

NEWSLETTER

Interview with Nandakumar, Joint Commissioner of Income Tax



YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9pRMNrky8>

Setting the Pace at MDA

Keeping in line with MDA's vision of "impacting 500,000 children by 2020" a lot has been happening at MDA across entities. Holistic development of the child, building awareness, creation of part time remedial centers, training and workshops, setting up of Resource Rooms to extend our reach, new ways to identify and nurture talent in Hydra, and conducting workshops and awareness of Tamizh Vazhi Payarchi, have been the areas of focus.

Dr Angela Fawcett's visit (VP British Dyslexic Association) was one of the highlights. Dr Fawcett conducted a workshop on Bilingual Dyslexia and Positive Dyslexia and Maximizing Potential at IIT Madras. She rounded off her visit with an address on Lifelong Management of Dyslexia to a group of invitees.

Training sessions are in full swing and a programme aimed at teachers in Government aided schools is expected to be rolled out soon. Avance 360 is an initiative of creating workflow software to track the progress of every child from Assessment at the entry stage to the passing out, post remedial process. This is in its final stage with final tests underway.

MDA's participation in the International Dyslexic Conference in Singapore in July and Tokyo in August has given us visibility at a global level. Four papers to be presented by Special Educators have been selected for presentation in the 2018 Conference in Singapore.

Participation in events like Dyslexia Week, Wipro Marathon and Pedal Beat has generated lot of interest.

The Editors

Visit of Education Minister to Ananya



On 19th January, 2018, the Honourable Minister for School Education, Tamil Nadu Thiru. K A Sengottaiyan, visited Ananya Learning and Research Centre, a project of MDA. The Special Educators explained a few remediation methodologies to the Minister. Later, the Minister informed the press that the Government of Tamil Nadu will consider engaging the services of MDA to train Government School teachers to identify and remediate children with Specific Learning Disability or Dyslexia.



Dr. Angela Fawcett
Professor Emerita, British Dyslexia Association

Bilingualism and Dyslexia – A Talk by Dr Angela Fawcett

The World Federation of Neurology defines Dyslexia as a disorder in children, who despite conventional classroom experience fail to attain the language skills of reading, writing and spelling commensurate with their intellectual abilities. Children with dyslexia

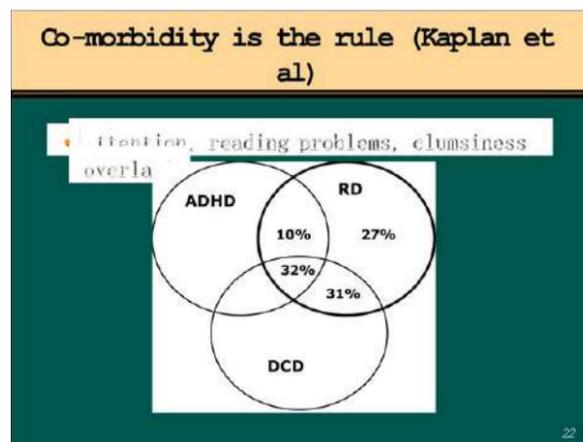
form about 5-10% of the school population. Along with problems in reading, writing and spelling, they may have associated problems in math, speed, coordination, memory, organisation, lower self-esteem and problems with social skills.

Dr. Fawcett has proposed 3 main theories of Dyslexia

- a) **Automatisation Deficit Theory**
Automaticity is the final stage in learning. Dyslexic children will have difficulties in any skill that requires you to be automatic. This impacts working memory and speed of performance across a range of skills.
- b) **Cerebellar Deficit Theory**
The cerebellum has always been known to be involved in coordination. Links between cerebellum and Broca's area make it crucially involved in language and fluency. Evidence from brain scans shows that there is only 10% activation of controls.
- c) **Procedural Learning Deficit Theory**
Procedural memory/ learning is learning how to do anything that involves a sequence. For eg. tying shoe laces, driving a car, playing a sport. Evidence shows this is impaired in Dyslexic children and adults. They face problems in implicit learning, consolidating skills, speed accuracy and consistency of learning.

Comorbidities and SLD

In developmental disorders comorbidity is the rule not the exception. There is a high overlap between symptoms of different developmental disorders. This overlap between difficulties places the Dyslexic child at increased risk. They may have problems with coordination, particularly evidenced in handwriting. Consciously compensating for poor automatised skills will impact their speed and memory and hence lead to problems in attention and following instructions. Overall these overlaps are a disadvantage for Dyslexics throughout life and make it difficult to remediate their problems, even more so for the bilingual.



Bilingualism and Dyslexia

In the case of bilingual learners, at age 2, their executive skills will be better than in monolingual children, and their memory at age 8 will be superior. Development at age 5 is 10% lower than in their peers but there is greater progress between the ages of 7 and 18.

Problems of Bilingualism

Dyslexics in India face challenges due to bilingualism. At least two languages including English are learnt either simultaneously or sequentially in school. Indian languages are more transparent than English. The sound mapping is largely one-to-one and it is taught in syllables rather than phonemes. Since it's visually more complex, it impacts orthography more strongly than reading. But by age 7, performance is equivalent across all languages.

Indian languages are visually and spatially more complex. The word order is not fixed and the words are long and complex, consisting of many elements. There is a mismatch between the orthography of English and the native languages and most children have no experience of spoken English. All the theories of Dyslexia might account for elements of difficulty in Indian Dyslexics.

While learning Tamil, Dyslexics faced difficulties with both the visual and auditory aspects. Learning the number of possible symbols posed a challenge. They were unable to differentiate between similar sounds.

Strengths of Bilingualism

Babies learn their native language from the environment. Although they can learn any language easily in the first 6 months, they lose this ability between 6 and 12 months and focus on their own language. Bilingual children have richer environment and an extended period to learn. This gives them a delay in committing which gives advantages in terms of flexibility, memory and attention. Bilingualism may even offer protection from dementia.

Literacy in India is typically lower. 32% in Grade 2 cannot recognise letters and 20% cannot recognise numbers. Most Dyslexic children are not diagnosed until age 11, although difficulties are known at age 5. Since there is a stigma attached, most do not seek remedial support.

Screening for Dyslexia

Dyslexia is the most common developmental disorder. It's genetic in origin and there's a 50% chance of a child inheriting it if their parent is Dyslexic, and it persists into adulthood. Appropriate teaching support improves reading, spelling and confidence while lack of support leads to continuing failure and problems become entrenched and generalized. The earlier support is provided, the more cost effective it will be.

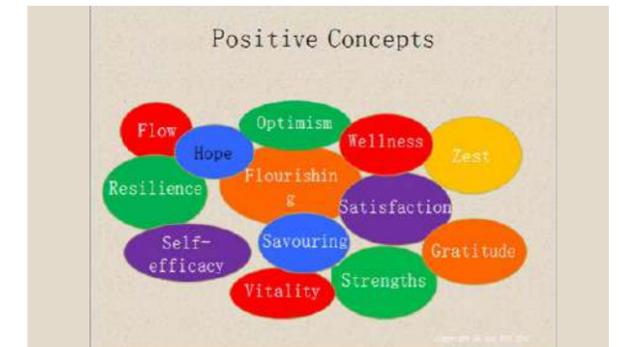
Strengths in Dyslexia

These may be children with encyclopedic knowledge about areas of interest. They often have strong verbal skills and are creative and artistic. They are able to see the bigger picture. They may give the right answer but not know why! Bi-lingual dyslexics show greater flexibility based on strong executive function based on switching between languages but struggle with lack of automaticity in speech.

Ten Strengths in three Triads		
Work Strengths	Cognitive Strengths	Inter-personal Strengths
Determination / Resilience	Big-Picture Approach	Teamwork
Flexible Coping	Innovation / Creativity	Empathy
Proactivity	Visuo-Spatial Skills	Communication
Unconventional Experience		

Positive Dyslexia

Having seen the problems associated with Dyslexia and the Strengths that a Dyslexic has, psychologists now focus on positive aspects of Dyslexia. Their aim is to develop the understanding, the tools and environment needed to allow every individual to identify, develop and utilise their own strengths productively.



Dr Angela Fawcett interacting with children and educators at Ananya



Creative Talents on Display at Dyslexia Week

Dyslexia Week is an annual programme conducted by Madras Dyslexia Association to raise public awareness about learning difficulty and to identify and encourage the talents of dyslexic children.

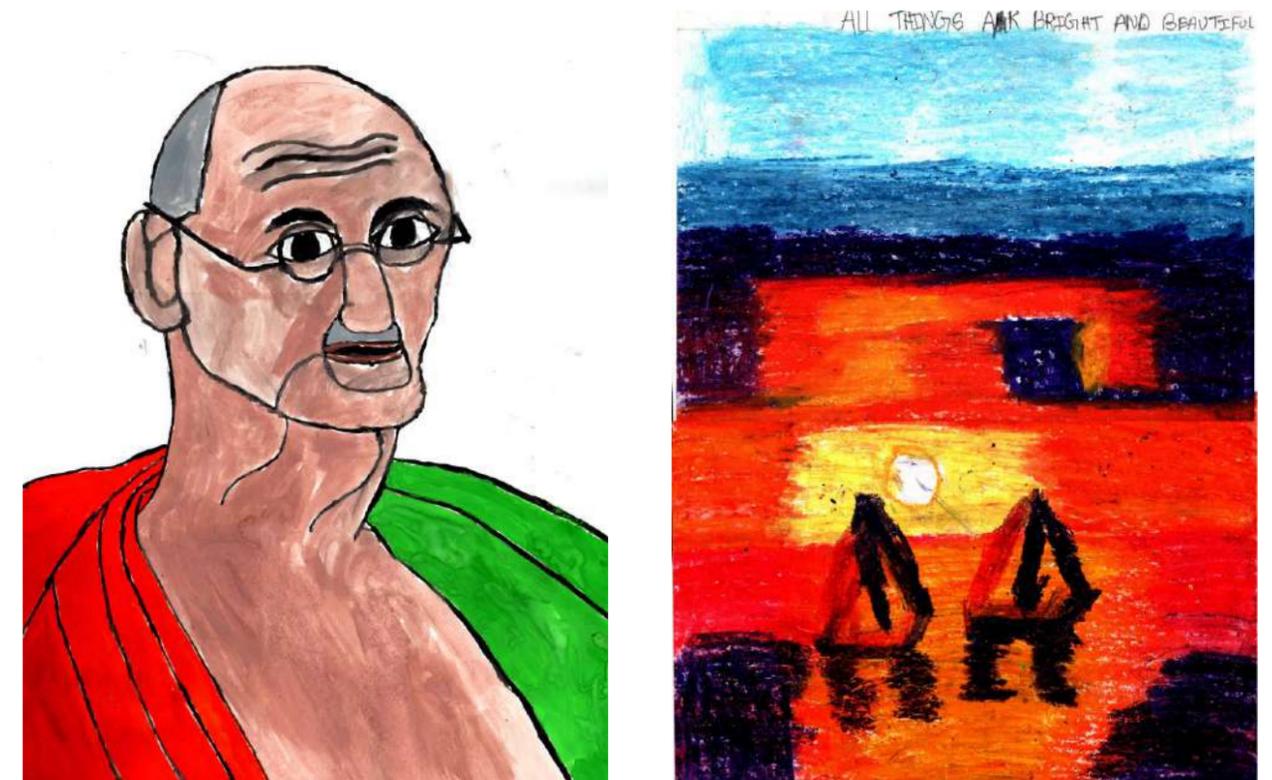
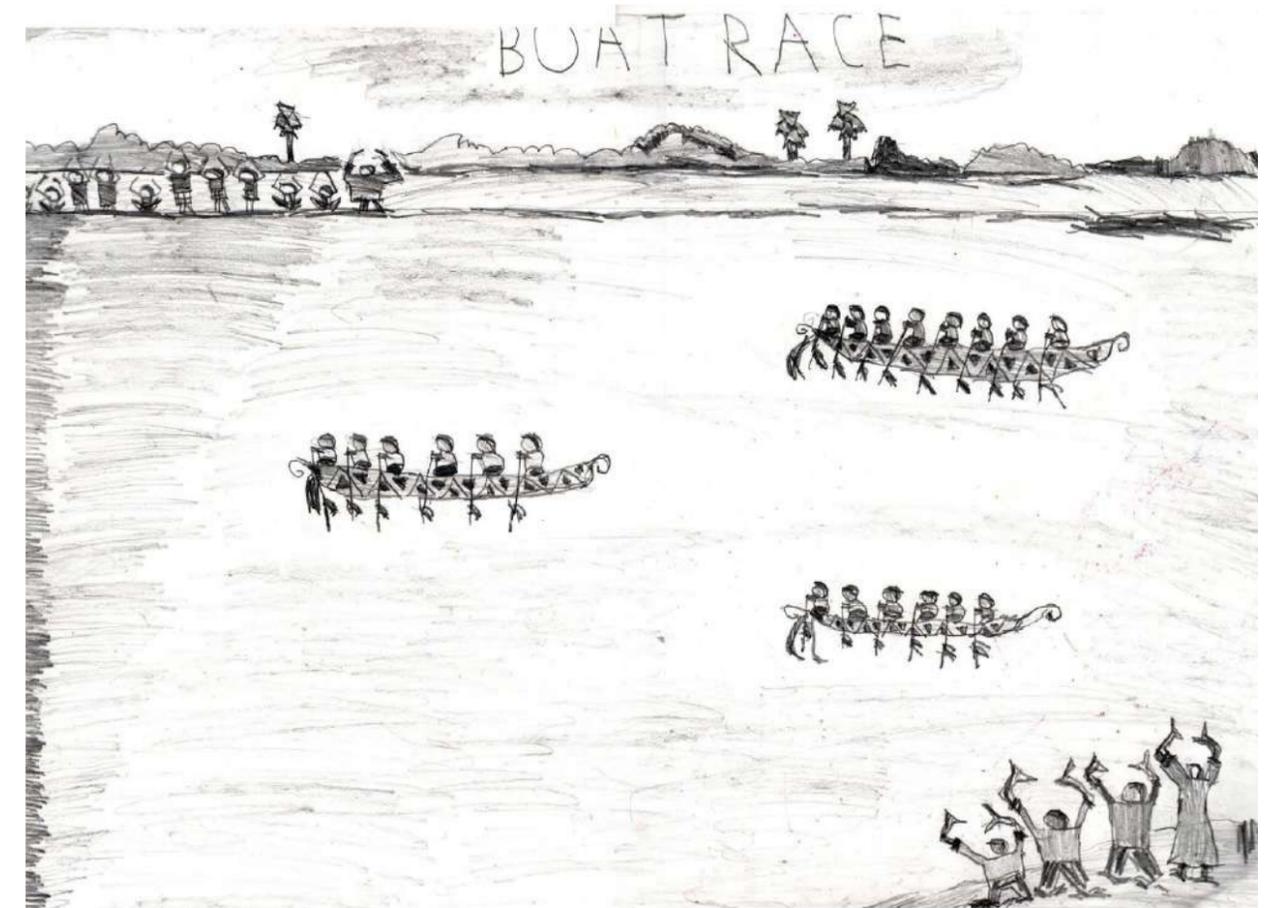
This year the event was held from 2-7 October 2017, in partnership with the Rotary Club of Madras South. Participation has been steadily increasing over the years and 2017 saw a record participation of 450 students drawn from over 20 schools. The celebration of Dyslexia Week, which began in 2014, has been observed every year in Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai and Trichy.

As part of the celebration, seven contests were held for school children between the ages of 6 and 16. Children participated in painting, fireless cooking, kolam, art from waste, skit and dance, and music competitions. "The objective of this week was to help dyslexic children get an opportunity to discover themselves and their many talents. We had asked schools to send children with learning difficulties to participate and showcase their talents," said D Chandrasekhar, President of MDA.

During an interaction with parents, one of them strongly stated that the schools should play a major role in facilitating the development of children. "My son is a student of SIET Dyslexic Centre School. The school encouraged him to take part in the painting contest," he said. The long-term aspiration of MDA is to train teachers to identify and support dyslexic children in mainstream schools. With an estimated 10-15% of school children having dyslexia, there are not enough resources to take care of them. Rather than segregating them, they must be integrated within existing schools, and made to interact with other students.

Magdoom Mohamed R.Z., President of the Rotary Club of Madras South, presided over the event and handed over a cheque for Rs 50,000 to MDA. The event corresponded with the International Dyslexia Week, where dyslexia associations in Singapore, Malaysia and the UK also celebrated in identifying special talents. The event was extensively covered in the local dailies both in English and in Tamil

The Editors



Art from Waste



Dance



Kolam



Music



Beyond the Classroom: How Can I Help My Child With Dyslexia?

This article has been reprinted with permission from the [International Dyslexia Association \(IDA\)](#)

Linda Siegel, retired professor from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver Canada. Linda is the author of *Understanding Dyslexia and Other Learning Disabilities* published by Pacific Educational Press and also available from Amazon.

It's become fashionable to speak of the "gift" of dyslexia, but it's not that simple. Dyslexia brings emotional struggles. I think that many would choose to "regift" it if the opportunity arose. The most important way of coping with dyslexia is to help children find their abilities and be proud of their accomplishments.

Peer Pressure

"Lisa, why don't you take that dark red lipstick? It'll look good on you. Just slip it into your purse. No one will notice." Lisa was a 13 year old with dyslexia, and two of her "friends" urged her to shoplift the lipstick. Dyslexic young people are especially vulnerable to peer pressure because they want to gain the admiration of their peers. In their minds it can make up for the humiliation that they experience in school. Adolescents are particularly vulnerable. Exposing the issue and role-playing this situation can help them learn to cope with the pressure.

Bullies

The other side of peer pressure is relentless teasing and bullying. Teach children to recognize bullying and tell them to let their parents and teachers know what's happening. Of course, they may be threatened or be afraid of being called a "baby." Recognize their dilemma, and reassure them that they'll be safe and that parents and teachers will pay attention to their concerns.

Survival Skills

Parents can help their children develop survival skills by:

- 1. Recognizing Abilities**
People with dyslexia often have considerable abilities in areas such as dancing, music, art, mechanical skills, and sports, among others. Find those strengths and encourage them.
- 2. Teaching Persistence**
Struggling with reading, spelling, writing, and/or mathematics isn't easy. Help them break the long-term goal into small steps along the way. For example, rather than master all the spelling words or the entire multiplication table, start with only three spelling words or the five times table.
- 3. Promoting Self-Advocacy**
If your child is 12 or older, help him become an advocate for his rights. For example, he has a right to accommodations, whether it's extended time for examinations, taking tests in a quiet room, having access to a calculator, using a computer, or anything else that helps him deal with his learning disability. Teach your child to advocate for himself in middle school. Being an advocate is important at all educational levels, middle school, high school, college and university. Part of self-advocacy is disclosing the problem. People with dyslexia have a dilemma. Should they disclose it to teachers or employers? Disclosing can get accommodations, but it can cause resentment and hostility. Another part of self-advocacy is asking for help when you need it. Maybe he didn't understand an assignment or a concept. Teach your children not to be afraid to ask for help. He may encounter unsympathetic people but, hopefully, he'll find patience and kindness.
- 4. Encouraging Teamwork**
Studying with a small group helps many students with dyslexia. People have strengths in different areas; working with a group increases the chances of problem solving. Working on group projects can take advantage of each individual's strengths;

some are good at writing, others at drawing, others at research, and others at building models. Hopefully the school environment will recognize the value of teamwork.

5. Assuming Responsibility

Help your child to understand when he needs the help of others and when it's necessary to do something without anyone's help. There's a fine line that requires a careful balancing act. Parents need to provide a supportive environment for their children with dyslexia, but they also need to let them fly. Resist the temptation to overprotect them.

6. Providing Humour

"I'm not a slow learner; I am a fast forgetter," one 16 year old told me. She added, "If you cannot laugh at yourself, whom can you laugh at?" Humour can diffuse a lot of situations if a person is equipped to use it.

7. Finding the Positives

Some people feel that struggling with dyslexia made them more sympathetic and interested in helping people. Some parents of dyslexic children think that dealing with the problems that their children have faced has made them stronger.

Another key to staying positive is turning other people's negative comments into something positive. For example, one 13-year-old boy said when someone says, "You're disorganized," respond with, "No I see things from different points of view at the same time." If someone says, "You're hyperactive," she can say, "No I don't tire easily."

Helping Your Child Understand

A young child of 7 will ask, "Why can't I read like everyone else?" The simple, but true answer is that everybody's brain is different. It's important to add, "You can swim very well, (play the guitar, draw lovely pictures or whatever). Your teacher will find ways to help you."

Please never say, "Try harder." These are some of the worst words that a dyslexic person can hear. I know from experience. I cannot carry a tune. As a school child when we had singing in class, teachers told me to try harder and listen carefully but I really was doing my best. One children's chorus conductor told me she could teach anyone to sing. When I shyly sang for her she said, "You'd be a very difficult case." No amount of trying harder was the solution in my case just as trying harder is not the solution for the struggling reader with dyslexia.

Japan Dyslexia Society

D Chandrashekar, President Madras Dyslexia Association

Japan Dyslexia Society is a Tokyo based organization started by the mother of a dyslexic son, who now is a very successful architect practicing in Singapore. She and her dynamic daughter Ami To do manage the activities of this dynamic organization with the support of a host of parents, special educators and technologists.

I was invited to attend their Asia Pacific Dyslexia Festival 2017, scheduled on 21st and 22nd October, 2017 in Tokyo to speak about the evolution of Madras Dyslexia Association over the last 25 years and how Madras Dyslexia Association has been positioning itself to meet the massive challenges of helping dyslexic children not only in Tamil Nadu but all over India.

The programme was spread over two days. There were parallel sessions – one stream for administrators and parents and a separate stream for special educators. On the first day when we made the presentation on Madras Dyslexia Association to an audience of nearly 175 policy makers and parents, there was also an exhibition of assistive devices and educational materials. The entire event took place inside the building of Nippon Foundation, Tokyo.

Administrators and parents from Japan, Indonesia, India, Bhutan, Malaysia, Singapore and Philippines presented papers on their experiences. On the second day, they had arranged a programme of adult dyslexics to talk on how they felt growing

up dyslexic. We had representatives from Thailand, Malaysia and Japan sharing their experiences. By now each of them had excelled in their chosen activity - music, theatre, architecture, copy writing and free-hand sketching.

I was given the opportunity to speak about Multiple Intelligences, when providentially the adult dyslexics spoke about their areas of creativity. There was a lot of interest in Hydra, the Multiple Intelligences division of MDA.

Assistive Devices were displayed at the event and proved to be a major attraction.

On the whole participating in the Tokyo Festival provided a lot of self-assurance that MDA is very much on the same page as their counterparts in the Asia Pacific region. MDA had a few giveaways like Hydra and strategy for training large number of teachers while the takeaways were Assistive Devices, Technology and Organisation Skills.



சிறப்பு தமிழ் பதிப்பு

19/1/2018 அன்று தமிழ் நாட்டின் கல்விதுறை அமைச்சர் மாண்புமிகு திரு. செங்கோட்டையன் அவர்கள் அனன்யா லெர்னிங் & ரிசர்ச் மையத்திற்கு வருகை தந்தார். அமைச்சர் அவர்கள் மையத்தில் நடைபெறும் சிறப்பு பயிற்சிகள், உடற்சார்ந்த பயிற்சிகள் மற்றும் நடனப்பயிற்சி வகுப்புகளை பார்வையிட்டார். மேலும் அமைச்சர் அவர்கள் தமிழ் வழி பயிற்சி பற்றியும், அதற்காக தயார்செய்யப்பட்டுள்ள உபகரணம் பற்றியும் மிகவும் ஆர்வத்துடன் கேட்டு அறிந்து கொண்டார். அவர் ஊடகங்களுக்கு அளித்த பேட்டியில் அரசாங்கப் பள்ளிகளில் கற்றலில் குறைபாடுள்ள குழந்தைகளை கண்டறியவும் அவர்களுக்கான சிறப்புப் பயிற்சி வகுப்புகள் நடத்துவதற்கு ஆசிரியர்களை பயிற்றுவிப்பதற்கு மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷனின் உதவியை தமிழ்நாடு அரசு மேற்கொள்ள முதல்வருக்கு பரிந்துரை செய்வதாக கூறினார்.



முதல் நாள் நடைபெற்ற பயிற்சியில் கற்றலில் குறைபாடு பற்றிய விழிப்புணர்ச்சி தெளிவாகக் விளக்கப்பட்டது. அதனைத் தொடர்ந்து வாசித்தல் திறன் பற்றியும், வாசித்தலின் வகைகள் பற்றியும் விளக்கப்பட்டது. வாசித்தல் திறன்வளர்வதற்கு மாணவர்களுக்குக் கொடுக்க வேண்டிய பயிற்சிகள் செய்துகாண்பிக்கப்பட்டது. இதில்கலந்து கொண்ட ஆசிரியர்கள் மிகவும் உற்சாகத்துடன் பயிற்சிகளைச் செய்துபார்த்து கற்றுக்கொண்டனர் அடுத்தநாள் எழுத்துப்பிழை, எழுதுதல் திறன் ஆகியன விளக்கப்பட்டது. காட்சிகளாகக் காணுதல், கேட்டறிதல், தொடு உணர்ச்சி மற்றும் இயங்கவியல் மூலமாக வார்த்தைகளைக் கற்றுக் கொடுக்கும் முறைகள் விளக்கிக் கூறப்பட்டது.

பயிற்சிமுகாம்

சசிகலா ரமணி அனன்யா எம்.டி.எ

கடந்த செப்டம்பர்மாதம் லர்னிங் லிங்ஸ் மற்றும் அசோக்லேலண்ட் (Ashok Leyland) நிறுவனங்களால் நடத்தப்பட்ட பயிற்சி முகாமில் மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷன் (Madras Dyslexia Association) சிறப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் பங்கு பெற்றார்கள். எண்ணூரில் இருக்கும் அசோக்லேலண்ட் நிறுவனத்தில் நான்கு நாட்களும் ஹோசூரில் நான்கு நாட்களும் இந்தப்பயிற்சி நடைபெற்றது.

மூன்றாம் நாள் கணிதப்பாடங்கள் கற்பிக்கும் முறைகளும், அதற்கு அடுத்த நாட்களில் பன்முகத்திறன்களில் பாடங்களைப் பயிற்றுவிக்கும் முறைகள் பற்றி எடுத்துரைக்கப்பட்டது.

இந்தப்பயிற்சிகளின் நிறைவாக அசோக்லேலண்ட் மற்றும் லர்னிங் லிங்ஸ் நிர்வாகிகள் கலந்து கொண்டு பயிற்சியாளர்களிடம் தங்கள் நன்றியைத் தெரிவித்தனர். ஆசிரியர்கள் இந்தப்பயிற்சி வகுப்புகளில் பயன்பெற்றதை அறிந்து கொண்டனர். பயிற்சியில் பங்கு பெற்ற ஆசிரியர்களுக்கு சான்றிதழ்கள் வழங்கப்பட்டன.

செய்திச்சிதறல்கள்

சென்ற நவம்பர் 2017, 20ம் நாள் டாக்டர் ஏஞ்சலா பா.செட், பிரட்டிஷ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷனின் துணைத்தலைவர், அவர்கள் அனன்யா லெர்னிங் & ரிசர்ச் சென்டருக்கு வருகை தந்தார். அப்பொழுது பள்ளியின் சிறப்பு ஆசிரியர்கள் மற்றும் மாணவர்களுடன் கலந்துரையாடினார்.

ஓராசிரியர் பள்ளி

2017 டிசம்பர் மாதம் 16, 17 சனி மற்றும் ஞாயிற்றுக்கிழமைகளில் மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா குழுவினர்கள் நடத்திய சிறப்பு முகாம் உளுந்தை கிராமத்தில் நடைபெற்றது. இதில் ஓராசிரியர் பள்ளியைச் சேர்ந்த 250 ஆசிரியர்கள் கலந்து கொண்டு பயன்பெற்றனர். இதில் கற்றலில் குறைபாடு பற்றிய விழிப்புணர்வு மற்றும் வாசித்தல், எழுத்துக் கோர்வை, எழுதுதல் மற்றும் கணிதம் கற்பிக்கும் முறைகள் கற்றுக் கொடுக்கப்பட்டது.

மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷன், ஜனவரி மாதம் செகந்திராபாத் நகரத்தில் உள்ள

செயின்ட் லூயிஸ் கல்வி நிறுவனத்துடன் (செயின்ட் ஆன்ட்ரூஸ் பள்ளி) ஒன்று முதல் ஐந்து வகுப்பு குழந்தைகளுக்கான முழுநேர சிறப்பு வகுப்புகள் அப்பள்ளியில் அமைப்பதற்கு ஒப்பந்தம் கையெழுத்திடப்பட்டது. இந்த மையத்தில் சிறப்பு வகுப்புகள் தவிர பன்முகத்திறன் மற்றும் உடற்கூறு சார்ந்த பயிற்சிகளும் நடத்துவதற்கு முடிவு செய்யப்பட்டது. இதில் பயிற்சி முகாம் நடத்துவதற்கும், மையத்தை மேற்பார்வையிடுவதற்கும் மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷன் உதவி செய்யும்.

மெட்ராஸ் டிஸ்லெக்சியா அஸோஸியேஷன், ரோட்டரி சங்கம் சென்னை கிழக்கு, இரண்டும் இணைந்து, அரசாங்க உதவி பெறும் பள்ளிகளுக்கும், பொருளாதார நிலையில் பின்தங்கிய மாணவர்கள் படிக்கும் தனியார் பள்ளிகளுக்கும், ஆரம்ப நிலை பள்ளி ஆசிரியர்களுக்கான பயிற்சி முகாம்கள் ஆரம்பிக்கப்பட்டு நடைமுறையில் இருக்கிறது. இதில் பலவிதமான பயிற்சி முறைகள் பற்றி ஏழு நாட்கள் வகுப்புகள் நடைபெற்று வருகிறது.

Happenings at MDA



On Saturday, 16 December 2017 and Sunday 17th of December 2017 MDA team addressed about 250 teachers of Single Teacher Schools at Ulundai Village. An awareness programme on Dyslexia and some strategies in the areas of reading, writing, spelling and Maths were discussed.

An MOU was signed between St. Louis Education Society (St. Andrews School) Secunderabad and MDA for setting up a full time pullout Remedial Centre for classes 1-5 for helping children with Specific Learning Difficulties in their school. The centre will have remedial classes, a Multiple Intelligences unit and Occupational Therapy as well. MDA will guide and support the centre at Secunderabad with workshops and monitoring sessions



Madras Dyslexia Association in collaboration with Rotary Club of Madras East is conducting Teacher Training workshops in Government Aided and Private schools who work with under privileged children in creating awareness on Dyslexia.

It is a 7-day training program. Teachers of 75 schools will be trained over a period of 2 years.

Madras Dyslexia Association
94, Park View, G.N. Chetty Road,
T. Nagar, Chennai 600 017
Tel: 2815 6697, 2815 7908
Email: ananyamdachennai@gmail.com
Website: www.mdachennai.com



For Private Circulation Only
Editorial Team

**Ram S, Kalyani Balakrishnan,
Mrudula Govindaraju,
Harini Ramanujam,
Rashmi Wankhede, Suchi Natraj**