Mubin from Pragati presented innovative special education solutions, sparking a lively discussion on the differences between training neurodivergent and conventional students.

Visitors to BGCT



A pop-up stall showcased items made by Pragati's young adults, demonstrating their practical skills, creativity, and independence. The visit provided valuable exposure to different educational models and societal challenges, benefiting both the visitors and Pragati.

It underscored the importance of global collaboration and learning in addressing social issues, preparing these future leaders to think critically and compassionately about diversity and inclusion in their own communities.



Ms. Sarbani highlighted BGCT's mission to keep these children within the educational system and help them become self-reliant.



University Collaborations and Internships



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Global Futures Experience 2024 (Common Purpose)

The Common Purpose Student Program is an international leadership development initiative aimed at university students. It provides participants with the opportunity to enhance their leadership skills by engaging with diverse perspectives, tackling real-world challenges, and collaborating across cultures. The program often includes immersive experiences, where students visit various organizations, engage in workshops, and participate in projects that address global and local issues. Through these activities, students gain insights into different sectors, build cross-cultural communication skills, and develop a broader understanding of global leadership.

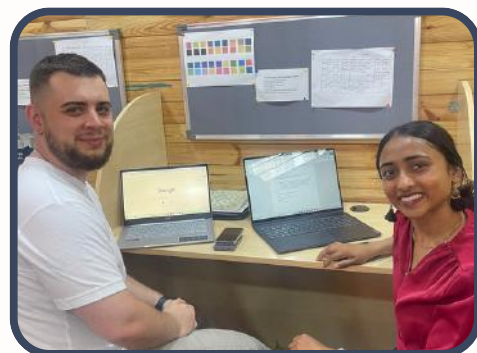


- Students from various universities in UK visited Pragati to learn about our work.
- Institutes that were a part of the cohort were City University, University of Bristol, De Montfort University.

Thanks to Common Purpose for giving us a cross cultural learning experience.



Internships at a special needs center bring fresh perspectives and energy, enhancing our work while helping us identify future talent. Interns gain hands-on experience in a unique setting, develop essential skills, and gain deep insights into working with neurodiverse individuals. This mutual growth fosters innovation and strengthens both the organization and the interns, creating a foundation for future success in the field.



“Meet Dhruvika Mohan and Konrad Tuminski. They are students from De Montfort University, UK. Recently, they completed a three-week internship at Pragati, where they explored and highlighted the unique qualities of neurodiverse individuals by helping them with pictures and videos for upcoming international conference.

Deepshika from Oxford Brookes University trained interns on Self-Advocacy, accompanied adults to the International Conference on Comprehensive Education (ICCE-24) in Mysore, and collaborated in creating rakhis.

Aadhya Paul choreographed a performance for Independence Day, tailoring it to suit our young adults' abilities.

Empowering
Inclusion, through
CREATIVITY



Internships

After completing a 3-month internship, Sani Kazhine and Jessica, both from Kristu Jayanti, have joined new roles. Jessica is a Digital Literacy trainer at Bubbles Centre for Autism, while Sani Kazhine is trainer in the Creative Arts section at Pragati. 🌟👩🎓

Alka and Tanmay from Chandra Sekhar Speech and Hearing Institute completed a 2-month speech internship starting in May.

Pooja, with a Bachelor's in Psychology from Kristu Jayanti, served as a Digital Literacy trainer, supporting teachers and understanding the unique needs of students. She contributed across departments and presenting her research on movement and behavior at International Conference on Comprehensive Education (ICCE-24) which was held in Mysore. She is now moving to Uk to pursue neuropsychology at the University of Bristol. We wish her all the best for her future endeavors.



As their internship came to an end they described their time at Pragati as one of positivity and friendship. Even though they were so far from home the Pragati family had become their family.





Interns Tarun and Khatija: A Culinary Journey at Bubbles and Pragati

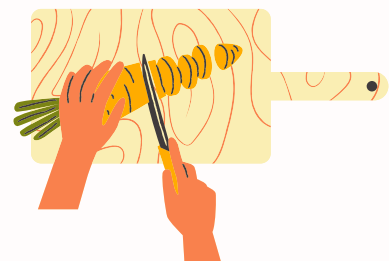
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In the vibrant kitchens of Bubbles, two enthusiastic interns, Tarun and Khatija, are embarking on a culinary journey. Having left the familiar surroundings of Pragati, they are now under the expert guidance of Lakshmiamma, the head chef at Bubbles.

Their daily routine includes peeling, cutting, and chopping vegetables, crucial skills for any aspiring chef. Beyond cooking, they also ensure the kitchen remains clean, learning the importance of hygiene in food preparation. To support their growth, they work within a structured environment with visual aids like a time table and a clear cooking schedule, which outlines daily tasks and reduces unpredictability and anxiety.

Under Lakshmiamma's mentorship, Tarun and Khatija are not only acquiring technical skills but also understanding how food fosters community, as the meals they help prepare are served to both Bubbles and Pragati.

As they continue their internship, Tarun and Khatija are evaluated on their progress, with the potential to be offered a paid position after a few months. This opportunity marks a significant step in their culinary careers, as they aspire to become not just skilled sous chefs but also ambassadors of the vibrant culinary culture they are now a part of.



Parent Empowerment & Capacity building



Workshop at Shuttles and Needles

13th - 16th May 2024



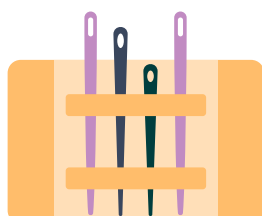
Shuttles and Needles is a hobby store in Bangalore, offering a wide range of supplies for sewing, knitting, and other crafts.

The store is known for its extensive selection and knowledgeable staff, catering to both beginners and seasoned hobbyists.

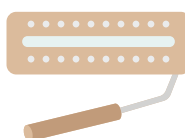
A training was conducted by Shuttle and Needle in HSR layout for few parents and trainers of Pragati. They now are the trainers who will teach these skills to the students of Pragati.



These workshops help in empowering parents and trainers of Pragati. The collaboration of parents and trainers help in planning better for the future of the children.



The looms have been installed and would be put to use.



Immersive Learning Experience

To empower students towards self-sufficiency, the young adults visited Visthar for an immersive learning experience. They were trained in handmade paper production, with both students and staff engaging in the process and learning together. This collaboration facilitated upscaling skills, as the teachers acted as facilitators and also gained new insights. The day concluded with everyone enjoying fresh jackfruit from Visthar’s eco-space.



Founded in 1989, Visthar is a secular Civil Society Organization committed to social justice and peace.



They learnt how to make raw hand made paper.

And of course the trip wouldn't be complete without the eating of fresh jackfruit from the trees



Certification Programs

Certification Program for Pragati Trainees at Intel



The certification course was from January till May and the certificates were given on 26th June.

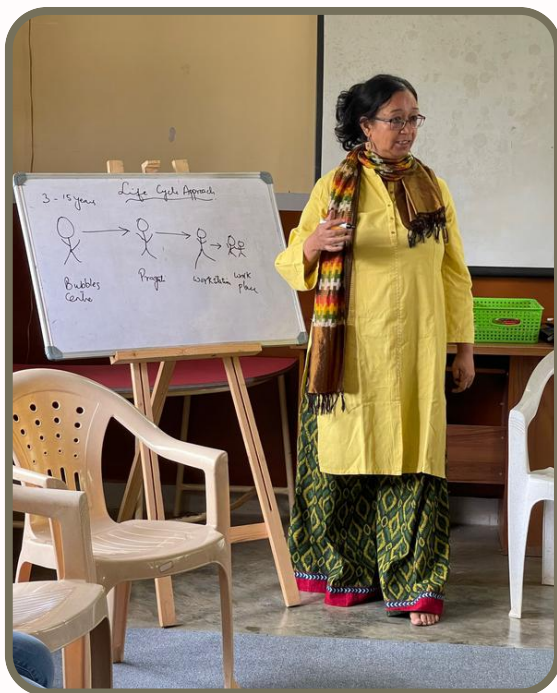
The proud recipients of this certification are Amaan Munnavar, Medha D, Darshan V, Santhosh, Tanvi Garg and Sanjay Sriram.



“*This is getting them one step ahead towards being self reliant.*”

Parent Support Group Meet

The first Parent Support Group meeting on June 24, conducted by Ms. Sarbani and Ms. Nikhat, was well-attended by many mothers, some fathers, and several new parents.



“

Parents were encouraged to introduce themselves as individuals rather than through their children, revealing the challenge many faced. Ms. Sarbani emphasized the importance of forming a support network among parents, who are co-travelers in this journey, and addressed the common concern of who will care for their children in the future. She also highlighted the need to give special attention to siblings to ensure they are not burdened by their sibling's special needs.



Parents Voice

Parents Unite for Road Safety Near Bubbles Centre for Autism



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The parents of children attending the Bubbles Centre for Autism have come together to address a growing concern: the unsafe road conditions near the center. Recognizing the potential risks to their children and others in the community, these parents have launched an awareness campaign, utilizing both traditional and social media to highlight the issue.

The initiative has been spearheaded by Gaurav Das, a dedicated parent who has been instrumental in organizing the efforts. His proactive approach involved not only raising awareness but also engaging with local authorities to seek a resolution.

The parents' campaign quickly gained traction on social media platforms, where they shared their concerns and experiences. They posted photos and videos illustrating the dangers, which helped garner public support and draw media attention. Their posts were widely shared, amplifying their message and rallying more people to the cause.

Gaurav Das played a crucial role in this process, coordinating with other parents and ensuring the petition reached the right officials. His dedication and leadership have been vital in maintaining momentum for the cause, and he continues to work closely with authorities to monitor progress and advocate for necessary changes.

The collective effort of these parents has not only brought critical issues to light but also created a sense of community solidarity. Their campaign serves as a powerful reminder of the impact of grassroots activism and the importance of civic engagement in addressing local concerns.



https://bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com/bangalore/cover-story/slip-slide-to-school/amp_articleshow/111026469.cms

Self Improvement Sessions



The Human Process Laboratories, hosted by the Institute for Self Awareness and Social Change (ISABS) in Odisha, served as a transformative gathering for individuals keen on exploring human dynamics. Held in a serene retreat center, the event featured workshops and experiential exercises focusing on self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, and effective communication.

Participants, including Ms. Sarbani from BGCT, engaged deeply in sessions led by experts in psychology and sociology.



They delved into topics such as conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, and leadership dynamics, gaining valuable insights into their own behaviors and interpersonal interactions.

The event culminated in a renewed sense of purpose among attendees, who departed with a commitment to apply their learnings in personal and professional settings. The Human Process Laboratories thus left a lasting impact, inspiring continued exploration and application of effective human processes among its participants.



“

Exploring human dynamics for transformative growth, self-awareness and enhanced interpersonal skills were inspired among participants.”

Inspiring Stories

~ Sharing the Journey



Pragati hosted an open house featuring a special guest: Alyx, a Neurodiverse Young adult and the proprietor of Pumpkin Patch Design Studio, a community-focused establishment dedicated to supporting youth development and inclusivity. Alyx's presence highlighted a shared commitment to fostering independence among the young adults at Pragati.

Pumpkin Patch Design Studio, run by Alyx, is known for providing inclusive opportunities for people of all abilities, emphasizing personal growth and community engagement. This ethos aligns closely with Pragati's mission, making Alyx's visit particularly meaningful.

Pragati invites parents who have navigated the journey of raising neurodiverse children to share their experiences and inspire others. By speaking about the challenges and successes they've encountered, other parents can offer valuable insights and encouragement to families currently on a similar path. Their stories of resilience and hope are a testament to the power of community and the importance of supporting one another in fostering independence and growth among neurodiverse young adults.



The discussions focused on equipping young adults with essential skills, from financial literacy to vocational training, to prepare them for life beyond Pragati's supportive environment.



Parent Empowerment Emotional Regulation Workshop



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Bijal Modi and Smitha Harith recently led a workshop at BGCT on emotional regulation for parents. They explained the roles of key brain areas: the amygdala, which triggers emotional responses; the prefrontal cortex, which moderates these reactions; and the hippocampus, which links memories with emotions.



Using the "hand model" of the brain, they demonstrated how the prefrontal cortex helps manage emotions triggered by the amygdala. This model, popularized by Dr. Dan Siegel, provides a simple visual aid to understand these complex processes. The workshop offered practical strategies, including mindfulness techniques, deep breathing exercises, and positive reinforcement, to help parents and children better regulate their emotions. This knowledge empowers families to develop healthier emotional responses and improve their overall well-being.



“

Bijal Modi and Smitha Harith taught parents about brain functions in emotional regulation using the "hand model" and provided practical techniques for managing emotions.



Spotlight on Champions



Nagaraj Uncle

The Heartbeat of Bubbles

Nagaraj Uncle has been with Bubbles the longest of all the staff members, making him an integral part of the institution's fabric. Stationed at the school gate, he warmly greets each student by name, fostering a unique bond with the children. His understanding of each child's needs and quirks is unparalleled, ensuring they feel safe and welcomed.



The rare occasion when Nagaraj Uncle was absent left a noticeable void, with everyone eagerly awaiting his return. His presence is as constant and comforting as the sound of the school bell, which he rings to mark the start of the day, breaks, and the end of the school day. For the children and staff alike, Nagaraj Uncle and the ringing bell are synonymous with the rhythm and safety of daily life at Bubbles.