

SAKSHAM
disability

SAKSHAM

RESOURCE CENTRE

NOIDA

**A National award winning NGO working for Persons with
Visual Impairment since 2003**



Introduction

The Saksham Resource Centre, Noida, established in 2006, has grown into a full-fledged centre spread across many units, catering to the needs of individuals across the country ranging from very young children to young adults with blindness, low vision and multiple disabilities.

What makes Saksham stand apart, is the focus on developing confident children, who are independent across all domains and are able to navigate physical spaces, participate in community activities and be fully included in mainstream schools and spaces. The Saksham children are trained to be fully independent in reading and writing. They are informed of their right to seek support, wherever necessary and Saksham is always there to support them and their families throughout their journey.

Saksham trains and supports persons in their access to education, vocational training; access to facilities and services, capacity building for livelihood and financial independence. Working towards maximizing independence and enabling independent living.



Saksham Resource Centre

Saksham Resource Centre endeavours to curate individualized education & training programmes aimed towards maximizing potential and achieving independence across all domains.

Emphasis is placed on every individual at Saksham building independence in Reading and Writing, participating in co-curricular activities, sports, excursions & exposure visits, participating in the community and independent living activities for all-round development.



- Works with and supports children and adults in the 0 -27 years age group and their families, across the country.
- Trains and supports persons in their access to education, vocational training; access to facilities and services, capacity building for livelihood and financial independence. Working towards maximizing independence and enabling independent living.
- Reaches out to and works with schools and other centres, building their capacity.
- Prepares children for inclusion in mainstream schools.
- A holistic curriculum works towards developing all areas necessary for daily living and building independence, including Academic skills, language and communication, orientation and mobility, braille, computer literacy. Art and craft, music, story-telling sessions; games and sports and participating in community based activities are an integral part of the curriculum. Safety skills training is emphasized and training on using fire extinguishers and pepper sprays are also included.
- Develops and Is fully equipped with curriculum-based, teaching learning material in accessible formats.
- Has professionally run physiotherapy, speech therapy units.
- Extends Training to read and write independently using computers; provides training to use assistive devices, mobile phones, Refreshable braille device, Daisy players etc. as part of independent living skills.
- Is affiliated with the NIOS i.e. the National Institute of Open Schooling.
- Offers vocational and skill building opportunities.
- Offers training to persons with disabilities in Sports through its initiative named, Pehel.
- Reaches out to children and their parents, across the country, through online modes as well.
- Works closely with parents and siblings, sharing information and building their capacity to support persons with disability.



Association with Assistech Lab, IIT Delhi

Saksham and Assistech Lab, IIT Delhi developed:

- Math and Science Primers.
- Modified diagrams in Class 9 and 10 NCERT Math and Science Books.
- Graphs in Tactile Form
- Developed a completely accessible Geom Kit.

Association with NCERT

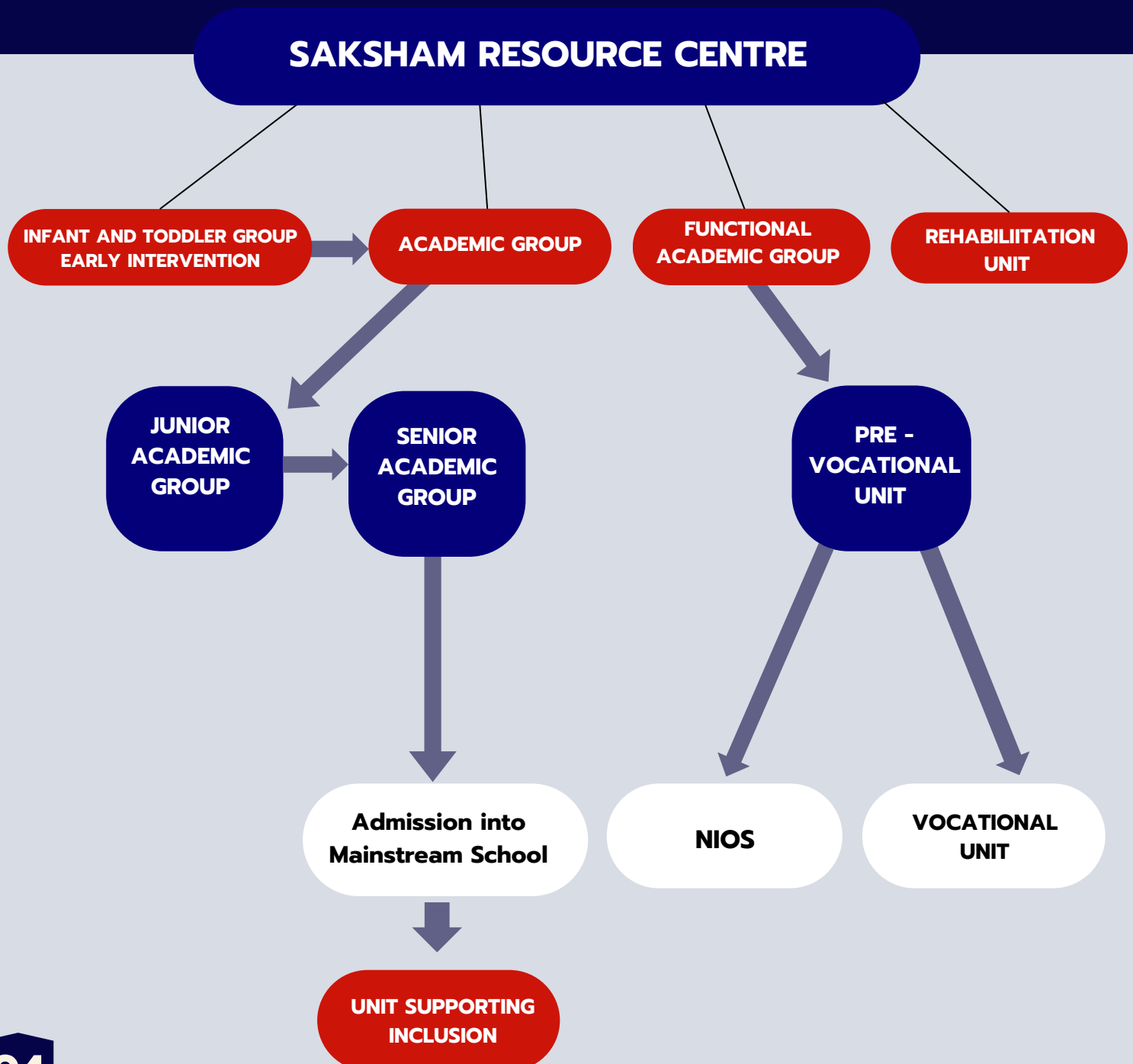
- Supported NCERT in developing accessible teaching learning material (BARKHA reading series, first tactile Map Book, Economics Tactile Manual etc.)
- Supporting the NCERT Youtube Channel and sharing teaching learning strategies for inclusive classrooms.
- Contributing to the Dikhsha Portal on making teaching learning material accessible.

Association with Vision Empower Trust

- Developed games & activities for children with visual impairment to enhance their understanding of Math & Science.

THE UNITS AT THE SAKSHAM RESOURCE CENTRE

- Infant and toddler group [0 to 4 years].
- Early Intervention unit [4-6 years]
- Junior academic unit
- Senior academic unit
- Pre-vocational unit / Functional Academic group
- National Open School unit (NIOS)
- Unit Supporting Inclusion
- Vocational unit
- Rehabilitation unit





INFANT AND TODDLER GROUP [0 -4 YEARS]:



AARYAN's STORY:

Aaryan came to Saksham when he was two years old. He is a child with multiple disability [intellectual disability, low vision, speech impairment and delayed motor milestones]. The Saksham team curated a holistic plan for Aaryan to work on developing his activities of daily living, communication skills, participate in music and story sessions. Sessions were slotted with the physiotherapist and the speech therapist. Today, Aaryan follows simple instructions and expresses his needs through gestures, actions, pictures and a few basic words. Aaryan is learning all the pre-academic skills and basic concepts. He has learnt to be with other children and participate in activities with them. He has just started learning the letters of the alphabet and is on his way to furthering his learning abilities.

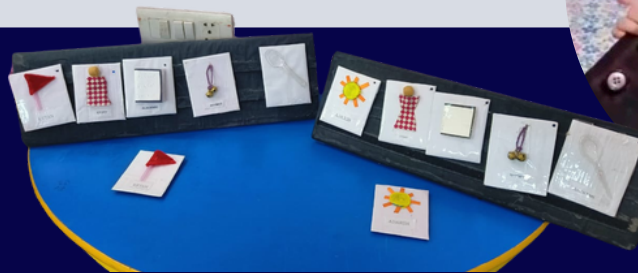


The Infant to Toddler Unit

- Works with children with blindness or low vision and multiple disabilities, in the 0 to 4 year age group.
- Is a centre-based as well as a home-based programme.
- Focuses on the overall development of the child and works closely with each family, extending the necessary support at all times.
- Has a team comprising senior special educators, early interventionists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists and music therapists who develop a holistic programme for the child.



AREAS OF FOCUS:



- For very young children with blindness or low vision, the educators and therapists work together with the parents on building the child's capacities and abilities. The focus is on:
 - Teaching orientation and mobility skills
 - Enhancing tactile skills
 - Enhancing sensory skills and sensory integration
 - Introducing basic concepts
 - Learning to recognize and name objects of daily use
 - Developing Communication and language skills
 - Building Awareness and participation in activities of daily living
- Every child at Saksham is taught independent mobility skills, moving from indoors to the outdoors. Teaching children to navigate & move independently is emphasized.
- Children are introduced to different tactile, auditory, olfactory, gustatory experiences to build their sensory awareness of the world around them.

Early Intervention Unit



SUMATI'S STORY:

Sumati is 7 years old. She is a child with cerebral palsy and low vision. Sumati struggles to see when there are a lot of things in front of her as scanning objects poses a challenge. She also faces difficulties with fine motor tasks, making it difficult for her to learn braille. After learning the basic concepts and pre-academic skills in the early intervention unit, she moved to the junior academic group.

A lot of work has been focussed on building her communication skills. She is now able to participate in conversations at an age-appropriate level. She is following a full curriculum and reads using a computer with screen-reading software. She is also learning to type and the team feels she will soon be ready for inclusion in a mainstream school, with the necessary supports in place.



Early Intervention Unit

Children older than 4 years of age move to the Early Intervention programme.

AREAS OF FOCUS

An Individualised Education Plan or IEP is developed for each child, based on an assessment. The plan covers the entire range of aspects:

- Activities of Daily living
- Sensory stimulation and integration
- Academics: Basic concepts and Pre-reading, writing, pre-Braille and pre-math skills
- Language and communication skills, with a focus on expressive language skills: expressing their needs and feelings.
- Orientation and mobility
- Art and craft
- Games and activities
- Story telling sessions ... Among other things

The team working with the children assess their needs and abilities and based on this, divide them into two groups:

- The group of children who are able to pick up the basic concepts and are ready for a more formalised academic curriculum. These children move to the Junior academic group from here.
- The group of children, primarily those with high support needs, who require more time and more intensive work on building their abilities in the academic stream. These children stay back a bit longer and may move on to the functional academic group or the NIOS group later.





SANDHYA'S STORY

Sandhya is a young girl of 8. She is a child with vision impairment. Sandhya came to Saksham six months before the pandemic forced the lockdown. Sandhya was a very shy, withdrawn child when the Saksham team first met her. The primary reason being that, she had had no exposure to the outside world and people before coming to Saksham. Her parents were hesitant to take her out because they were not sure how others would react to her or whether they would accept her. So, Sandhya spent the crucial first 6 years of her life, isolated at home: not the best start for any child.

However the team at Saksham ensured that she made up for the lost time. They worked with her and she was a quick learner. Today, she is enrolled in a mainstream school and is doing very well with the constant support of the team at Saksham. She reads and writes independently using braille and the computer; participates in all the sports events, competitions, Olympiads and has won many medals. Her parents are very proud of her achievements and the confident Sandhya of today seems a far cry from when she first came to Saksham.



This unit prepares children to take on the challenge of the formal academic stream. The unit lays the base for moving to the senior academic group and a stepping-stone to inclusion in a mainstream school.

JUNIOR ACADEMIC GROUP

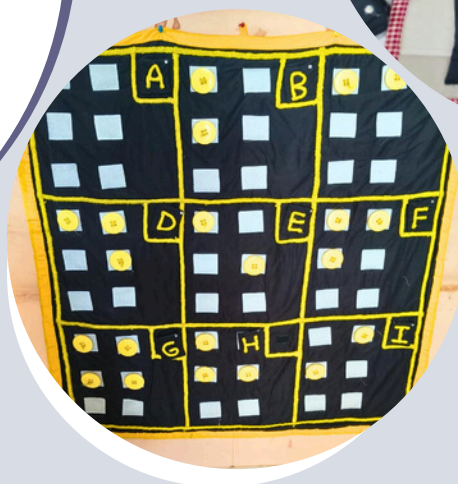


AREAS OF FOCUS

Children follow a curriculum for UKG and class 1. They learn Pre-requisite skills for reading, writing braille, pre-math skills, basic concepts, & awareness about themselves and the environment around them; basic EVS, Math, English, Hindi, General knowledge. They are introduced to the Taylor frame, Pre-Braille skills and tactile books. Focus is on Orientation and Mobility, Activities of Daily Living [ADLs], Communication skills, Basic computer training, Games- both indoor and outdoor games, Art and craft

With inclusion being the aim, there is a focus on communication, mobility, safety and security, seeking support whenever required.

Once these skills are in place, the children move to the Senior Academic group.





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RATI'S STORY

Rati is a young girl of 10. She joined Saksham when she was 7 years old and spent one year in the Junior Academic group, learning all the basic skills. She is a child with vision impairment. However, the fact that her first access to formal learning was at the age of 7 meant that she required some time to catch up.

After her year in the junior academic group, she moved to the senior academic group and spent a year there. The time that she was just beginning to learn coincided with the pandemic induced lockdown. Though Saksham supported her with a device to ensure that there was no break in her education, she was not able to continue her learning. Network and connectivity issues topped with her own barriers, meant that she was not able to learn through the online classes. The fact that both her parents were working meant there was limited support at home. Once things opened up and she came back to class, the teachers noticed that she had forgotten many skills that she had learnt. Since she was already 9, the team sat with her parents and discussed the option of enrolling her in school and supporting her alongside. There was no point delaying entry into school. The team was of the view that being in school, with other children would help her learn social skills and other skills necessary for building independent living skills.

The parents were on board with this and Rati entered the next phase, attending class in a mainstream school. The arrangement worked out was that Rati would attend the government school, near her home, three days a week and the other three days she would come to Saksham.

Since she is 10 years old and has been enrolled in class 1, means that she is older than the other children in her class. Seeing her classmates motivates her further and she makes an extra effort to learn. Saksham has supported her with a laptop, which she uses in class. She has also learnt braille and completes her assignments independently.

Rati does have a sense of humour. In class, the fact that Rati wrote in braille and her teacher did not know braille, meant that Rati would often give wrong answers and force her teacher to believe that she had given the correct answer! Later she would boast that she was able to trick her teacher into believing she was right! A reminder that all children have a mischievous streak that plays out.

However, the teacher turned out to be smarter. She realized that her inability to read and write in braille was being taken advantage off. When the teacher from Saksham visited the school, the class teacher shared this obstacle and requested the Saksham teacher to teach her basic braille. With a sheet in braille pasted on her desk, the teacher is now able to catch Rati when she makes a mistake. Thus both Rati and her teacher are learning as they move forward together.

The teacher and special educator in Rati's school are very cooperative and are taking all necessary steps to ensure that she learns what is taught in class.

The Plan Ahead:

The Saksham team supports Rati in covering the curriculum of class 1 and 2, to give her good foundational skills. On a parallel track, they are also planning to enroll her with the NIOS system so that she is able to fast track her learning and reach age-appropriate levels. Being in a government school means that she gets to interact and make friends with other children and she is also able to access all the social security benefits offered by the government. Rati has blossomed into a lively, talkative child and makes friends easily. This will stand her in good stead.

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SENIOR ACADEMIC GROUP

Children in the Senior Academic unit work towards inclusion in a mainstream school.

AREAS OF FOCUS

- The senior academic group has children with blindness or low vision between 8 and 11 years. There are 2 groups based on their level of functioning and their pace of learning.
- The children learn phonetic skills to strengthen their reading and writing, English, Hindi, Math, EVS, ADLs and attend sessions in art and craft, orientation and mobility, clay modelling, music, stories and basic computer skills.
- The curriculum of class 1 and 2 are adapted and followed. Regular assessments and exams are conducted, for which children read and write in braille.
- Once the children gain independence in daily living skills and begin learning at age appropriate level, they are enrolled in mainstream schools.
- Children who require more time, enroll with the NIOS system till they are ready for inclusion. Few may choose to continue with the NIOS.



FUNCTIONAL ACADEMIC GROUP & PRE VOCATIONAL GROUP

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ARJUN'S STORY

Arjun is an 11-year-old child. He is part of the Functional academic group. He is a child with blindness and intellectual disability. Arjun is extremely sensitive to sound. Initially it used to trouble him to an extent that he found it difficult to function. The team worked on building sensory integration and increasing his acceptance to sounds. Starting gradually, he was exposed to different sounds and at different levels and has now reached the stage where he is able to use a juicer without the sound bothering him. He is able to identify different fruit through touch, smell and taste and can use the juicer to make juice.

He is working on enhancing his communication skills in English and Hindi and is able to communicate his needs and express himself.

He is following a functional academic curriculum and building his academic skills slowly but surely.

He is independent in his daily living skills and is able to eat on his own. Besides this, he can identify his things and put them in the appropriate place, which translates into functional activities both at Saksham and at home.

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This unit focuses on children with multiple disability and those with higher support needs. The centre has children with cerebral palsy, autism, intellectual disability who also have vision impairment. There are also children with deaf-blindness who are part of the centre. Individual work plans are curated based on their unique ability, pace of learning and support needs.



AREAS OF FOCUS:

- This unit builds their independence and prepares individuals for the future by developing vocational skills and building academic skills.
- Depending upon the individual's pace and style of learning, they are enrolled with the NIOS or under a functional academic curriculum. Individualized holistic curriculum is curated for each person for maximizing their abilities and potential.
- The focus is on building vocational and independent living skills; enhancing Social and Communication skills; participating in co-curricular activities, training and participation in sports.
- Focus is also on building self-confidence through creating opportunities for meaningful participation within home and beyond and enabling them to become valued members of their family and community.
- Once the individual's abilities, learning style and interests are assessed, the team introduces and explores different avenues for vocational training and work opportunities.





Saksham is an accredited centre of the National Institute of Open Schooling [NIOS] for running its Open Basic Education Programme. The centre prepares children for the grade 3, grade 5 and grade 8 level exams.

ARNAV'S STORY

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Arnav is 12 years old. He is a young boy with low vision. He joined Saksham in 2017. At that time he was not going to school, as his parents were not aware that he had a right to go to school. At Saksham, he went through the paces and was soon in the Senior academic group where he learnt braille, learnt to use a Taylor frame and also learnt the all important, orientation and mobility and ADLs. He then moved to the NIOS unit in 2021. During the lockdown, he faced difficulties attending on-line sessions and that resulted in a roll-back in his learning.

However, now with regular sessions at the centre, he has learnt braille and uses a computer to read and write independently. He can search for information for his assignments and create and save the files for the various subjects that he studies.

A lot of work has also been going on at a parallel level with Arnav's family. Since his parents are not literate, his older sister, who is in school, has been taught braille and using a Taylor frame.

Now that Arnav is able to follow a curriculum, the team at Saksham is very hopeful that he will be able to get admission in a mainstream school. NIOS has helped him reach age-appropriate levels academically and he is at par with his peers. They are preparing him for school and there is a lot of focus on his orientation and mobility, on training him to maintain his things, on hygiene and grooming, making friends besides coping with the curriculum. With confidence levels going strong, he is all set for the next step.

NIOS has laid the base for him and prepared him for life in school.

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Children in the age-group 8 to 13 years are a part of this unit.

The aim of the NIOS unit is two-fold:

- One, using NIOS as a means to an end i.e. to prepare children, like Arnav, for the mainstream and ensure they are learning at par with their peers before being included in an age-appropriate class. NIOS acts like the training ground for the formal school system.
- Two, using NIOS as an end in itself i.e. children with multiple disability benefit from the flexibility that the NIOS curriculum offers and set their own pace for learning. They can complete their school education through the NIOS.





AREAS OF FOCUS:

Whatever route the child takes to get to the NIOS unit, there are certain areas of focus that remain common to all.

Classes are held 5 days a week and there are 4 subject-teachers who teach the children.

Besides this, children also learn ADL skills, Orientation and Mobility skills, Art and craft, Clay modelling, Music. They participate in Games and sports. Communication and social skills, including seeking support. Personal hygiene and grooming; Safety and security, Building confidence levels.



At present, children with intellectual disability and those with multiple disability are enrolled under the NIOS programme, where they follow a holistic curriculum package and access their right to a formal education. On a parallel track, these children are also able to access vocational skills training. This exposure to various areas helps them identify their areas of interest and strength. Incase a child is unable to cope with the NIOS curriculum beyond grade 8, they may opt to join the vocational centre while following a functional academics curriculum.





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DIVYANSH'S STORY

Divyansh is a student of class 6 in a mainstream school. He used to be sitting in class, but there were no supports extended to him. At the end of the day, he used to get notebooks from friends and his parents used to help him complete the day's work. He was not learning anything. It was only in 2019 that Divyansh's father heard about Saksham. At Saksham, Divyansh learnt computers and was given a laptop with screen reading software to enable him to read independently and to type. With Saksham's intervention, Divyansh is now receiving the necessary supports within school as well.

Divyansh attends school from 7.30 am to 12.30 pm and then his older brother brings him to Saksham. Here the teachers explain the concepts using tactile books, tactile diagrams and material in other accessible formats. He does his work on the computer and is now independent in reading and writing. He is happy to have the support of the subject teachers who explain concepts that he is unable to understand in school.

Besides academics, he has also become part of the sports initiative at Saksham. He participates in relay races and other athletic events. He says that this has given him a lot of happiness and he loves being on the field. He feels he has been given wings to fly.



ANIKA'S STORY

Anika is a confident, young 14 year old. She is in class 7 at a well-known private school. She has been part of the Saksham centre since she was 5 years old. She shared that when she was very young, the other children in school used to tease her and call her by her impairment rather than her name. It used to hurt a lot and there were times when she did not want to go to school. But with the support of Saksham, the peer group was sensitized. Today, she has many friends and loves going to school.

Tracing her journey, Anika says that as a young child she used to do all her work in Braille, but now she does her work using a laptop. She is able to read independently using the screen reading software and uses headphones when she has to read something in class. Her teachers in school have deputed one child to dictate whatever is written on the board or projected on the screen. She then types it on her laptop. After school, she goes over the concepts done in class with the teachers at Saksham. This enables her to comprehend better and she is able to do all the assignments and do well in her assessments in school. Besides doing well in academics, Anika is also part of the Pehel sports initiative of Saksham. She is learning wall climbing, she has become a good chess-player and also does taekwondo. When free, she loves dancing to loud music and having a good time.

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Children above the age of 10 years, who move into mainstream schools continue to receive support from Saksham. The nature of the support extended varies from child to child. Saksham has established a link with many schools in and around Noida and these schools are sensitized and are supportive of children with disability. Saksham supports children from low-income groups for school fee, uniforms, books and other education related expenditure to enable their inclusion.



AREAS OF FOCUS:

- Before children are mainstreamed, the team ensures their capacity building. They are trained to navigate through the school space, take care of themselves and their belongings, build social skills. They are trained to recognize people by their voice which helps them in their social interaction and in making friends. Saksham prepares, sensitizes and supports the teachers and children in the school to enable them to support the child in class.
- Children are taught to use their laptop in class, using headphones while reading material on their laptop, how to work on their assignments and write their exams. Focus remains on building independent reading and writing skills.
- Trained subject teachers provide after-school academic support at Saksham, through study material in accessible formats- Braille books, tactile diagrams, tactile books, aids and appliances, study material in audio format and support all areas for sustaining inclusion.
- The centre also bridges the gap for the children in schools by creating channels for interaction between the Saksham team and the teachers at school. Saksham works intensively with all the teachers in school and share specific teaching-learning material, strategies and other requirements of the child to facilitate inclusion and enable full participation.
- The Saksham team also accompanies parents for the PTMs with a focus on empowering the parents and also monitoring the progress of the child.
- Children who require further training in ADLs, Orientation and mobility, communication, therapy are able to access these at the centre. They also participate in Sports and learn other life-skills at Saksham.

All children, right from the early years are imparted computer training.

A progressive, individualized curriculum is followed, customized according to the age and the need of the child. This unit develops independent living skills, by building capacities in using a mobile phone, a refreshable braille display, a daisy reader and other necessary devices. A computer is provided to each child so that they can work on it at the centre, in school and at home.



- The overall objective is to ensure that children are able to read, write, do Math and Science and work independently in a classroom . They should complete their assignments and tests independently, using their computer instead of a scribe.
- A range of reading material is introduced to develop vocabulary and comprehension, enhance language and communication skills as well as computer skills.
- Work towards building typing speed and accuracy both in English [50-55 words per minute] and Hindi [40-45 words per minute].
- Specific goals depend upon the ability, the needs of the person and the long-term goals.
- Many individuals in the Vocational unit face limitations in their reading and writing skills, rendering computer training not so meaningful. For them, a programme has been curated on learning to use a phone. Learning to make and receive phone calls, using whatsapp to send messages, learning to book a taxi, making payments using UPI apps, online shopping, internet banking, learning to use Google Maps, Google lens, Google assistant etc. These are essential life-skills taught keeping in mind the specific needs and ability.
- Careful attention is paid to all individuals developing leisure time activities and using devices for reading, accessing information and entertainment.

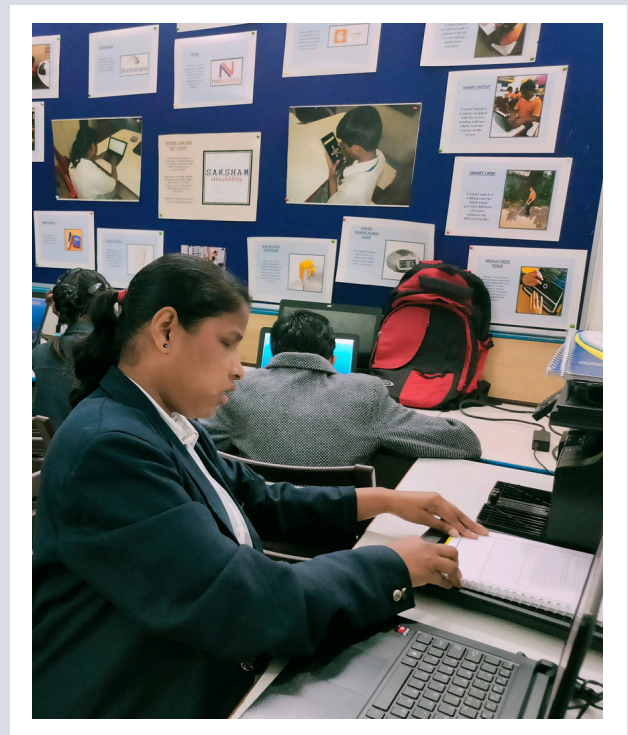
BRAILLE AND COMPUTERS

The focus of the team at Saksham is to build the ability of the children to be able to read and write in Braille independently before building their capacity on computers. Class 5 onwards they are all given laptops to read and write and prepare them for the years ahead. Children with low vision and those with fine motor difficulties are introduced to computers straightaway as they face challenges in learning braille.

DEVICES, MATERIAL IN ACCESSIBLE FORMATS et al:

Saksham has a range of devices and platforms that serve to provide material in accessible formats and support the students in learning independently. Some of these are:

- **Devices:** Laptops with screen reading software, Orbit readers and other refreshable braille displays, Daisy players, mobile phones are some of the devices that all students at Saksham have access to.
- **Libraries:** All students at Saksham are registered with Sugamaya Pustakalaya and Bookshare where they can access reading material in accessible formats.
- **OCR devices:** These convert inaccessible material into accessible formats, thereby overcoming one of the major hurdles that students face. These are currently available at the Saksham centre, but will soon be available in all schools where the students are studying.



VOCATIONAL UNIT

At present the unit is working with persons in the age group 14 to 27 years. Persons requiring support beyond the age of 18 years, prompted the centre to extend the age limit.

- Individuals develop independent living skills, home management skills, daily living skills, mobility, communication skills. They learn computer and phone skills; basic shopping and money transactions.
- They learn skills that can enable them to find employment or become self-employed.
- They build academic skills alongside. While, some individuals enroll with the NIOS; others follow a functional curriculum, curated to suit their needs.



One of the challenges that Saksham faces while working with individuals who are much older when they join Saksham, is that they have limited exposure to the outside world, are over-protected and supported for all activities at home. The team has to work really hard to ensure that these young adults become independent in their daily living skills.



TANMAY'S STORY

Tanmay is a young adult of 22. He is a person with cerebral palsy along with vision impairment and intellectual disability. He also faces fine motor challenges and speech difficulty. Though he communicates verbally, his speech is not very clear. He was among the first batch at the Saksham centre and joined as a very young child. Despite his challenges, Tanmay has come a long way. Along with the Saksham team, his parents have always supported him and ensured he gets exposure to as many things, places and situations as possible. Earlier, Tanmay was able to read print, but over time, his vision has deteriorated. He learnt to work on a computer and though he is not able to type very fast due to his fine motor difficulties, he can manage his assignments. He cleared his class 12 exams from the NIOS last year. Tanmay along with the Saksham team and his parents looked at the various livelihood options. Together they decided that Tanmay should join his maternal uncle in his incense manufacturing business in Hyderabad. Tanmay and his mother went and spent time in Hyderabad and learnt the process. During this stint, they realized that due to his fine motor difficulties, Tanmay was not able to make the incense sticks himself. They decided that Tanmay could concentrate his energies in marketing the incense instead of the manufacturing part.

Today, Tanmay with the support of his parents and the Saksham team sets up a stall to sell incense. Twice a week, from 10 to 1pm, he sets up a stall outside Saksham and sells these to people in the community. The other half of his day at Saksham, he builds on his computer skills, goes for therapy sessions and other skills necessary for day-to-day functioning. Having received training sessions on using of a mobile phone, he has started marketing the incense sticks through Whatsapp. He also goes and delivers the orders to people living in his immediate community.

Today, Tanmay is a confident young man. He even travelled on his own, by air from Delhi to Hyderabad. Within the city, he has started commuting using an autorickshaw and has started using online apps like Uber for within-city travel. He has just begun online shopping on Amazon and is very thrilled with his new-found independence.

DISHA'S STORY

Disha is a 19 year old young lady with deaf-blindness. She came when she was 8 years old and like Tanmay is among the first batch of students at Saksham. Over the years she worked on developing her communication skills, learnt tactile sign-language, learnt braille and has also learnt to use devices. A lot of emphasis was also placed on communicating with people in the community. Communication cards with short sentences in braille, English and Hindi have been made for her to carry. Today, at 19, she has already completed class 8 from NIOS; she has learnt how to knit and knits socks, which she then sells; she has learnt to sew cloth bags using a sewing machine. She is fully independent; can make rotis, clean and tidy up the home and kitchen space and is able to manage many things around the house. She comes to Saksham everyday from 9 to 2.30 pm to work on enhancing her vocational skills as well as learn using a phone and other devices. Her father supports her by marketing the products that she knits.





Graduating from Saksham:

While there is no fixed age criteria to determine exit-policy, the point at which the team feels that the individual is able to cope independently and has mastered the key skills that were part of their work plan, is when the individual is weaned off. For instance, there are individuals who have with Saksham's support set up their own kiosk or shop. While intensive support is required initially, it is gradually tapered and then withdrawn once the individual is able to manage independently and is confident.

The individual and the family know that Saksham is always there for need-based support and information, whenever required.





Saksham reaches out specifically to persons with late blindness and supports them to build academic skills, computer and mobility skills. Unlike other units, this unit works with very few persons as it requires intensive, individualised work. It curates need-based, short courses and individual sessions and builds capacity through training.

The journeys of some of the individuals the unit is working with are as follows:



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DHEERA'S STORY

Dheera is a young woman of 20. She has completed her schooling with Saksham's support and has also learnt braille and the basics of computer through sessions there. She says she would like to become a computer teacher and is building her computer skills. She has also learnt the necessary daily living skills. She is being trained to take on sessions to teach younger children which helps her sharpen her skills besides developing a sense of responsibility and much needed confidence. Now she comes to the centre twice a week to reinforce what she has learnt and gradually she will take wing and be on her own...

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PEHEL: AN INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE SPORTS AMONG CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH VISION IMPAIRMENT

Saksham has always believed in inclusion of children and adults with blindness and low vision in all spheres of life, including sports. Sports are an integral part of a person's development.

Saksham launched, Pehel, which seeks to ignite a passion for sports amongst persons with blindness and low vision. Pehel aims at sports being seen as a career rather than just a leisure activity. The unit, open to everyone and not limited to Saksham, offers training in cricket, chess, taekwondo and other sports for both boys and girls. The coaching and practice sessions are held every weekend.

There is a proper playground and infrastructure along with well-qualified coaches for training the young sport enthusiasts. These coaches are persons who have represented the country and excelled in their respective sport. They aim to train persons to be able to compete at the national level and receive respect, admiration and attention.



SAKSHAM'S SUCCESS STORY CAN BE CHARTED THROUGH THE LIFE JOURNEYS OF ITS ALUMNI

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ISHITA'S STORY

Ishita lived with her parents and two younger siblings in an urban slum in Noida. Her father worked as a gardener and her mother worked as a house-help. Ishita had never been enrolled in the Anganwadi or in school. The Saksham team met the parents and convinced them that Ishita could learn. Ishita thus became the centre's first student. The Saksham team used to pick her up every morning and then drop her back home in the afternoon. Ishita learnt to move independently with the mobility training she received and was gradually prepared for mainstream school. She learnt to read and write in braille and gradually started learning to work on a computer. Today, Ishita is enrolled in a LLB course in and is on her way to becoming a lawyer.

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Three students from Saksham excelled in their Class 12 CBSE exams in 2023, writing their exam independently, including Science and Math. All three scored very well in their chosen streams of Science, Commerce and Humanities respectively. Presently, one is enrolled in an Engineering College, the second is now pursuing BBA at an IIM and the third is studying for a BBA at Symbiosis.

These stars exemplify Saksham's belief that with the right training and support, individuals with blindness can read and write independently and do not need to a scribe.

They have forged ahead entirely on their own merit, pursuing their dreams and shattering the glass-ceiling.



Contact Us

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SAKSHAM IS REGISTERED UNDER 80G AND FCRA