

# Mission possible

*An interview with Merry Barua, Director, Action For Autism, Chirag Gaon, New Delhi.*



**WHAT INSPIRED** you to get into this field?

Autistic children are not mentally retarded, and they are not mad. They are special children and they need special attention.

I am a journalist by profession and wrote a lot about autism to bring about an awareness among the people. That was in the early seventies when I was working with Asia World, a magazine published from Kolkata.

My son who is twenty now, is an autistic child. I wanted to help him.

**Where did you get your training from?**

I did my training from the United States. Initially I started to work with my son at home. Then in the course of time I realised that I could help more kids like my son who need it.

Thus, I started dealing with other kids. The centre, Action for Autism was opened seven years back and I started training teachers and parents to deal with these special children.

**Is Autism curable?**

I would not like to give a pessimistic answer. If not completely curable, proper training surely ensures a better, and an independent life.

**Tell us more about your mission.**

The goal or mission of AFA is to create an environment that maximises opportunities for the person to lead an independent, productive life and to be an integrated part of society. "You are not alone" is our motto.