

# Newsletter

September 2022



## Overview

Beginnings bring hope and the possibilities of many 'firsts'. With the start of a new academic year in 2022, there was palpable eagerness to hold the summer school in person. As the world around us started to recover from the tumultuous time of Covid-19, we were afforded tremendous opportunities to provide transformative experiences for the children.

The Summer School commenced with the introduction of a number of novel additions to the programme. The first of these was the new four-day format where the children stayed on campus from Monday through Thursday. This new format brought a whole range of possibilities to engage the children in meeting their therapeutic goals. The second one was the 'YAY YAY Picnic Day!' where the children visited public spaces around the campus. The four days on campus allowed us to further our pursuit of inclusion while ensuring that the children's social, attentional and emotional goals were being met. Term 2 took this ahead with central themes of gardening and community living, functional academics and self-care and safety.

Our step out of home and home-away-from-home brought moments of absolute unbridled joy and celebration, be it in seeing our children window shop at markets, be welcomed at a public function, visit homes of families or engage and converse in their own way with shop owners. The fun was scaffolded with learning as the children prepared for the world around them, understanding road safety, food through cuisines, tried exercise and games, and understood the science of life around them.

Our outreach work continued and grew along with the Arjunabettahalli Government School and Community sessions. Sangam remains the star of inclusion as the children of the government school and from other associations joined the program to make it a true symbol of diversity. Trainings and talks deepened our collaboration and engagement with partner organisations as we committed to shared goals and modeled the means to reach them. Online one-on-one sessions continued along with the introduction of offline one-on-ones as well.

In this effort to continue giving back, we at Snehadhara have been working with the Indian Army by engaging with women's groups, working with children of special needs in the Umang Special Care Centre in Itarana and training practitioners in arts-based practices known to us. This engagement which involves three visits has already seen two highly successful visits take place. Workshops and external trainings have, likewise, continued with reaching diverse groups of people and spaces.

Direct Care

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impART

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Prajnadhara

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Internal Trainings

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"The greatest gift we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence."  
- Maria Montessori

## Summer School

Summer school marked the start of the new academic year 2022-23. Aptly titled '**Kaarigari - Working with Hands!**' the summer school provided the children with exciting new experiences as they stepped out of campus to explore neighbouring locales and sights, tried new crafts and cuisines, ploughed and sowed to turn the campus green and thrived in their experimentation to further understand the basics of life sciences.

## Field Trip

One of the most thrilling and consequential additions to the semi-residential programme has been the introduction of field trips. Every Monday morning, the children arrive on campus, gobble up their breakfast and go through a morning assembly all at the edge of their seats to know the field trip plan for the week. Since the introduction of this in the summer school, the children have visited neighbouring parks, community play areas, temples, schools, hill tops and markets.

We have also had the delight of being invited to and visiting the homes of our team members from the Nelamangala community who, along with their families, welcomed the children into their homes with warm smiles and open hearts. Treating the children to local delicacies and refreshing drinks, the families engaged with the children, played games, sang and danced too.



## Go Green

With the intention to give the children increasing ownership of the space, gardening projects began as part of everyday activities on campus. To build a community garden, work began on a vegetable patch with some groundwork from the team. The children excitedly took to gardening, working with the mud and soil and overseeing their growth. Tilling the soil, digging, sowing, watering and adding manure; all done by and with the community. The matter of brown and green composting was also taken up as part of the sessions. The children understood the matter of compost of food for the plants, just as we eat food for ourselves. A simple idea with profound implications. The children engaged with the flora in and around campus, making curious observations and explorations.

## Functional Academics

Furthering the children's pursuits, functional academics was a starring feature in both the summer school as well as Term 2. With the intention of orienting the children to the world around them, the Homi Bhabha Small Sciences Curriculum served as inspiration to develop a series of modules on many topics such as food, shapes, time, weight and the general world around us. The children continue to absorb this vast network of interconnected ideas and rise to every challenge presented to them. Along with this, Term 2 also focused on community living, gardening, self-care and safety.





**“Diversity is a fact, but inclusion is a choice we make every day.”**

**- Nellie Borrero**

## A Highlight in #BuildingInclusion

A visit to a temple opening within the Clifton Park establishment (which also houses our campus), led to one of the most standout moments of inclusion seen in practice. Coming from a 10-year experience of little acceptance and inclusion in public spaces, the openness, warmth and joy with which the children were welcomed at this pooja nearly made us dance in celebration. The children of course, joined the pooja with full gusto and enthusiasm.



## One-on-one Sessions

With the easing of restrictions from Covid-19, offline interactions have become increasingly possible, making one on one sessions in the city a new experience for many children. This has allowed children to receive the support and learning they require outside of the traditional classroom set-up and to work towards their therapeutic goals in a holistic and inclusive environment.



## Parent Interaction and Support

The new year has seen the parents join the bus journey to and from the campus. Through this they have gotten a chance to experience what life at Nelamangala is for the children. Parent interactions have continued on campus allowing for artistic experiences for parents. The study circle has made a comeback with the dawn of Term 2. Covering a range of topics such as “The True Meaning of SWA-RAJ” and “8 Pillars of Joy and their role in our Lives”, the parent group and team have made the circle a space of open interaction, discussion and exchange of ideas.



Research helps us better our work and through that, our world. A study on the impact of the arts-based curriculum and pedagogy within the community living space for children with special needs, was recently rolled out and completed by members of the team, led by our Programme Coordinator for Direct Care, Ms. Vibha Bhat, as a part of our research wing Vinati.





## Sangam

Sangam, our day-long programme that brings together children of different backgrounds and needs from across the city, has become a true and visible symbol of inclusion, rising to new heights with the advent of the new academic year. Drawing on the theme of elements, the children have enjoyed stimulating, thrilling and fun sessions through play, music, dance, drama and the visual arts. From splashing colour water to create life-sized paintings, clay works, nature walk inspired creations to blowing bubbles and creating a story with a balloon for the hero, the children have moved through the varying activities planned for them, teaching us to see things as they do, with openness to the simple joys and abundance around us.

The Sangam programme has also welcomed children from the nearby Government School at Arjunabettahalli and from Sunbeam Child Fund Association. Having 20-30 more children and young adults on campus along with children of special needs, we have experienced revolutionary sessions that show the real zest of inclusion and stand to break any rigidity and dogma. It has been a joy to see the two groups figure out and understand each other while in reality, this transition from being two groups to one appeared seamless.



## Arjunabettahalli Government School

The children at Arjunabettahalli Government School are the direct beneficiaries of the outreach work in Direct Care. With the goal of spoken English, the children have engaged in sessions revolving around vocabulary and grammar through song and play. These sessions break the stereotype of a blackboard classroom and strict learning as the cheery voices of children can be heard across the street, shouting for cups and saucers and singing about twinkles of stars as they learn the meaning of old and familiar words along with new ones and weave their new story together.



## Arjunabettahalli Community

The Arjunabettahalli community sessions which take place every Sunday, see the coming together of children and adults in a space that offers them openness and safety to meet their socio-emotional goals. The children enjoy music, singing, dancing and drama, which act as a language to achieve their needs while the children always remind us of the simple joys of togetherness.



## Sanjay Camp, Delhi

SF conducted sessions with children from the Sanjay Camp Basti, an urban slum in New Delhi, in partnership with Light Up (Emotions Matter Foundation). The sessions were focussed on creating positive self-image, building emotional resilience, and examining the resources within each of us to cope with challenges that life throws at us. The Sunday morning online sessions with the group involved the use of creative arts methodologies to work with emotional expression.





Snehadhara Foundation has taken its best practices to reach out to communities outside its regular realm of interactions—including other organizations, corporates and schools—to foster better interpersonal dynamics and community building through trainings, workshops and year-long programmes.

## HLC International, Chennai

The two-day engagement with 50 members of this team of HLC International, Chennai, saw the use of play, visual compositions, and story sharing to create a safe space with an all-important takeaway that this hard work is worth it and one must befriend and invest in oneself.



## Google Serve Employee Engagement

Volunteers from Google Serve visited the Snehadhara campus to spend time with the children at Direct Care. It was an enriching experience that saw the social worlds of the children expand while being an eye-opening experience of giving back for the volunteers. One of the volunteers said: "The whole experience was so gratifying, satisfying and made us humbler. It has opened our eyes to inclusion in a whole different way and is definitely going to make us more open-minded and push us to spread awareness to others around us as well so we can do our bit for those kids and others out there with similar abilities."



## Annual SPOC Meet, Tata Coffee

Dr. Gitanjali Sarangan, was invited to be a guest speaker at the TATA Coffee Annual SPOC Meet in Bengaluru, bringing together more than 24 team leads from across the country and beyond. She spoke about the "8 Pillars of Joy", referenced from a conversation between Archbishop Desmond Tutu and The Dalai Lama, beautifully bound up into Douglas Abraham's "The Book of Joy". The talk was an invitation to the group to look at the pillars of the mind - perspective, humility, humour, and acceptance, and the pillars of heart - forgiveness, gratitude, compassion, and generosity.





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## One Billion Literates Foundation

We collaborated with OBLF through our programme Mandala: Creative Dialogue Circles through Arts and Play. This programme seeks to build resilience, self-reliance and psychosocial wellbeing, all of which are vital to the teachers at OBLF as they seek to continue empowering women of socio-economically weaker sections of society in rural Bangalore to deliver impactful learning to children in their communities.



## Drum Circle with Brigade Foundation

Have you heard an army of drums beat in unison? That is exactly what happened as nearly 120 drums beat together in a sprawling luscious greenscape with the teachers from the Brigade Foundation Schools. Snehadhara Foundation was invited to host a drumming circle to open the new cycle of training and goal setting for the group. With the promise of meeting again, the drums echoed the wishes and aspirations of filling the lives of the children with the joy and promise of everyday.



## Beyond 8, Bengaluru

Dr Gitanjali Sarangan was invited to Beyond 8 for a training for their teachers and students titled 'First things first: Preparing for the learning journey through the multi-arts'. The group at Beyond8 nurtured and displayed their synergy by coming up with innovative solutions to the egg-drop challenge and effectively creating a scrumptious buffet spread for lunch. Exploring the seven habits of effective people, the group geared up for their first learning cycle with a light and playful engagement.



## NMIMS, Mumbai

At Mumbai's esteemed institute NMIMS, a session aptly titled 'Creative Connections' focused on introducing the group to the role of the Arts in learning, therapy, and inclusion to a group of second years in Bachelors in Applied Psychology. The discussion revolved around the power in the Arts and Play to take care of the self. This way one can extend a hand beyond oneself with a sense of lightness and ease, and use creative interventions to give direction to the voyage of self-discovery as well as one's purpose. The students engaged in this discovery of new paradigms and took away valuable self-care tips for everyday life.





In our bit to give back to those to do so much to protect our country, Snehadhara Foundation engaged with the Indian Army at Alwar in a three-fold engagement: working with women's groups in Alwar, Udaipur, Mt Abu and Jaisalmer in an online-offline format, working with children with special needs at the Umang Special Care Centre in Itarana (Alwar), and training the teachers at the Umang Special Care Centre to work with arts-based methodologies. This is a year-long engagement with the group at Alwar, and would be spread over three visits to Itarana (Alwar) by the training team.

## Mandala with wives of Army men

The lives of military wives are unique and while they carry enormous power and resilience within them, they too have concerns that are peculiar to the roles that they play as wives, caregivers, and individuals. Keeping that in mind, we conducted the Mandala programme which equips them with the psychological skills to cope with the challenges of day-to-day lives and that works on roles and identity, self-reliance and psychosocial wellbeing. The sessions were in an online-offline format with 20 women in Alwar and 80 women joining from Jaisalmer, Udaipur, Jaipur and Mount Abu.



## Sessions at Kendriya Vidyalaya

We also worked with the children at Kendriya Vidyalaya, Itarana, Alwar through diverse sessions. From travelling with stories for 500 children of classes 1 to 5, to conducting play sessions with 200 children from classes 6 and 7, followed by talking about effective habits of successful people with classes 8-12, we worked with children across the school in varied capacities. The sessions were very well received by staff and students alike.



## Umang Special Care Centre

Following our online engagement with the children from the Umang Special Care Centre at Itarana, Alwar, we started to work with direct beneficiaries through the programme in an offline format. The idea has been to work on group interaction and dynamics and bring the group in a space of learning together despite their varied levels of functioning and cognitive capacity. We also assess, map out and develop plans to work towards the progressive long-term and short-term goals of the children. Working with parents towards sensitization to the needs of the group is also an integral part of the programme.



## Teacher training at Umang Centre

The programme was aimed at building on the capacity of the teachers working at the Umang Special Care Centre. The goal was to work with the teacher at the centre to create, deliver and implement arts-based learning and teaching methodologies with a concrete pedagogical approach. This was done through onsite training during the visit and will be followed with continuous online support and supervisions throughout the year for the teacher.

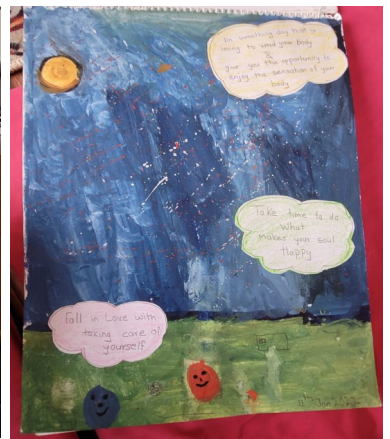


Prajnadhara aims to extend the reach of Arts Practices for Inclusion (API) certificate course through webinars and various programmes to reach beneficiaries across the country and beyond. With the vast impact of the same seen through our Nepal beneficiaries, the programme continues to grow and expand to newer horizons.

## Arts Practices for Inclusion in Nepal

The Arts Practices for Inclusion has been well-received, and the team is very proud of the progress made in a span of less than two years. In this duration, 22 India and 28 Nepali practitioners have undergone API training from Snehadhara Foundation. They, in turn, have touched the lives of hundreds of people in India and Nepal by working with children and adults with special needs, children and adults at risk of economic and social exclusion, adults at de-addiction centres, in inclusive classrooms, anganwadis, people who have experienced sexual abuse, the elderly with neurodegenerative conditions among many other beneficiary groups.

When Snehadhara Foundation received the Millennium Alliance grant for taking its Arts Practices for Inclusion programme to Nepal, the commitment was to train 20 professionals over different social sector organisations over three years. From amongst hundreds of people who participated in our introductory webinars, 28 people were invited to train at Snehadhara's campus in Bengaluru in September 2021 and February 2022; notably, within the first year of the programme itself.



The past year has been full of learnings for our trainees in Nepal. They have been facilitating API sessions at their respective organisations for many months now. Monthly supervision calls are being conducted with each organisation, in order to support their learning and to think about how the API work can better benefit the children, teenagers and adults these organisations work with. Most of the organisations have either completed the required number of sessions to be certified as API practitioners or are going to do so in the future. Many of the organisations have gone ahead and done the community inclusion project that concludes the training.

A highlight of this year has been a supervision visit made by Ms. Gitanjali Sarangan, Executive Director of Snehadhara Foundation and Mr. Arjun Kherra, the external supervisor for API programme delivery between 15 May to 21 May, 2022. During the supervisory visit, supervisors met with trainees from nine organisations, namely (i) Antardristi, (ii) Centre for Dalit Women, Nepal (CDWN), (iii) Self-help Group for Cerebral Palsy, (iv) Blind Youth Association of Nepal (BYAN), (v) Koshish, (vi) Bikalpa Training Centre, (vii) Just Nepal, (viii) Naya Yuba Naya Soch, and (ix) The Relief Trust. The supervision visits took the supervisors not only to Kathmandu but also to towns like Janakpur, Dhulikhel and Pokhara.





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## Second Contact Sessions for API Batch 2022-23

The second contact session for Batch 2 of the API programme in India took place at the Snehadhara campus in June 2022 with a view to demonstrate their session facilitation skills and receive feedback from the faculty. The faculty is looking forward to seeing how the rest of the journey pans out for Batch 2 of API. These students will soon undertake community-inclusion projects. The projects will involve introducing their beneficiary groups (which include children with disabilities as well as children and adults at risk of social and economic abuse) to newer spaces, people and groups, to enable everyone and every space to have experiences in social inclusion.



## Overview of API Course

This two-and-a-half day residential training programme in Overview of Arts Practices in Learning, Therapy and Inclusion, was flagged off in June to give its participants an introduction to Arts Practices of Inclusion (API) and the usage of multi-arts to achieve varied therapeutic outcomes. With 2 batches already through, the participants of the programme have been exposed to the visual arts, music and rhythm, play and movement and selfcare in both theory and practice, with dynamic and soulful takeaways for the participants individually and as practitioners.





**Practice is a culmination of effective training via pre-work, and consistent updating of skills. In the case of our team—being facilitators and caregivers—this training and updating revolves around practical and socio-emotional skills and abilities. Internal trainings are held to reassess ourselves and to introduce new learnings from the field. Thus, we may bring the very best of practices to our pursuit of therapeutic learning.**

## The Many Ways of Being Together

with Aruna Gopakumar

Aruna Gopakumar, director of Navagati, conducted a two-day psychodrama-based workshop on “The Many Ways of Being Together”. She shed light on the understanding of a person as a population of ‘selves’ that play complex roles. Touching upon the relationship between the selves, the ecosystem and the work that we do, we connected with our inner children through play and learned to articulate the roles we wanted to play in the lives of the children we work with. It was a unique and unifying experience for the team and helped set a solid start of intention and action for the new academic year.

## Internal Staff Sessions

Internal training has continued within the team as well through sessions by senior facilitators. Covering a range of topics to revise and reassess the existing learning, training was conducted on the understanding of domains and therapeutic goals, structure of a session, session planning, design and facilitation. The team members absorbed this and conducted an internal practice where they executed sessions on topics of their expertise and choice with the rest of the team as beneficiaries, leading to a thorough understanding, review and feedback process to make us effective practitioners.

## Skill-based training in Clay work

with Soumya Jeppu

A skill-based training in clay work was conducted by Soumya Jayaram, our Advisory Board member, who held a training in hand work and pottery, allowing for the team to experience a pottery wheel. The team themselves turned into excited little children flashing their hands up in the air at lightning speed for a chance to try the wheel. The session was a quiet and steady affair as we learned to understand and appreciate the clay and the care, technique and skill with which it is handled to bring about an admired process and result.





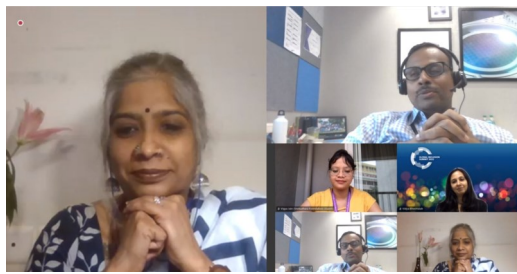
Beyond the work we do through our direct beneficiary programmes, we also take the ethos of therapeutic learning processes to corporates, colleges and organizations who feel invested in raising a more socially-aware future. Through webinars and talks, we have connected with many of them around the country in 2022.

## One Day One Story

We continued our rejoiced tradition of celebrating World Literacy Day through our collaboration with PNLIT and Pratham Books with the event 'One Day One Story'. Held online since 2020, children across the country joined in for a theatrical and fun performance of two adorable stories 'Croak' and 'Beauty is Missing', conveying one ultimate message back: that they want to hear more!

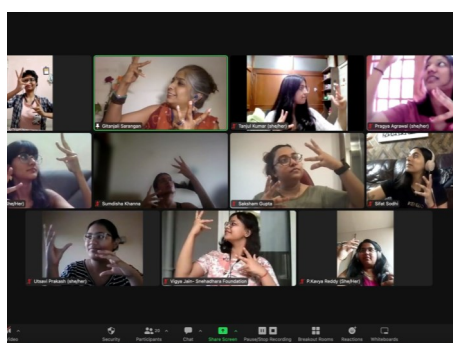
## Bringing Up: Applied Materials

Dr Gitanjali Sarangan was invited to conduct an expert session at Applied Materials as a part of the Global Inclusion Summit 2022. Titled "Bringing Up", the session delved into discovering the child's learning potential and creating holistic, inclusive, and joyful learning experiences for them and the catalysing role that parents can play.



## Arts Practices for Inclusion: Unbottle Emotions

Dr Gitanjali was invited to speak on "Arts Practices for Inclusion", at the Summer Program'22 hosted by Unbottle Emotions. Delivering the programme's concluding talk, Dr Gitanjali shed light on how multi-arts can be used for inclusion, education and diversity while building a sense of rhythmic connection within the group.



## PaDa Project

PaDa, an initiative of Snehadhara Foundation in association with Vasu Dixit Collective and 'Believe' (ISHTAR MUSIC PVT. LTD), was brought to fruition by the release of the episode on Youtube. The project aimed to unearth folk traditions, document associated stories, situate contexts, and produce collaborative music. It has brought about a change in livelihoods for the younger generations of folk musicians, an awareness of these knowledge systems while contextualizing folk music in the present times.

## Consultative Workshop at APU

The SF team was invited to Azim Premji University on 28th May for a Consultative Workshop as a partner organization for field internships being offered to students of M.A. Development Studies. An enriching experience, it brought together various organisations to share their best practices while putting forth the work being done in the field.



Snehadhara Foundation (SF) is a registered non-profit organisation based in Bangalore. The pioneers of Arts Practices for Inclusion, Snehadhara Foundation believes that inclusion is the bedrock of a more compassionate and empathetic society. SF advocates inclusionary spaces where arts practices form the primary methodology of teaching and learning. SF aims to create an environment which welcomes, acknowledges, affirms and celebrates the value of all learners. We have crafted three initiatives in pursuit of this goal: Direct Care, impART and Prajnadhara. The major thematic area of the organisation's work is service and community based. We directly work with the beneficiaries in our Direct Care space and also in other organisations working with children at risk. impART and Prajnadhara look at capacity building, training, certifications to re-imagine classrooms and learning facilitation in schools and colleges, and building lifelong partnerships by introducing corporate citizens to the goals of a socially inclusive society.

Join hands with us as we work towards creating an inclusive world, a world where we are able to relook at ourselves and are inspired to live differently and compassionately. A world where everyone belongs.



Azim Premji  
Foundation



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### WEBSITES

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<https://impART.snehadhara.org>

### Facebook Pages

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### Youtube CHANNELS

[www.youtube.com/user/SnehadharaFoundation](http://www.youtube.com/user/SnehadharaFoundation)

## LEGAL STATUS

### Karnataka Trust Registration Act

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