

# BODHI TREE SPECIAL SCHOOL



## Vision

Our vision is directed towards resurrecting well beings of mentally children from cross communities in destitute from the villages of marginalized communities of Bodhgaya region of Bihar state of India. The parents consider normal children as assets while the children with mental health issues liability. Our effort is to bring attitudinal change in the communities towards these children who are subjected to trauma and are living in heart wrenching conditions.

## Mission

Our mission is to be a model for nurturing and honing qualities of mentally challenged children from cross communities in destitute. We have also launched a campaign to enlist mentally challenged children from 90 villages of Bodhgaya. We are also mobilizing other civil agents and stakeholders to join the campaign in co-creating conducive and humble atmosphere for these children.

## Goal

To act as a resource center for protection of rights, equal opportunity and full participation of mentally challenged children in mainstream of society.

## Aims & Objectives

- To provide the Education for the Children with Mental Retardation.
- To integrate the mentally challenged children with normal children through collaborative and inclusive matrix at Bodhi Tree School. We are also fostering a sense of equality among the children at Bodhi Tree School.
- To launch a helpline number to assist the mentally challenged children who remain soft target for trafficking. We also want to mobilize the critical social and Govt. establishments to act in harmony to curb the child trafficking.

## INTELLECTUALLY IMPAIRED



The term "intellectually impaired" is often misunderstood and seen as derogatory. Some think that retardation is diagnosed only on the basis of below-normal intelligence (IQ), and those children with intellectually impaired are unable to learn or to care for them. Actually, in order to be diagnosed as a child with intellectually impaired, the child has to have both significantly low IQ and considerable problems in adapting to everyday life. However, most children with intellectually impaired can learn a great deal, and as adults can lead at least partially independent lives. Most importantly, they can enjoy their lives just as everyone else. Intellectually impaired may be complicated by physical and emotional problems. The child may also have difficulty with hearing, sight or speech. All these problems can lower the child's potential.

### The parents

Our students are from cross communities in destitute from nine villages in Bodhgaya region of Bihar State of India. These communities are called Dalit. The villages around our Bodhi Tree Special School have 100 percent population of cross communities of Dalit. Only 2 percent of them are engaged in cultivation on a piece of land while 96.3 percent have no land at all. They are scattered in dozens of villages around our school campus and are landless work as laborers and shepherds. Bodhgaya Gaya falls in drought prone terrain of the state. Agriculture depends on rain. Thus economy is greatly impacted by Monsoon. If there is no rain these laborers do not get work. Since many of Dalits work very hard in the field or construction work however because of the poor wages they are unable to make both ends meet. 92.5 percent Dalit work in agriculture land that is owned by landlords. Rest move to nearby city to look for some work in construction or others. They are not only treated untouchable because of their unhygienic life styles but were only allowed by affluent communities to settle outside of village. Even after many years of independence of India, Dalits are still treated like outcast. of society. For Dalit, education was an unaffordable luxury and was of no use for them. The prevalence of traditional systems of governance that pose no challenge to unjust social hierarchies and the established inequitable clan based rules could be the major reason behind the plight of children. The oligarchy would not allow children of poor families to receive an education lest that comes in the way of their work getting done. Moved by their appalling and heart wrenching conditions, Bodhi Tree conceived a well determined resolution to mobilize Dalit communities of villages for social and educational rehabilitation. Though in the beginning it was an uphill task but tender tools used over

the years resulted into a voice of education and Bodhi Tree School turned to be practically the first 'site' where the agenda for 'education for equitable development and social justice' has been introduced and deliberated upon.

### Children's Villages



Villages around the campus have mud clay walls with grass roofs and seem to have left in lurch over the decades. One can easily see heap of dung in villages. 67 percent of the population in Bihar still depends on firewood or firewood chips or dung as the kitchen fuel. But the giggles of children and smiles of women show that they are optimistic about life. Villages still seem to have no access to modern amenities and that shows their traditional approach towards life. Many of the villages have no electricity hence people depends on hand pumps for drinking water. The animals generally cows are commonly seen in villages. The animals share almost the same accommodation as the families. During rainy season most of the villages get inundated with water and communication with nearby city becomes challenging .



## The Children



Our children are having different types of disabilities including mental retardation. Malti, Aryan and Neha are having Down syndrome while other some children are having hearing and speech impairment together with mental retardation. Children have been categorized mild, moderate and severe disability.

## Don Syndrome



There are three children with Down syndrome: Neha, Aryan and Malti

ADH



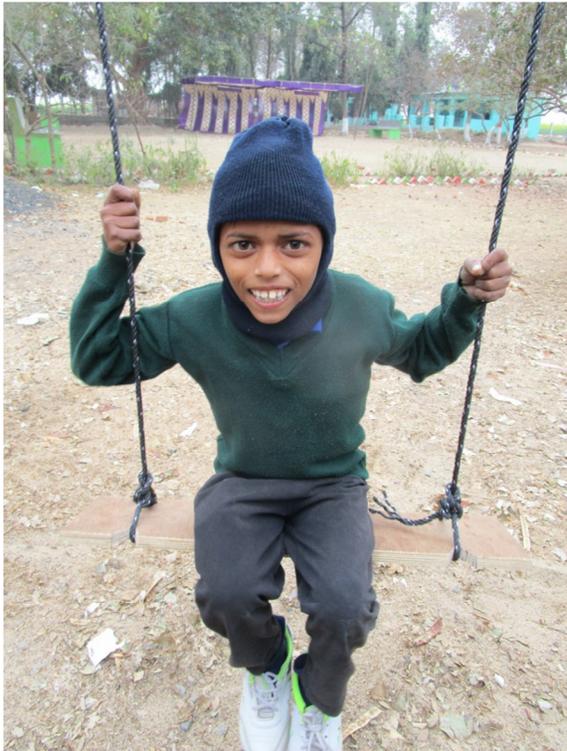
7 year Simran has ADH





Isha and Vikas have hearing and speech impairment with mild mental retardation

Children undergoing Physiotherapy: Chhotu and Ritu



Children having moderate level of disability: Vicky and Kajal



Manju and Shivani have developmental disability

Children having profile of epilepsy as a disability: Prince and Karishma



Our Consultants

Dr shahbaz Husain: Pediatrician



Speech Therapist :Dr Abhishek Kumar



Psychiatrist:Dr Jainendra Kumar



ENT Specialist: Dr Arshad Imamm



Dentist: Dr Kashif Hussain



General Physician: Dr Ziaul Haque



Physiotherapy: The department of physiotherapy, Magadh University conducting physiotherapy –session for Ritu and Chhotu



Certification and evaluation of disability: RINPAS, Ranch



Children and parents at RINPAS Ranchi with the head of the Multidisciplinary team Dr AK NAG



Parent Participation

The parents meetings have been made mandatory from this academic session. Violation of the norm may lead to partial termination of students.



### Nutrition



The school looks after children's health care, physical training activities, recreation and one-time nutritional supplementation.

The children who study at the School come from drought-famine affected homes and are severely starved and malnourished. Mid-day meals are served to meet with nutritional security

## Can Intellectual Impairment Be Prevented?



### **Trained Staff**

Bodhi Tree has been providing special education to the mentally challenged children through the efforts of well trained staff, who are well qualified in special education.

The teachers have all been trained but the extraordinary thing about Bodhi Tree is the atmosphere of love which surrounds it and the extraordinary support it gets from its staff members.

## Present strength in Special School

The present strength of the school is 40 and all are from poorer than the poorest families.

## Bus Transport Facilities

We provide to every student from all villages. Apart from driver, we have appointed a care taker in each transport for comforting children.

### A classification of the mentally subnormal

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>I.Q. LEVELS</b>
Borderline cases	70 - 84
Mild cases(educable)	55 - 69
Moderate cases(trainable)	40 - 54
Severely deficient	25 - 39
Highly severe	below 25

## Therapies and Trainings provided to special children

We are providing behaviour modification of the mentally challenged through the services of physiotherapy, speech therapy, music therapy, yoga therapy and special education techniques by a team of interdisciplinary teachers, whom we approached by paying visits, who are employed in other noted institutions.

We are constantly training our students in daily living skills, who are unable to do their daily chores, like eating, dressing, grooming, and also toileting etc. The main purpose of this training program is to infuse confidence in them, to make them feel that, they are quite efficient and can attend to their daily needs with more confidence.

## School

- Class Room Teaching
- Physio Therapy
- Speech Therapy
- Dance
- Drawing
- Games / Sports
- Experiential visits
- Life Skills
- Social skills
- Motor skills training
- Recreational therapy
- Movie
- Cognitive social skills
- Medical Checkup by doctors

## Term Boarding

In the next academic session our effort is to conduct term boarding in which a child lives at hostel for a week while he lives with parents for another week.

## Addressing problems of Adolescent Mentally Handicapped Children

Our institution is also interested in adolescent problems which need more attention. The period of adolescence is roughly between the ages of 13 and 20 years. Sometimes the adolescent problems lead persons to a kind of risk. The paramount risk is a tendency towards committing suicides. It runs maximum during the period of adolescence among mentally challenged persons, when sharply rejected by the society.

## OTHER ACTIVITIES

### SPORTS



### Yoga



Incluiveness with normal kids



### Indoor games



An educational and recreational excursion trip was organized for the children with special needs from Bodhgaya to Rajgrih.

## **TRAINING AND REHABILITATION ACTIVITIES**

During the year under review a total of two (2) training program for the benefit of the parents of Children with M.R. below 12 years of age and another for below 15 years for parents and both the program have been completed with success.

## **TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR THE PARENTS OF THE DISABLED CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS**

This is an orientation program relating to the children with behavioral problems. The psychiatrist, Dr. Ashok Sadhu of our organization has conducted this program and discussed about bed-wetting, self-biting, thumb sucking, self-hurting and other related problems which usually confront with the disabled children. The duration of the said program is for one day.

We have been making efforts to collect the needed literature by way of gifts or as donations from the interested people of our region.

## **The Issues**

### **Social marginalization**



A disability of a child is often followed by his being marginalized in the society. In Bodhgaya region of Bihar in general and southern outskirts of the district in particular not even 1% of the disabled children have access to education.

Furthermore, the disability scares people .It is often established in the collective conscious that a disability is a curse or a punishment for sins committed by ones ancestors. Children suffering from disabilities are isolated, shunned and are considered untouchable...

This type of thing is mostly flagrant in developing countries where the majority of disabled children are illiterate and they live completely isolated form the rest of the society. Often, they are forced to beg in order to provide for themselves and they live in slum like villages in extreme poverty and denial.

### **Violence**



There is an increasing risk of disabled children becoming unfortunate victims of violence due to their inability to defend themselves. Thus, physical, psychological and emotional violence happens to be a sad reality that disabled children undergo in domestic and social circles.

### **Discrimination due to disability**

A huge discrimination is largely noticed even in children. There is a tragic heart wrenching world of children with discrimination. The communities here seem to have a little or no faith in such children. They consider them liability while normal children are considered asset. The parents do not want to take them to social gathering and ceremonies.



### **Right to education**



Due to the lack of infrastructure, of means, of knowledge and above all of goodwill, most of the disabled children do not receive education or training, not even primary education . Children with disability are classified in two categories: Educable and trainable.

### Poverty



## A great room for improvement

The word “handicapped” often contains a pejorative connotation: a handicapped suffers from incapacities, so the temptation to treat them as incompetent is widely felt. But, a disabled child is capable of engaging himself in constructive things, and above all they are capable of progress. Unfortunately they are seldom provided with an opportunity to progress.