

autism

N E T W O R K

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INFORMATION

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Cover Illustration
'The Temple'
By Vrinda Chaswal, age 16 years,
as seen in her neighbourhood

WISHLIST !

FOR THE SCHOOL

- o Trampoline
- o Plastic indoor slide
- o Board markers
- o Permanent markers
- o Art materials such as :
Water colours, Acrylic paints,
Cartridge paper, Canvas
- o A4 sheets
- o School Exercise books
- o Workbooks on writing exercises
- o Math school books - Levels 0-4
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make a noise
- o Musician to teach music
- o Artist to teach art

LIVING SKILLS / PARENT TRAINING UNITS

- o Air conditioners for both units
- o A collar mike

If you want to help, write to AFA or call:

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- Indu Chaswal: Tel. 65289605
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PAGE ONE

In order to further the education of children with autism AFA had for several years struggled for the start of a training program for teachers under the RCI. And we succeeded. Now, that effort is being labeled as a retrograde step! It seems that wanting to provide appropriate education – versus the hit-and-miss methods that is still largely the norm - to children with autism in a setup where those working with them are trained to teach them, is somehow politically incorrect and anti-inclusion. This is in line with the school of thought that believes that in order to bring about inclusion we forthwith put a halt to all special needs schools as well as specialized teacher trainings.

Inclusion of course is not just education. Inclusion implies a society that recognises and values differences: differences of social background, ability, race, religion, creed, colour, caste etc. A society that embraces every kind of difference, and where being different does not exclude one from the social and cultural, political and economic fabric of society. Inclusion means that your child and my child can go to a restaurant like you and I, watch a movie if they want, hold a job, run in the park, have a doctor attend to them when ill, travel, AND receive an education like anyone else.

Yet reality is that inclusion is not the life experience of families with autistic children (I use the term deliberately) who are more often than not excluded from these simple everyday actions of life that most of us take for granted. And of course neither is education, inclusive or otherwise.

However, when considering inclusive education, no one can deny that it is an important component of inclusion as a whole. Inclusive education is not, as the popular impression suggests, a favour towards those who are different. It empowers equally those who are NOT different. Inclusion in education when well implemented can be a powerful tool towards creating an inclusive society. It implies an environment where any child can learn along with others in an environment of his choice, and get the quality of education that he requires, with environmental adaptation and accommodation made for his special needs. And that is a PROCESS. For this we train teachers, equip schools with appropriate tools, infrastructure and skills, change policy, inform society. We also teach our children with autism learning behaviors,

organizational skills, flexibility; skills that facilitate learning. That is a process that requires careful planning, and includes all stakeholders. And this takes time. Inclusive education is NOT just putting all children together and expect that by some miracle they blossom and learn. That does justice neither to the students nor to the schools.

By running special needs schools and training teachers to work with autistic children one is contributing in a small but significant measure to the process. Fifteen years ago it was believed that autistic children could not learn. Open Door was started to prove that all children with autism can indeed learn, even the so-called 'hopeless' ones. Subsequently many more schools have started in many different places all working towards the same goal. And I am sure none of these schools prevent a child from joining a mainstream school if the child does indeed find a placement.

Perhaps it is that autism manifests through behaviours in children who appear so 'regular' that, we either perceive their behaviours as a personal affront, or see the apparently 'regular' looking child who 'speaks' (and anyone who understands autism will know why I put speaks within quotes) and, we decide: What's the big deal in teaching this child. Just a lot of needless fuss.

There is no argument about the need to move steadily towards Inclusive education. That is something that all of us HAVE to work towards. When children learn together it does away with prejudices, clears ignorance and fear, and grows acceptance. Not completely of course. (Because then there would be no religious or caste prejudice!) But definitely to a great extent.

But it's the 'how' of it that we need to examine. We preach loftily about inclusion and non discrimination on the basis of ability, and glibly practice exclusion in mainstream schools. We divide classes into sections according to ability, so that there are sections for the highest scoring students, then you have the above average, the average students, and finally the below average. Teachers threaten students with 'demotion' to the last section if they do not perform well. In these supposedly inclusive schools students grow up learning

(...cont on back page 18)

What is Neurodiversity?

Mike Stanton

Mike Stanton lives and works in the UK where he teaches children with severe learning difficulties, many of whom are autistic. His adult son is diagnosed with Asperger Syndrome. Mike speaks and writes on autism and is active in the National Autistic Society.

When I attended the International Autism Conference in London last year I heard Professor David Amaral tell the story of a young man with Asperger Syndrome who was visiting the MIND Institute at UC Davis. He was asked what he would do if they could develop a pill for autism. He thought for a while before replying that he would take half the pill.

I think this illustrates a real difference within the autism community. There are many who pathologize autism as a disorder that afflicts an otherwise healthy individual. If you hold this idea you naturally look to understand the causes of autism in order to find that "autism pill."

THE idea of Neurodiversity was developed by autistic people in opposition to the pathologizing model. According to them autistic people are not disordered. They have a different sort of order. Their brains are differently wired. They think differently. They do not want to be cured. They want to be understood.

THIS is not to deny that autistic people often face real difficulties. That is why the young man at the MIND Institute told David Amaral that he would take half the pill, but not the whole pill.

What does Neurodiversity mean for parents?

The cure mentality places great pressure on parents to rush into interventions. Then there is the guilt. Was there something I did or didn't do that

caused the autism in my child? Can I put it right.? How can I not put it right? Instead of raising your child you can spend all your time trying to fix him.

ONE Mother's Story illustrates this:

Olivia was four when Liz finally faced up to the diagnosis, wracked with guilt that, having given birth to her at the age of 42, she was somehow responsible for her child's problems, either directly or as a result of a pre-natal diagnostic test (amniocentesis) that went wrong.

Her way of dealing with this lonely burden was to take action. "I wanted to rip the autism out of Olivia with my bare hands," she says. In the years that followed, she whirled her daughter from one therapist to another, trying everything from cranial osteopathy and 'brushing' her nerve endings, to Portage - a method of teaching everything in tiny steps...

"Every practitioner is convinced that his or her treatment is the one and you feel compelled to try

everything to find the one that will open up your child. I have seen children who have made remarkable improvements, but I would never say they have been cured or recovered."...

Having reached a state of mind where, even if she could, she would not change Olivia, she tries to concentrate

India signs UN convention protecting the rights of disabled

India signed the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities when it opened for signatures and ratification on 31 March 2007 in Washington.

The Convention which aims to improve the lives of the world's estimated 650 million people with disabilities has to be ratified by 20 signatories for it to become International Law. The Cabinet has given approval for ratification but due to small administrative glitches India has not ratified as yet. It needs ratification by 19 more, with Jamaica being the only country to have ratified it on the very first day. However there were 82 signatures on the opening day, a record for any Convention.

on the good qualities that come with autism - honesty, uncompetitiveness, absence of spite.

EMBRACING Neurodiversity allows you to stop looking for a cure because there isn't one. I agree with the Autism Society of America that:

Most of the enlightened world knows that autism is at its root, genetic, and therefore by definition it is not something that can be considered 'curable' or a 'disease'.

GIVING up on a cure is not the same as giving up on your child. In fact it can help you to take a more balanced approach. It is easier to reflect on your child's strengths as well as their difficulties and take up Lorna Wing's advice that:

An autistic child can only be helped if a serious attempt is made to see the world from his point of view.

SOMETIMES our biggest problem lies with other people. One mother gave me permission to quote something she wrote in an email about autism and acceptance:

I think that it's a bit insulting sometimes for people, especially family and friends, to try to give me information about how to make my son be a 'bit less autistic'. It makes me think they want a short-cut to make him more acceptable. I'd prefer it if they tried to connect with him and enjoy him as he is. Then they'd really be able to help him to progress.

THIS is the essence of Neurodiversity. First accept the difference. Then find ways to work together.

And it is not all about problems either. We all had a favourite subject at school that we were good at and something else we really struggled with. Imagine being told that you had to drop your best subject and have double lessons in your worst subject.

THAT is not so far from the experience of lots of autistic children whose interests and talents are sidelined while we concentrate on their difficulties. This can send all the wrong messages to our kids. They learn about their limitations but rarely get the chance to achieve. So they put up barriers to protect what is left of their self esteem. You try and offer constructive criticism. They take it as a mortal insult.

IF we accept somebody and work with their strengths we can help them to find ways of dealing with their problems that work for them. I spent a lot of time trying to solve my son's problems and making choices for him. The turning point came when Dave, a clinical psychologist asked him to think about what he wanted.

Prior to this my son had always been encouraged to meet other people's demands and expectations. Dave was the first person to give my son explicit permission to put his desires before our expectations.

When does Neurodiversity give way to disability?

It is a common mistake to believe that neurodiversity is only for people who are 'high functioning' or are 'mildly autistic' or any other synonym for 'not my child'. The argument goes that neurodiversity is all right for you. You can talk. You can write. You are intelligent. My kid is non-verbal, self-injures and needs constant care.

THERE is a whole set of problems that comes with being high functioning. People expect you to be normal or at least to act normal. So you expend a lot of mental energy pretending to be normal which leaves you wide open to stress related problems like depression, obsessive compulsive disorder and social anxiety disorder. You may be paralysed by panic attacks or have uncontrollable bouts of anger. This can get you in trouble with the law or trapped in the psychiatric system. Being high functioning is not a soft option.

DOES the demand for tolerance and understanding mean ignoring children in distress, doing nothing about autism, denying the need for scientific research? Of course not. We support the need for decent peer reviewed research into the problems associated with autism. It is by no means clear what constitutes the core features that are fundamental to autism, and what are secondary factors. We just do not see any justification for seeing all a child's problems as being down to its autism and imagining that there is a magic bullet to solve them all.

Who will speak for my child?

This is a real concern, especially for parents of children who are highly dependent on others. But we are all mortal and when we die who will speak for our children then? Neurodiversity is a way of thinking about human difference that has the potential to change the world for autistic people in ways that are comparable to the impact of the liberation movements for women, blacks and

gays. When society speaks for my child, then I can die happy.

THE National Autistic Society in the UK recently changed its constitution. We are no longer a parent led organization. Previously there had to be a majority of parents elected to our National Council. Now there has to be a majority of family members - parents, siblings and **people with autism**. Many parents of severely autistic children were worried that this dilution of control would weaken their voice as the only effective advocates for their children. Some were worried that high functioning autistics would take over the NAS and their children would be forgotten.

I pointed out at the AGM that in my experience autistic people who were willing and able to campaign and hold office were concerned for the rights of all autistic people. They take Neurodiversity seriously and value everyone on the autistic spectrum. The parents of children with Asperger Syndrome were far more likely to push the NAS down the path of providing mainstream support for their children at the expense of those who needed more expensive care and protection.

NEURODIVERSITY, like freedom, is indivisible. And its benefits are being seen within the NAS as the professionals in our care homes and schools strive to create mechanisms whereby all autistic people within our structures are able to self-advocate, make choices and exercise personal autonomy.

What does Neurodiversity mean for professionals?

By listening to autistic adults I have changed my practise in relation to the autistic children with severe learning difficulties in the special school where I teach. I no longer expect eye contact. Instead of demanding, "Look at me when I am talking to you!" I ask, "Are you listening?" When I speak to a child I give them extra time to process my words and formulate a response. If someone is acting strangely, instead of stepping in to prevent the behaviour I ask myself, "Why is he doing that?"

OK I am only human. sometimes I have bad days. I make mistakes. I mess up. So do the kids in my class. They make allowances for me. I make allowances for them. Some people do not get it. They think I am 'letting them get away with it'.

Yes, like they are being autistic on purpose.

THE most important thing a professional can do is to help a person understand and accept that they are autistic and then decide what they are going to do about it. A lot of autistic people spend a lot of time trying to change themselves to fit in with the world as it is. It is important for autistic people to learn how to get by in this world. But they will not do that if we try to manage the way they think. I often say that we should not teach autistic people to manage their behaviour: we should teach them to manage ours. And between us we may make the world a bit more manageable for all of us.

What does Neurodiversity mean for autistic people?

I am a parent and a professional. I am not autistic and therefore would not presume to speak for autistic people. There are many who can speak for themselves. You can find a really good sample at the Autism Hub, a place where autistic people, parents and professionals meet with no distinction and anyone is welcome providing you share our respect for the condition of being autistic. We seek no fundamental alteration to this state of being but we do seek to intervene sometimes should the situation require it. And when we do intervene we should remember the words of a very wise person with autism, my son:

My autism is not a problem. It creates problems. But it is not going to go away. I want help with my problems not with who I am. I want you to offer support but do not try and change me into someone else.

LINKS

- *One Mother's Story*
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/health/main.jhtml?xml=/health/2006/05/08/hastor08.xml&sSheet=/health/2006/05/08/ixhmain.html>
- *Autism Society of America*
<http://www.autism-society.org/site/>
- *Autism Hub*
<http://www.autism-hub.co.uk/>

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Mike's blog <http://mikestanton.wordpress.com/> is part of the Autism Hub.

LETTERS

The importance of being Vinnie

Before going to bed, each day, people thank God but I thank AFA. I wonder whether you remember Vinnie Nanda, my daughter. I came all the way from Calcutta looking for an integrated school in Delhi.

It was a coincidence that I attended this workshop conducted by AFA and it turned out to be an eye opener. Your workshop made me understand Vinnie like the back of my hand. Her behaviour, for the first time, made sense to me. Thanks Merry and thanks Indu and thanks Indrani and thanks AFA. Your workshops should reach the remotest corners of India and enable more and more parents.

Vinnie has integrated well in the main stream. To be honest, its kind of impossible to make out today that she has or had any sensory difficulty. She speaks well, understands well, and is fun to be with. There are difficulties but nothing major. A most endearing thing about Vinnie is the way she takes literal meaning of sentences. Few examples of how Vinnie takes literal meaning of sentences:

Vinnie was asking for juice and pepsi at the same time so her Dad said "Make up your mind." Vinnie replied "Should I apply lipstick on my head?"

In her EVS notebook Vinnie had written 'Igloo' but drawn a girl under it. I scolded her and said, "Why have you drawn a girl. Can't you see you have to draw an Igloo?"

Vinnie said, "Aditya was saying – 'Draw Vinnie, Draw Vinnie', so I drew Vinnie!"

After hearing about the Nithari episode Vinnie asked me about 'kidnap' and I told her that kids are picked up by bad people and they should never go near strangers.

The other day I saw her knotting a leash around her pet and saying "Now no one can pupnap you."

Vinnie wanted to know who was a stranger. I told her that a stranger is someone.... whom we do not know, we do not know his name...or where he lives...

After Nithari I told Vinnie never to take any sweets from strangers. To this Vinnie said- "I don't take sweets from strangers. I first ask their name and where they live."

Vinnie may not be 'perfect', but she is positively more fun to be with. She thinks differently and that's funny and interesting. I had started off with great fear but it is so different now. She may not be considered to be the best in her class but for me she is the best. Thank you for making me understand autism which in turn has made me understand Vinnie.

Punam Nanda
GURGAON

Editors note: When I received this letter from Punam, Vinnie's mother, I wrote back to ask if I should change their names to protect their identity. Punam's response was one that makes one feel that all the efforts at enabling acceptance worth every little bit.

To quote Punam:

I always love to share Vinnie with all of you because you have played a major role in enabling us. And I do not understand the need to protect our identity. I am proud of Vinnie and each milestone that she has achieved. She is too young to understand but I hope she will grow up being proud of who she is.

Letter to the President of India
from a distraught father

Yesterday I had a fight with another resident in my apartment block. The reason for the fight is my four-and-half year old son. Their complaint is that my son had scratched their car with his cycle. But the cycle handle bars are made of rubber, and actually neither are there any scratch marks on their car. They say that I or my wife must be present when my son plays with his cycle within our compound premises, and not to allow him to play around their car.

My son is has an Autistic disorder. He does not understand or obey any normal communication or

order. Most of the time we do watch him when he is playing. But some times we request the watchman to keep an eye on him. These are very brief periods. Like when my son and I return home from shopping, I have to hand over the shopping bags and tell details to my wife. In this brief time he takes his cycle and goes off. The same thing happened yesterday.

Our neighbour's complaint is very frequent and we are totally annoyed. They are not able to understand our difficulty in bringing up this kind of special child. I do not have parental support and I do not like to employ some baby sitter for reasons of trust plus also for money. (I am finding it very difficult to manage my expenses within my salary due to medical expenses for this boy and newly born child who is two months old).

And yesterday that neighbour lady - Mrs R M, she is working as a Bank Manager – when she came to complain about the scratch told me, "You are mental and your child is mental". I told her, "If you have any problem, if he has done something then prove it, and I will pay for it". She answered, "We are not so cheap and if your son is mental you have to take much more care".

I got angry and told her that, "To solve this problem either I had to kill my son or I had to kill you." Then she got angry, "How can you say kill me, try touching me." Her car driver also started shouting at me.

Then she left in her car. My wife observing this suggested we give a police complaint. So I gave one complaint to police asking for security, in case this lady comes back with some others for a fight.

K.K.Nagar Police gave me a cell number to contact in case of any problem, otherwise they said they will come in the morning and make enquiry.

At 9.30 pm that night she came with her husband, her son and her nephew to my flat and threatened me saying, "You call anyone no problem, shall I call the DGP? I can book you for threatening to kill."

I said, "I did not mean it and had said it out of anger, because you said my son is mental. I used that word the way anybody uses bad words when in anger." I also asked forgiveness for that word with my folded hands.

Still their anger is not reduced. Her son and her nephew started shouting at my wife, saying "If you are not able

to look after your child then why did you give birth to the child." Then she got angry and started using language in a not respectful way (in Tamil 'nee' is not respectful and 'Neenka' is a respectful word), which made them much more furious. They too used disrespectful words against my wife. Somehow I made my wife to go inside and again said sorry and then they left.

Police did not come even after my wife had called in the night after this fight and also the next morning.

My only request is that parents who are bringing up this kind of special children must have some kind of help from the government and also educate public to be tolerant for this kind of child, especially when they are living in apartments or in a colony. Nobody is able to understand our problems, so we are unable to get sympathy from others. Please sir, help us we are crying every day.

Suresh Jagadeesan
CHENNAI

TRAINING COURSE 2007-2008

Diploma in Special Education (Autistic Spectrum Disorder)

Action for Autism, a premier organization training therapists and teachers to work with individuals with autism and communication handicaps, offers training in one of the most challenging and exciting areas of Special Education. AFA has pioneered teaching strategies based on extensive practical experience and internationally used sound behavioural principles, adapted to Indian conditions. Successful candidates receive placements in leading organizations. Admissions open for our RCI recognised course in Autism starting July 2006. *Seats limited.*

Qualifications

Energetic and enthusiastic candidates who are creative, logical, intelligent, and willing to work hard are invited to apply. Graduates in Psychology, Education, Child Development preferred, though 10+2 pass with 50% may also apply. Prospectus and application forms available from Action for Autism for Rs. 150/- (payable by cash/ DD), plus Rs 20/- for pp. Last date for submission of applications with bio-data 31 May 2007. Please send completed forms to:

Action For Autism, Sector 5 Jasola Vihar,
Behind Sai Niketan New Delhi 110025

— बर्बल बिहेवियर (वाचिक व्यवहार) —

एक समावेशक विचार

जब हम किसी व्यक्ति के साथ काम करना शुरू करते हैं और जब ऑटिज्म जैसी जटिल विकारता हो तो अनेक विस्मयकारी विकल्प सामने दिखाई देते हैं। ऐसे में अभिभावक और व्यवसायी, दोनों को चुनाव करना कठिन लगता है कि किस शिक्षण या प्रशिक्षण प्रणाली को चुनें। अभी तक कोई भी वैचारिक रूप से ठोस और संस्कृत ढांचा रखने वाली चिकित्सा प्रणाली या मत उपलब्ध नहीं है। सारे ही सुझाव या परामर्श प्रायोगिक या कुछ गिने चुने किस्सों पर आधारित हैं। इसलिए अभिभावक एवं सलाहकार इन्हीं के आधार पर चिकित्सा संबंधी सुझाव देते रहते हैं, जिनमें वैज्ञानिक और वैश्लेषिक दृष्टिकोण सीमित होते हैं।

हाल ही में कुछ ऐसे शैक्षिक दृष्टिकोण विकसित हुए हैं जो बहु स्वीकृत व्यवहारिक सिद्धांतों पर आधारित हैं और हमारी समझ व वैधानिक प्रक्रिया को बढ़ा रहे हैं। बर्बल बिहेवियर चिकित्सा प्रणाली एक ऐसी ही दृष्टिकोण है जो आज स्पेशल शिक्षा की अनेक धाराओं को एकाग्र कर उनका अनुसंधान करके मान्यता प्राप्त कर रही है।

वी बी की मांग बढ़ रही है। यह मांग नई है परन्तु इसका मूल्य सिद्धान्त नया नहीं है। 1938 में बी एफ स्किनर द्वारा लिखित पुस्तक "जीव व्यवहार" में इन सिद्धान्तों का वर्णन किया गया है। उन्हें "ऑपरेंट कन्डीशनिंग" या "सक्रिय अनुबंधन के नाम से जाना जाता है। इस सिद्धान्त के अनुसार कोई भी व्यवहार का पुष्ट या दुर्बल हो जाना, उसके परिणाम पर निर्भर करता है। जैसे- लालबत्ती को कूदने पर चालान का काटा जाना व्यवहार को दुर्बल करता है। भविष्य में व्यक्ति लाल बत्ती को नहीं काटेगा। वैसे ही सर दर्द में ऐस्पिरिन लेने का व्यवहार सर दर्द कम होने के कारण पुष्ट होता है।

स्किनर के नये संकलन में उसने अपनी ऐसी विधि बताई है जिससे व्यवहार समझने और बदलने की विधि एक साथ समझी जा सकती है। सक्रिय अनुबंधन के तरीके समझने के लिये हमें कुछ बातों को पहले ग्रहण करना पड़ेगा। प्रबलीकरण की समय-सारणी, विलोपन, प्रोत्साहन विभेदीकरण और सामान्यीकरण जैसे तत्वों को अपनी

शिक्षण शैली में प्रयोग करना सीखना होगा (रीइन्फोर्समेंट, ऐक्स्टिंक्शनद्व जेनरलाइजेशन)

1957 में स्किनर ने बर्बल बिहेवियर नामक पुस्तक में स्पष्ट किया कि "भाषा व्यवहार का एक रूप है और इस कारण जो नीतियां हम व्यवहार परिवर्तन में प्रयोग करते हैं वह भाषा शिक्षण में की जा सकती है।

स्किनर ने भाषा को कार्यात्मक इकाईयों में विभाजित किया है। यह इस प्रकार है।

माँग या "मैण्ड"

किसी को मांगने की प्रेरणा/जैसे- गेन्द देखकर "गेन्द" शब्द बोलना क्योंकि बच्चा गेंद शब्द का प्रयोग गेन्द मांगने के लिए कर रहा है। ठीक इसी प्रकार शब्द न बोल पाने पर उसका "साईन" या "इशारा" भी मैण्ड कहलायेगा।

टैक्ट या "नाम लेना"

किसी वस्तु को या घटना को नाम देना। जैसे-1 गेन्द को देखकर कहना "गेन्द"या गेन्द दिखाने पर "यह क्या है" को उत्तर में "गेन्द कहना"।

2- बारिश देखकर कहना "बारिश है"।

इकोइक या प्रतिध्वनिक

किसी के मौखिक व्यवहार की नकल करना (अर्थात् दूसरों द्वारा बोले गये शब्दों, शब्दार्थ या वाक्य । वाक्यांश दोहराना।

जैसे- "पानी" शब्द सुनकर स्वयं "पानी" कहना।

"आपको क्या चाहिए" के पश्चात् यही वाक्य दोहराना।

इन्ट्रावर्बल या अन्तर वाचिक

किसी प्रश्न का उत्तर देना या रिक्त स्थान में शब्द बोलना

जैसे- आप यदि बोलें "मछली जल की-

बच्चा बोले-रानी है।

या अन्य किसी सवाल का उत्तर (आप पूछे-आपका नाम क्या है और बच्चा बोले "राजू" ।

टेक्चरुअल या पाठ्य

किसी शब्द को पढ़ना जो सुना है या लिखा है। रिटन या लिखित सुने जाने वाले शब्दों को लिखना या उसका मौखिक श्रुतलेखन।

अनुकरणात्मक या माईमेटिक

दूसरों द्वारा शारीरिक क्रिया का अनुकरण करना। जैसे हाथ नकल करके हिलाना, उंगलियों द्वारा नकल इत्यादि।

रिसेप्टिव या संग्राहक

दूसरे द्वारा दिये गये आदेश पालन करना। जैसे- "दे दो, उठालो, डाल दो, दिखाओ"

स्किकनर की इस "बर्बल बिहेवियर" विधि का उपयोग भाषा और संचार में बहुत सही तरह से किया जा सकता है। ऑटिज्म से प्रभावित बच्चे प्रायः किसी शब्द का प्रयोग किसी एक तरह से ही कर पाते हैं। उदाहरण के लिए "गाड़ी" को देखकर वह उसे टैक्ट के रूप से "गाड़ी" कहते हैं (नाम लेना) पर गाड़ी में जाने के लिए वह मैण्ड या मांग के रूप में यह शब्द नहीं बोल सकते। इसलिए बर्बल बिहेवियर के सिद्धान्तों द्वारा हम बच्चे की कार्यात्मक भाषा का विकास कर सकते हैं।

बर्बल बिहेवियर विधि को कार्यशील करने में निम्नलिखित मूल्य बातें याद रखी जाती हैं :-

1. अध्यापक स्वयं को बच्चे के वर्तमान प्रबलीकरण के साथ जोड़ता है। उदाहरण- बच्चा यदि चॉकलेट से प्रबलित होता है तो अध्यापक पहले उसे चॉकलेट द्वारा अपने साथ जोड़ेगा। प्रबलित करने वाली वस्तु खाद् पदार्थ, खिलौना, गुददुदाना इत्यादि कुछ भी हो सकता है, जो बच्चे के लिए सही माने में प्रबलन ला सके।
2. बच्चे को "भूल मुक्त शिक्षण" कार्य विधि से सिखाना है। वह भूल करे, उससे पहले ही अध्यापक बच्चों को मदद कर सही प्रतिक्रिया दिलवा देता है।
3. कठिन और सरल, नये व ग्रहण किये हुए लक्ष्य का सही अनुपात।

4. भिन्न प्रकार के नियत कार्य आपस में विविधता और मिश्रित रूप में दिये जायें।

5. प्रबलन के सकारात्मक तरीके प्रयोग करें।

6. प्रबलन प्रदान को विविधता के साथ आयोजित करें। अर्थात् प्रबलन की मात्रा, अन्तर समय इत्यादि का कार्यक्रम बनायें।

7. प्रोम्प्ट या सहायता जो कार्य सिखाते समय दी जा रही हो, उसे धीरे धीरे धीमा और लुप्त करें।

8. सीखे जा रहे कार्य को गति में लायें। उसका दर बढ़ायें। इससे सीखे गये लक्ष्य सही और सहज रूप में प्रयोग किये जा पायेंगे।

इसके साथ वी0बी0 कर्ता कठिन और अनुचित व्यवहारों का कार्यात्मक विष्लेशण भी करते हैं। जैसे- यदि बच्चा काम के समय रोता चिल्लाता है, या सामान फेंकता है तो वी0बी0 कर्ता इस व्यवहार के कारण तक पहुंचेंगे। क्या यह व्यवहार कार्य से छुटकारा पाने के लिए है, कार्य की कठिनता, अध्यापक की प्रतिक्रिया या किसी अन्य संवेदिक परेशानी की वजह से है ? इसका कारण विष्लेषण द्वारा ढूंढकर 'समाधान विधि निश्चित की जाती है। इस प्रकार "कार्य सम्बन्धित" व्यवहार सकारात्मक रूप से सशक्त होते हैं।

जो बच्चे अबोले हैं, उन्हें "साइन" या "इशारों" की भाषा सिखाने पर जोर दिया गया है। पेक्स (पिक्चर ऐक्स्चेन्ज सिस्टम) भी भाषा विकास में, या अबोलेपन में उपयोगी सिद्ध हुआ है और वी0बी0 भी इसको प्रोत्साहित करती है।

बहुत पहले से ही ए0बी0ए0 जैसी शिक्षण प्रणाली व्यापकता पकड़ रही थी। अब बर्बल बिहेवियर (जिसके कि मूल्य सिद्धान्त ए0बी0ए0 पर ही आधारित) कुछ नई और उपयोगी सुधार के साथ मान्यता प्राप्त कर रही है। लक्ष्य एक औपचारिक स्थित में सिखाकर, फिर बच्चे के स्वाभाविक वातावरण में भी उसका प्रयोग करायें।

ऑटिज्म के क्षेत्र में कार्य करने वाले और ऑटिज्म से प्रभावित लोगों के परिवार का समुदाय बर्बल बिहेवियर प्रणाली के आभारी हैं। यह प्रोग्राम भाषा विकास और अन्य कौशल विकसित करने में महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभा सकता है।

अधिक योग्य व्यक्ति को सिखाने के कुछ सुझाव

“प्रीती सिवाच”

1. याद रहे, जिन्हें ऑटिज्म होता है, उन्हें प्रबन्धन कार्यों में कठिनाई होती है। आयु के अनुसार प्रबंधन करना सीमित और कठिन होता है। इसमें सहायता देने के कुछ सरल उपाय इस प्रकार हैं :-

क- साफ शब्दों में बात कर संकेत देना (वाचक स्पष्टता)

ख- साफ सिखाकर प्रदर्शन करना (दार्शिक स्पष्टता)

ग- शारीरिक संकेत देना (भौतिक संकेत)

2. जो योग्य व्यक्ति हैं, उनके पास अक्सर भाषा तो काफी होती है, परन्तु मुहावरे व्यंग अथवा जैसे नकारात्मक वाक्य समझने में कठिनाई रहती है। इसके लिए कुछ उपाय हैं।

क- जहां तक हो सके निराकार भाषा का प्रयोग सीमित रखें।

ख- जब ऐसे निराकार या काल्पनिक विचार या भाषा सिखा रहे हो, तो उन्हें ठोस रूप में समझायें।

3. किसी भी कठिन या चुनौती वाले व्यवहार का कारण हो सकता कि ऑटिस्टिक व्यक्ति उस विशेष परिस्थिति में अपने नियंत्रण को खोने का अनुभव कर रहा हो ऐसी स्थिति में क्या करें ?

क- व्यक्ति को किसी ऐसे स्थान में बिठाये जहां वह स्वयं को सुरक्षित पाता है।

ख- उससे पूछें “क्या कुछ बताना चाहते हों ?”

ग- उस स्थिति के लिए कोई अतिरिक्त उचित व्यवहार के ढालें।

4. व्यक्ति द्वारा किये गये अपव्यवहार या दुर्व्यवहार को व्यक्तिगत न लें।

5. जितना हो सके व्यक्ति के साथ यथार्थ ढंग से पेश आये और निम्नलिखित बातों को ध्यान में रखें।

क- सरल सामाजिक संकेत जो एक आम व्यक्ति आसानी से समझ लेता है, उसे समझने में कठिनाई आ सकती है।

ख- उनसे आशा न रखें कि वह नकल द्वारा सामाजिक नियम सीख लेंगे। ग- उनसे अस्पष्ट और बेकार के सवाल न पूछें, “जैसे- क्या हो रहा है ?”

घ- उनसे लम्बे चौड़े उत्तर की उम्मीद न रखें। बात को छोटी इकाइयों में तोड़कर पूछें।

6. यदि कार्य सीखने में मुश्किल हो :-

क- कार्य के छोटी इकाइयों में तोड़ें

ख- अन्य प्रकार के संकेत दें

7. अत्यधिक न बोलें। बात को छोटे वाक्यों में पेश करें। अर्थात् बातचीत या संकेत हानिकारक हो सकता है।

8. आयु के अनुसार बात करें।

9. अपनी आकांक्षाओं और चिकित्सा में नियमित रूप से कार्य करें।

10. याद रखें कि उन्हें संवेदिक दुश्क्रिया हो सकती है, जिसके फलस्वरूप लोग अत्याधिक या बहुत कम संवेदनशीलता हो सकती है।

11. यदि व्यक्ति प्रश्न दोहराता है, तो-

क- उन्हें निवेदन करें कि वह लिखकर बात करें।

ख- यदि यह व्यवहार ध्यान केन्द्रित करने को है तो इस पर ध्यान न दें।

12. जहां तक हो सके उन्हें तुकबन्दी सिखायें।

13. कोशिश करें कि बच्चा स्कूल और घर के बीच सही स्तर पहुंच सके।

14. ऑटिज्म से प्रभावित अधिक योग्य व्यक्ति को कम्प्यूनिकेशन में कठिनाई आती है। उनसे यह उम्मीद न रखें कि वह स्वयं स्कूल से घर और घर से स्कूल समाचार या कोई भी बात पहुंचाने में समर्थ होगा। इसके लिए हमें ही कार्य करना होगा।

क- बच्चे के स्कूल के सहपाठी या शैक्षिका द्वारा सूचना लेकर बच्चे के ट्रेनिंग करनी होगी।

15. हमेशा सकारात्मक रहें रिजिड न रहें और नये सोच विचार से काम लें।

Autism: A Grandmother's Perspective

Tapati Ghosh

President, Autism Society West Bengal

Becoming a grandmother is a wonderful experience. I am a grandmother of a fourteen-year old handsome boy who has autism. He is the only child of my only child, my daughter. Having a grandson with autism, makes my experience as a grandmother quite unique.

MY grandson was a beautiful baby. By the time he was two years old, he had become a very spirited child – a busybody who would seldom sit down and play. He had a funny choice of objects to play with. He would hardly talk, but would address us very appropriately, like Mama, Baba, Dada or Didi.

BUT more often than not, he would not respond to us. My husband and I attributed this to the 'moods' of our *Little Prince*. But my daughter started getting worried about the situation. I saw no reason for concern. I blamed *Dr. Spock* and his child care manual for making young mothers unnecessarily 'hyper'. After all had I not noticed that baby boys would quite often start talking a little late? For my daughter's peace of mind, the boy was taken to several doctors and a number of clinical tests were performed. Nothing conclusive came out of those. Then ultimately, at the age of four he was taken to NIMHANS, Bangalore and was diagnosed as having *autism*.

THE word meant nothing to us. We looked up the dictionary and became more confused. My daughter tried to explain to us what autism was. I remember asking her two questions. One, whether my grandson will be able to speak fluently the way we do, and two, whether he will make headway in the educational field. My daughter did not have any positive answer. The situation was very depressing. My otherwise lively daughter became very subdued.

MY grandson was admitted in a school where they used special teaching methods. His other activities were also dealt with in special ways. I felt these were too much for a child. After all, did I not bring up his mother? And I certainly did not do a bad job! I noticed one thing though, that whenever I voiced my opinion regarding this, my daughter very intelligently, stuck to her ways without hurting my feelings. I then decided it was best to give her moral support.

A couple of years later, my daughter attended a workshop conducted by Action For Autism. After this, I felt that she was slowly becoming more relaxed. She started doing new things with my grandson and perhaps he was showing improvement. I was not very clear about the whole thing, but was tried to be brave.

MY daughter suggested that I too attend a workshop. By attending yet another workshop conducted by AFA, a number of questions arising in my mind were answered. I then felt that though the situation is difficult, we can try and tackle it. The situation was not insurmountable.

SOME parents may think that, after all, being just a grandmother it is easy for her to take the matter that way. But being a grandmother is also not very easy. My grandson, my daughter and my son-in-law are equally precious to me. When my daughter works hard, my grandson improves. When my son-in-law comes back home after a hard day's work, his son wants to interact with him – thus the boy's communication improves. But the other two (that is the parents) are overworked. In the reverse situation, when they are less focused the boy may show signs of regression. So what am I supposed to do? Whose side do I take? It is like falling on a *double-edged sword* - one can get hurt from either side.

EVEN with our modern and practical thinking nowadays, we still tend to become dependant on our children as we advance in age. We know that they are always there for us. Yet, we do not want to burden them with our problems, because we know that their hands are already so full. On the other hand, we try to keep ourselves available when they need us, whether they ask us or not. I know this happens in 'normal' situations also. But in our unique situation, we do not want to have any option. We just go ahead!!

AT times I have heard from parents of children with special needs, that their parents do not approve of the special ways the children are handled. Grandparents think that mothers are too strict. Pampering is a very natural propensity of any grandparent. May be that is their way

(...cont on page 11)

HELPLINE



Q My son is eight years old. He can do activities like colouring, writing numbers up to 100, copying words and other activities like peeling potatoes and putting toys by after playing.

The problem I am facing is that even though he can do all this, he mostly leaves the task without completing it and has to be reminded to get back and finish it. I want him to learn to do things completely on his own.

A Many children with autism have difficult work behaviours. They may start a task, walk away in between and may or may not return to complete it in piecemeal fashion. This happens a lot because the child may not understand the concept of 'finish' and therefore may take breaks even though the task is not too lengthy or challenging. It is therefore necessary often to teach the concept of 'finish'. To do this there are a few things we can do.

For instance, introduce the word 'finish' whenever he finishes an activity that is a part of his routine. When he is done eating his food, or drinking milk, we can say "Finished eating", or "Milk finished." In time, we slowly teach him what to do with the plate, or glass, after eating or drinking is done. When doing table-top work we can have a designated area as the finished area. The finished area could be a flat tray, a mat, a box, or an outline traced on the table, preferably to the right side of the child. When the work is done we can say "finished", and guide him to

(cont from page 10...)

of dealing with the situation, trying to make-believe that everything is okay.

IN my opinion, so far as autism is concerned it is better, for us the grandparents, to listen to our children. They certainly know more about the subject and are aware of the new methods that will help our grandchildren.

IN the present scenario, I have adopted a few means that have helped me. I would like to share those with other grandparents. I make it a point to interact with other families who are in a similar situation. I feel that I am understood better, and that I can reciprocate better in these interactions. I have also attended a few workshops

place his work (notebook, puzzle, beading, blocks, or whatever has been the work) in the designated 'finished area'.

Let the child know through visual and verbal clarity what is expected from him and what shall happen next when the work finishes. A reinforcer at the end of the work can be a great motivation to complete the task.

Another suggestion is to be very sure of giving him an independent task only when you are completely certain that he can accomplish it on his own. The duration of the work also needs to be taken into account. The child's attention span during independent work would decide how much work could be given. Sensory stimuli that can be distracting also needs to be addressed.

Q This is regarding my seven-year-old son. He has autism and he attends a mainstream school. He insists on sitting with one particular girl and wants to be with her all the time. She gets very upset about it and her parents have also complained to the school about this behaviour. Please give some suggestions.

A The situation perhaps arises because your son is most comfortable around his classmate and therefore only wants to sit with her. Your son perhaps has difficulty in interacting with his peer group and the girl is someone he has decided is the most comfortable one to sit with. He now feels much in control of the social

discussing subjects like teaching self help skills, behavior modification, and so on. These workshops help me to understand and follow what my daughter does to handle different challenging situations.

I often wonder, how these mothers manage to handle these not so easy situations so well. I feel that they deserve all the encouragement possible from their extended families and friends.

THE most important fact I have realized is, that my grandson would not have been more dear to me had he been someone else and not him. He is precious to me just the way he is. It feels wonderful, to hear our boy calling me 'Didi', whenever he interacts with me. No one else can take his place in my heart.

environment and is secure with her. Having done that, it is possible that due to the impairment in social skills and his difficulty in reading social messages, he is not able to differentiate when she wants to interact with him and when she wants to be left alone. As a result she perhaps finds his proximity intrusive and therefore gets upset. It could even be a nonfunctional routine or ritual. So in addressing this situation we will have to keep the needs of both the children in mind.

It may be helpful if your son is given very clear instructions as to 'when' and 'how long' he can sit with his classmate. Initially, they could perhaps sit together for two consecutive classes. After this another child could be made to sit between them. When your son sits away from the girl, his behaviour could be reinforced. Gradually the sitting away time could be increased.

However, your son will have to be prepared for this development. One of the ways you could do this would be by writing or drawing a simple social story. For more information on social stories you could visit our website www.autism-india.org

Given below is one example of a social story you can use with changes and improvements as you think fit. Read it out to him two to three times in a day for a week or so.

I sit in my class in school.

All children have their own seats in the class.

I may want to sit with Sonali every day.

My teacher wants me to sit with other children also.

My teacher is happy when I sit with other children.

It is OK to sit with other children.

I can try to sit with other children.

On Wednesday and Friday I can choose who I want to sit with.

If your son's school is open to suggestions, his classmate could also be supported to view your son's behaviours differently, and to actually actively buddy him when he sits with her, and in time, at other times during the day as well.

However if his little classmate does not want to sit with him as a result of negative feedback she has picked up from her family, about disability and autism and about him, as often happens, then it is the little girl's family who really need help in order to help them view the world from a more positive perspective!!!

Q My daughter aged five has been diagnosed with autism. We are trying to get our daughter admitted in an

integrated school in Jalandhar, Punjab. The Principal wants to observe my daughter for a few days in the school before taking any decision regarding admission. We have these queries:

1. Is it appropriate to decide by observing the child for a few days?
2. What should be the response of teachers/ students towards our daughter as she sometimes starts laughing?
3. How shall the teacher explain to other students regarding above mentioned behaviour as the students get disturbed?

A It is good to know that your daughter has got an opportunity for integration in a mainstream school with an opportunity for learning along with her typically developing peers.

I am sure the Principal has good reasons for wanting to observe your daughter before taking a decision. As far as we know, the school you refer to also has a section for children with special needs and different learning styles. Therefore the observation period is perhaps to help the school assess how best to accommodate your daughter in the school so that her needs are met.

Regarding your daughters laughing without obvious reason we need to first assess the behaviour. Why does she do it? What happens when she laughs? What do people around her do when it happens? Only after we assess all this we can work out a behavior management strategy. Laughing can be an inappropriate emotional response, sometimes children may laugh in order to cope with a difficult or a new social situation. Or they may laugh to gain the attention of others. Hence the need for an assessment. Once you understand the function of the behaviour you would be better able to help her to control the behaviour, indulge in it at specific times, learn some alternative behaviours.

Regarding sensitizing other children and the teachers - the children in her class would be very young and therefore would be accepting of differences. If the teachers are sensitive, so will the children be. Children pick up cues from adults on how to behave with others.

From what we know of the school, we believe they already have taken in a few children with Autism and the teachers would be sensitive. Please do not worry about your daughters behaviors beforehand. Also that the school is not making any commitments without observation is perhaps because they are still very new to

this, and want to be sure their staff have the skills to help your daughter. The very fact that this school in Jalandhar is making an effort at inclusion is commendable. In case the school feels that she can join the special needs section and not the main school, you could always ask them for the reason. Not as a confrontational issue, but to help you understand what you could work on to support your daughter's inclusion.

We want to work towards inclusion for all our children. To enable successful inclusion we have to understand our child's strengths and emerging skills, and work on these as well as the weaknesses. This can be facilitated by a functional assessment by an expert in autism. So please contact a good professional in Jalandhar for a functional assessment.

Q I have consulted the doctors at Nagpur, and they have diagnosed autism spectrum disorder for my son. They say it is in the middle order. I started the treatment for about five or six months, and now I do not have any facility in my hometown for the same .

He is not sitting in a place for long time. He is running around and saying only few words. Can you suggest any type of treatment?

A It is helpful to have more information on the child, like your son's age and current skill levels, and what you are already doing with him. However, here are some things you could do.

Have fun with your child. Sit for short periods, do things he likes, maybe tickling or singing a song to him. Play with your child so that he starts looking at you as a person who is fun to be with. Try and do fun activities with paint, water etc so that your son begins to equate learning with fun.

Keep something that your child likes, an interesting toy or a small treat like tiny pieces of kurkure/ chips. Give him a simple instruction, eg. ask him to put balls (about two or three) in a container. As soon as he puts one ball in praise him and give him the toy or treat immediately. Here the child is learning that when I do this, something nice happens. If your son will not follow the instruction, then induce compliance hand on hand. That is, you give the instruction, "put in", and place your hand over his, guide his hand over the ball, clasp his hand over the ball, lift his hand with the ball in it, and release the ball in the container. And then be excited and praise him and give him a small piece of chip immediately.

Try talking slowly, using a minimum of words while giving an instruction, breaking up instruction into small steps. So if you want him to get up and put a plate in the kitchen sink you can break it up into the following steps, "Stand," "Pick plate," "Put in sink." Try to keep instructions clear and precise.

Label the things the child is doing for example if he is jumping, you can say "jumping". If he is using words to ask for things he needs, then give him a lot of praise when he does and give him what he is asking for immediately. If he is not, then provide for him the exact words that he would need to use. So if he brings the biscuit tin to you, rather than saying, "Oh you want biscuit? Here you go," and then give him a biscuit as we usually tend to do; just say "Biscuit," and hand a biscuit to him.

When your son is running around rather than saying, "Stop running" you could say "Sit down," or "Sit with Daddy." So you tell the child 'what to do' versus telling him 'what not to do'.

Q We recently found out that my son has PDD-NOS. He is 4 years 8 months old. We got his diagnosis at the Spastic Society of Karnataka.

The main problem that we have is a behavioural issue. His behaviour is very different when we compare with other kids of the same age group. Suddenly he pushes some body. He distracts other children in the class room. When school is over, he does not get into the bus as easily. Every day he finds a new way of misbehaving with the other children. He is very adamant and very difficult.

A The Spastics Society of Karnataka would have given you some information on Pervasive Developmental Disorders (PDD), and you would too would have got some information. So you would be aware, that a primary area of impairment in PDDs is that of social understanding.

The behaviours your son has are because he has a PDD and not because he is a 'bad boy'. he is not misbehaving. Much of the behaviours that our children manifest which appear 'odd' or 'different' or 'unusual' are because of this impaired understanding of social rules. His pushing other children could be due to a variety of reasons: to get the attention of the other children, an inappropriate effort to play with them, or even to get the adult in the environment – the teacher or you – to pay attention to him. Depending on what happens after he pushes or distracts, it could even be his way of getting out of a situation that he finds aversive. To determine what is fuelling the behaviour you

will have to find out what happens before he does what he does. And what happens afterwards.

To give an example, if the adult in the environment, which is you or the teacher, scolds him after he pushes, then maybe this attention could be the reason for the behaviour. Or if the teacher excludes him from the activity as a punishment, (and supposing your son does not like that activity!), then he would push more often as a way of getting out of the activity.

So you will need to do some observation to understand your son's behaviours. You would also then know what to do to change them.

But a simple rule of thumb that you can follow is to 'catch him being good'.

Simply put, when your son is sitting quietly, flipping a paper, or maybe rocking to himself, most people would just ignore him. But the minute he pushes someone, he ends up with a production! Try and reverse this.

For instance, your son pushes other children. When he does that I am sure he generates a lot of reaction. Reverse that. When he is NOT pushing, just sitting in his place then tell him, "Great sitting". If he is pushing a car back and forth you could say: "Playing with the car!", or "Red car!"

And when he pushes, try to not pay him any attention. Instead attend to the child who has been pushed. Give the pushed child a hug maybe.

Simultaneously, the pushing could simply be your son's way of trying to play with the other children. Having a PDD, he would have an impaired understanding of play and not know what to do with another child. So teach him to play. It could be something as simple as greeting each other every morning, and saying goodbye. Or rolling a car back and forth between the two children.

The difficulty with getting into the bus could again be for a variety of reasons. A possible one could be a difficulty in dealing with transition. Transition times are difficult for children on the spectrum. His teacher could prepare him by telling him ten minutes before school gets over. She could show him a picture of the bus and point to a timer. Or simply a bell. She could say, "The bell will go in ten minutes, and X will get into the bus" (showing him the picture of the bus). When the bell goes she can hand the card to him and lead him to the bus.

SURVEY

The autism community has many complex issues that are often not clearly understood by us. Efforts have been made to discuss and share these understandings. But the response has so far been fragmented.

We would like to try one more time to hold discussions for parents and persons with autism on inclusion and planning for our children's future.

What exactly does inclusion mean? What does it mean in terms of schooling? What are the difficulties we face? What are our rights? What can we do?

Likewise, what are some of the issues related to planning for our children's future? Can we do something to address the question 'what after us'? What does it mean trying to set up a residence/ group home etc? If there are no residences or places for our children after we are gone, is there something we can do about whatever money we are leaving for them? What are the arrangements we can make. How do we ensure that the money is utilized for our children? How do we ensure the money is utilized correctly?

AFA plans to hold a few discussions on these questions that concern all of us. These would be a one day / half day discussion. If this interests you, please fill the form below and mail to the: *National Centre for Autism, Sector 5, Jasola Vihar, Behind Sai Niketan, New Delhi 110025*

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- I am interested in discussions on 'Inclusion'
- Planning for the future (please tick)
- I will definitely **ATTEND** a discussion on 'Inclusion'
- Planning for the future (please tick)

Name _____

Child's Name _____

DOB: dd _____ mm _____ yy _____

Address _____

_____ Pin Code _____

State _____

== *Workshop Announcement* ==

ENABLING COMMUNICATION

DATE: Wednesday 9 May 2007

Unlike other developmental disabilities, language and communication take completely different developmental paths in autism. Speech does not equate with communication. While some individuals with autism develop no speech, others may be vocal at different levels. Language may develop with the child having little idea how to use it for communication or even to understand how others use language for communication.

Much of the inappropriate behaviours in autism have their root in these difficulties. Children with autism are often therefore mistakenly perceived to be 'stubborn' or 'willful'.

The workshop will cover an understanding of differences in the development of communication in autism and ways to teach communicative function and the use of both speech as well as assistive and augmentative modes of communication.

The workshop will incorporate question answer sessions and interactive demonstrations. The workshop is open to

parents, professionals and anyone who works with children with developmental disabilities on a day to day basis.

The workshop will run from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Registration (including refreshments)*

- Rs 400 per Person
- Rs 300 for *Full Members* and *Life Members*
- Rs 325 for each attendee from an organization that has taken *Institutional Membership* if more than one person attends
- Rs 500 for spot registrations

* *Participants who have attended the workshop on 'Behaviour Modification' before attending the one on 'Enabling Communication' will receive a refund of Rs100/- on their registration when they check in on 9 may 2007*

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REGISTRATION FORM

Do fill this form in BLOCK LETTERS and mail, with a self-addressed stamped envelope to:
Action For Autism, Sector 5 Jasola Vihar, Behind Sai Niketan, New Delhi 110025

Name _____ (Tick relevant box) Parent Professional

Address _____

Tel _____ Email: _____

If parent, name of child _____ Male Female DOB _____

If professional, name & address of organisation _____

Please find enclosed a Demand Draft No _____

dated _____ drawn on _____ Bank _____

— *Workshop Announcement* —
AFA'S ANNUAL TRAINING WORKSHOP

DATE: 13–16 October 2007

AFA's annual workshops are an eagerly awaited event each year. The workshops build on an understanding of ASD and work through teaching various cognitive, communication, and daily living skills. The workshops are free of jargon, and illustrated with practical examples based on AFA's hands-on experience and exposure to children with autism of varying ages and across the spectrum and follow a format of lectures, a demonstration class, video clips, question and answer sessions and discussions.

Individual consultations on the last day of the workshop will be available at no extra charge to those families who book in advance.

Childcare will be available during workshop hours for families who find it difficult to leave their children at home. Childcare is open to children with special needs as well as their siblings. Information about your child's special needs will have to be given at the time of booking so that adequate arrangements can be made.

Please register in advance. Last date to register for childcare 5 October. Childcare will not be available to on-the-spot registrants.

Registration Costs

Parents

- Rs1750/- per parent attendee (Rs 1400/- for life members & full annual members)
- Rs 3000/- per parent couple (Rs 2500/- for life members & full annual members)

Non-parents

- Rs 2500/- per non-parent attendee (Rs 2200/- for life members & full annual members)
- Rs 2300/- for each attendee from an organization that has taken membership if more than one person attends

Registrations received after 30 September 2007

Parent 2500/- and Non-Parent Rs 3000/-

Daycare charges

- Rs 200/- per child, per day

Accommodation

Limited number of places of shared accommodation on first come first served basis, from noon of 12 October to noon of 16 October at Rs 1000/- per person for a four night stay without food. Last date for booking accommodation: 30 September 2007.

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PRE-REGISTRATION FORM

Do fill this form in BLOCK LETTERS and mail, with a self-addressed stamped envelope to:
Action For Autism, Sector 5 Jasola Vihar, Behind Sai Niketan, New Delhi 110025

Name _____ (Tick relevant box) Parent Professional

Address _____

Tel _____ Email: _____

If parent, name of child _____ Child's DOB _____

Please find enclosed a Demand Draft No _____

dated _____ drawn on _____ Bank _____

Do you require accommodation YES/ NO _____ Do you require childcare YES/ NO _____

(cont from page 1...)

that of course you got to segregate those who are 'stupid', those who cannot learn like 'us'. Would it be any surprise if these future policy makers, business men, bureaucrats, politicians, and teachers, carry these prejudices into their lives, their work areas, into society, and convey these prejudices to their children? Is that really how we create an inclusive society?

So merely stopping special needs schools, and training of teachers for specific special needs, will not bring about inclusion. We need to first critically evaluate our attitudes, our beliefs, our confused understanding of inclusion, and the entire system of education in the country. If we let ourselves get caught up in mouthing high-sounding platitudes but do not have the foresight and the will to change the system, true inclusion will continue to remain a dream.

First Announcement

Second South Asian Regional Conference on Autism: Building Bridges

There is a significant body of interesting work that is taking place in parts of South Asia and other countries in the region. The conference will provide an opportunity to share with a larger audience these developments, and learn from shared experiences. The conference is for individuals with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, parents, siblings and other direct carers, educators, therapists, Clinicians, researchers, and anyone wishing to understand more about ASD

Call for Papers

The Conference will consist of plenary sessions and specialist sessions. Please email your abstract consisting of not more than 300 words with a brief CV of not more than 100 words. Abstracts typed out in single spacing should contain:

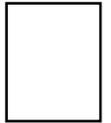
- Full title of paper
- Full name of author
- Full Address of Author, telephone and email

Potential topics include, but are not limited to:

Understanding ASD, Diagnostics, Education, Early Intervention, Research, Personal and Family Accounts, Biochemical Interventions, Employment, Ethical Legal and Advocacy, Communication, AACs, Social Aspects of Autism.

*Further details on the Conference will be posted on
<www.autism-india.org>*

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