

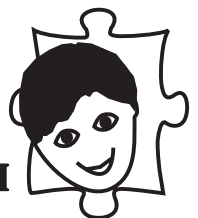
autism network

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ACTION FOR AUTISM



autism network

DECEMBER 2018

VOL 13 ISSUE 3

Action For Autism is a registered, non-profit, national parent organisation. Autism Network is published by Action For Autism to provide information on education, therapy, care, and to provide interaction for families and professionals across the country.

Autism Network is a forum for expressing diverse opinions. Action For Autism does not hold itself responsible for opinions expressed by individual writers. Publication of any information does not mean support of Action For Autism.

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INFORMATION

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YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

Do you have any comments, suggestions to offer? Information and experience to share? We look forward to our readers' participation. Send letters, articles, illustrations to: The Editor, Autism Network at the above given address or E-mail: actionforautism@gmail.com

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In referring to the child with autism, Autism Network often uses 'he', 'him' and 'his', not as a prejudice against the girl child with autism, but for reasons of simplicity and because the vast majority of children with autism are male. However, many articles also use 'she', 'her', and 'hers'.

Cover Illustration

**'Aeroplane:
Garuda Indonesia'**

by Amin Naqvi, 13 years, from Noida

WISHLIST !

- Computers & Computer Accessories: keyboard, speakers, mouse
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Website: <http://www.autism-india.org>

Helpline Email: helpline.afa@gmail.com

PAGE ONE

As the second generation of children who receive a diagnosis of autism attain adulthood, there is a surge in the realisation that there is not much to address the concerns of parents who suddenly become aware of their own mortality. "What after us?" has become a pressing question. The query has given rise to a variety of living arrangement for adults who would require support in different aspects of their lives when their parents are no longer around to provide a secure living. For the sake of simplicity the term 'parent' includes siblings, grandparents, and any other who may be acting as guardians.

In a country where the state does little to support orphaned children with or without disabilities, there can be little expectation for adults with disabilities who have high support needs. Civil society has to step in to find solutions. In such a scenario, there will not be any one solution to this concern.

In the host of options that are opening up, there is something for everybody!

Some make place for parents to live along with their offspring. Some have young children as well as adults in their 50s and more, all living together. Some only have adult residents. Some provide dorms. Others have individual and shared rooms.

All are created with the desire to provide a solution to a looming situation.

Given that most adults now seeking homes are males, and most males in middle class Indian homes are brought up as little princelings, do they participate in the running of the home? Do they keep their rooms in order? Do they help with household chores?

Do they get to decide any part of their day to day lives?

None of us living in families get to decide and have everything our way. Because give and take is a part of life. But we do have some say. Do residents in the sprouting 'hostels', 'villages', 'institutions', 'homes', 'apartments', have a healthy say in the lives they lead?

Do they have agency?

This is a vulnerable population with many of them unable to report on what kind of life they lead. Parents want them to have a good life of comfort and 'care'. They also want to ensure that there is no form of abuse or ill treatment. To ensure this, one demand that most parents have is for closed circuit TV (CCTV) cameras in the bedrooms, and some even in the bathrooms. And they want live feeds of these cameras available on their mobile phones. Many of the homes and institutions that have come up comply with this expectation.

We want to pause and ponder; which of us would want cameras in our bedrooms? How would parents ensure that they, and only they, watch their wards – dressing, undressing, having a private sexual moment? Does it not actually set the vulnerable adult up for abuse? While the demand from parents come from a good place, a desire to ensure that their ward is not mistreated in any way, it may not only do the opposite, it effectively strips the adult of all dignity.

Another point to ponder: if a parent has so little trust in the quality of any place, why arrange to have one's vulnerable son or daughter stay there?

This is an extremely sensitive topic and one that parents are often not willing to engage in. But it is one that needs discussion. CCTV cameras are only one of myriad aspects that need discussion.

There are no easy answers. In a scenario of lack of services parents often do not have much choice. But what they can do is hold robust discussions around the many challenging aspects of adult living for persons with disabilities with high support needs. Discussions that are thoughtful, open, and willing to listen to all points of view. Discussions without rancour.

There are no easy answers. There is no one answer. But out of such discussions can emerge possibilities that might make lives for our children better, dignified, and full of meaning.

• LEAD ARTICLE •

Reflections about STARGroup's Visit to Ananda in January 2018

Evemarie Knust-Potter, Önder Öz,
Flint Stelter, Yelena Tursky, Sabrina Wallner, Philipp Wilde

The following report has been developed on the basis of participant observation and lots of fruitful discussions by a team of experts with and without autism from Germany and Action For Autism (AFA) team members, in the new Ananda living project in the Haryana.

1. Who we are

StARG(Studying with Autism Resource and Research Group) is a group of students and former students with and without autism from different departments of Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts, led by Prof. Dr. Evemarie Knust-Potter. The aim of StARG is to develop counter strategies to traditional deficit oriented research, and practice towards resource oriented approaches in theory and everyday life (with one focus on university life), develop awareness strategies on personal-, university- and community levels, self-advocacy competences, and peer support competences.

2. Invitation from AFA

In January 2018, following an invitation from AFA and the acceptance of a Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts COS transnational Network Grant, StARG had the opportunity to stay in Ananda, and the chance to meet the people who live and work there, sharing a few days of life with each other, and reflect on the new Supported Living Project.

3. Our connections with AFA

AFA has been a very important founding member of the international Circle of Support (COS) transnational network, established at Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts in 2004, with members from India, England, Denmark and Sweden. The aim was to develop theory-practice modules in universities and NGOs for the development and evaluation of micro networks, supporting people on the autistic spectrum in life situations they want but could not fully accomplish on their own.

StARG is a spin-off or offshoot, of COS-transnational with the focus on Self Advocacy, Peer Support and resource oriented autism approaches and research.

4. Preparation for the expert visit

After receiving the invitation and before the visit a half day StARG-meeting was arranged with all members.

Discussions focused around topics of housing and living with autistic perceptions of the world, respecting the fact that each person with autism is unique and has different needs. The diversity of StARG allowed reflections on broad experiences concerning the structure of housing: from respite in closed institutions, living in semi-institutional settings like students' hostels, still living in parents' family, living in supported small group homes, living on one's own with support when needed, to living independently on one's own, with a partner or with one's own family and children.

Other topics were about mastering difficulties in social situations in one's own private living space and in the neighbourhood, and the challenges evolving out of one's hypo- and/or hyper-sensitivities.

5. Journey to Ananda

With our individual experiences and the oral presented experiences of our preparatory discussion meeting, four members of StARG set off for the 12 hour train and air journey to India. First Impressions on our arrival at Delhi Airport: hectic, chaos, then getting delighted by spotting familiar welcoming faces and getting relaxed when picked up by the director of AFA, along with a resident and a volunteer.

Leaving the airport we were visually confronted by glass-fronted office towers like in all big cities, showing wealth of a few and simultaneously the extreme poverty of so many others. After sometime the landscape changed. When we reached the Haryana area, we were amazed at a countryside which we didn't expect so near

Delhi, the hills and mustard fields and farms, country roads, and little villages.

6. Arriving at Ananda

One last turning into a small road and we discovered the view of big buildings as we approached our destination: Ananda. A wrought-iron gate opened and we met the project manager and some other people from Ananda. At first glimpse we saw the big residential building, another building opposite, marked as computer Centre and used for education and meeting rooms as the Manager explained to us, a lawn with chairs for sitting outside, further buildings a bit further away, still under active construction with some people working there; a garden and vegetable field a bit further away, with people busy watering the plants. Nice looking hills developed in our heads a desire for walks! Everything seemed busy in a relaxed and welcoming way.

7. The House

The AFA director gave us an introductory tour of the house and introduced us to the people, living and working there. We entered the house via a small terrace and took the staircase up. We passed long corridors which were ideal for walking, running, and skating within the house, walked past empty rooms and were shown our rooms for the stay. Nice, cosy beds for a short rest after a long journey. But before that, we were keen to see the whole house and meet the people whose guests we were going to be for a few days.

We entered a big communal lounge with chairs, sofas, TV, cupboards. At that time there were five residents living in the house, each having his individual room, opening onto the communal area.

We entered the big kitchen leading into a dining room, which is open all day and also used for talks, meetings, gatherings. Both rooms give a feeling of openness and welcoming warmth.

Up another flight is a big roof top terrace with a fantastic view over the rural, hilly countryside.

8. The People

When we arrived in the communal room, the residents were there and we had the chance to say our first hello to each other and also to the four members of staff (two male, two female). We all were a bit nervous, but meeting each other helped to keep a relaxed atmosphere, an atmosphere of togetherness and individuality; also a mirror of an obviously good and trusting relationship

between supporters and residents which made a situation like this possible.

After meeting in the communal area it was time for our first meal together, getting to know each other a bit more. Here we met the cook and enjoyed her delicious food. By that time we had met all the people presently living and working in Ananda: four fulltime and one part-time resident on the autistic spectrum, four members of support-staff, one Volunteer, and the AFA director.

Our Meeting Schedule for the following days was:

- A meeting and discussion group around the theme of independent living, supported living, with interested professionals, friends of AFA, and participating guests.
- A team meeting at Ananda and discussions arising from the housing and living situation in the project, and using examples of everyday life situations.
- A team meeting at the AFA Jasola Centre about supported living, transition from family-living to supported living outside the family home etc.
- StARG members meeting every evening to reflect on the day and take notes of their experiences as participant observers.

9. Main Points from our discussion groups and our participant observation

A. Transition

Both residents and staff, have entered a transition phase from former living situations to living and working in Ananda, which involves new surroundings, new people, new human interactions, new structures. That means particular attention needs to be paid to this transition period in which people on the autistic spectrum who have spent their whole lives with families and were not necessarily able to make their own decisions, become accustomed to living away from their families and surroundings.

Some of the points of our fruitful discussions, interactions, conversations were around: How do the residents perceive their new life. What does the transition mean for each of them? How do the staff members perceive their new working field?

Residents in transition

Thoughts for reflecting on the transition process of each individual resident.

How does s/he like:

- The new home

- Her/His own room
- The sitting room
- The kitchen and the dining/meeting room
- Other places in the house
- The working places
- The bathrooms
- The farmland
- The walks
- The other people around her/him (Sociogram)

Further:

- The movement radius of each of the residents inside / outside the house, wide countryside, locked doors
- The structure of the day
- The food and food preparation, experience cooking, house work
- The work
- The free time activities
- What is her/his interest
- What does he like and doesn't like, etc.

b. Staff in transition

How do **staff** members perceive their new work?

- The new building, working conditions, premises, rooms
- New tasks and challenges
- Working in a small team
- Getting to know each other
- Getting to know the Residents
- Professional decisions:
 - ~ Supporting versus deciding/ determine what people do
 - ~ Flexibility vs strong rules
 - ~ Personal closeness vs professional distance
 - ~ Mutuality vs hierarchy, dominance

B. Resource oriented support

We discussed what resource oriented support means for each individual actor in the field. How to develop relationships with the realisation of interdependence and mutual learning and learning from each other? How to keep the warm, human atmosphere between the individuals inside and outside the building and in the future as well, with the development of the project.

C. Each Individual resident has different needs. It is important to take them into account

- One person is a runner away and tends to wander away. Therefore doors to the outside have to be locked, which affects everybody else. None of the residents can go out whenever they want to, to have the chance to

explore their environment. Self-determination is restricted. Everybody needs to ring the bell, when coming from outside (not so good for residents with acoustic over sensitivities). Somebody has to open and lock the outside door after a person. The professional task is to find out, what it means for the residents and how one could broaden their options for motor activities and exploring the country side.

- One person is frightened of cows and therefore doesn't like to go out of the house and the grounds. He stays alone in the common room, when the others go for walks or picnics. What does that mean for him? Does he feel left out, or relaxed to be on his own? He isn't frightened within the Ananda area, so outdoor activities are possible. He liked the bonfire very much. How far does he walk towards the hill before he gets frightened?

In this discussion the question that presented itself: What about introducing COS again? We saw that if he has a Circle of Support, he goes out. Another thought: Is he frightened of a little calf? What about a little motherless calf in the Ananda Grounds he is responsible for feeding etc.?

- One person can sing an English song with all words, and it is obvious that he understands the words. In everyday situations he doesn't speak very much. An opportunity for developing self-esteem and spoken language?
- One person wants to watch just one television music channel. How can one broaden this interest? One possibility was dancing. Given the impulse, everybody started dancing and had fun. Discussions developed: The special interest of one affects all the others who have to cope with it, whether they like it or not. How can one build more win-win situations like the dancing?
- One person is very noisy and active, he seems to have much more energy than he can get rid of in the house. What further activities could exhaust his energy: jogging, punch bag, home trainer.
- One person is very quiet and withdrawn, likes books. Does he need a quiet room? Bookshelf in his room? Audio books (and the written version) in his room or with head phones in the common room?

D. When designing/configuring the living space it is important to take into account the differing needs of every autistic person

- Each person in Ananda has got a room for himself but does not use it for social withdrawal. The doors of the room were open all day. All rooms were more or less furnished the same.

- We discussed it in the team and the question of how residents could be involved in the furnishing of their own room and environment.
- Who decides what individual rooms and shared spaces look like?
- Many people on the autistic spectrum have sensory sensitivities. They might be sensitive to bright light, noises caused by certain kinds of light bulbs, bright colours, loud noises, heat or cold, amongst others. Not having those needs met can cause extreme distress.
- On the other hand, there are also autistic individuals who have a low sensory sensitivity and might want stronger visual stimuli like bright colours in their living space.
- As, obviously, no two autistics are the same and sensory needs and sensitivities vary wildly, it is very important to individuals to be as much as possible in control of their living space.
- The ability to be in control of one's living space gives a sense of independence, of being in charge of one's own life and of being taken seriously.
- On the other hand, for those who are not interested in configuring their living spaces, and some for whom too many choices are overwhelming, alternative options like pre-furnished rooms or guidance in navigating different options could be offered.
- The planned projects (fitness-room, PC-rooms, swimming pool, vegetable garden, place for a bonfire) are a good perspective for the future

E. Staff

- We have particularly positive memories of staff. Very human and friendly atmosphere. Warm and supporting relations, sensitive comments and corrections, humour. Atmosphere of togetherness, community and appreciation between the team and the residents
- All members of the Team: open minded, motivated, engaged, interested
- Attitude of acceptance and appreciation
- Individualised TEACCH plans were developed for all tenants. The implementation of these personalised plans and the mastering of it showed that they gave a good orientation and how proud the individual was to do activities on one's own. Examples were personal care, folding washed clothes etc.; motoric activities, e.g. running a certain amount of rounds, calming down, when over-excited. TEACCH schedules and systems have been helpful to getting on, having fun and being oneself. What we also discussed

was to use structure as a tool towards a better orientation in life. Use TEACCH in a manner that reflected flexibility and not too rigidly.

- Person oriented approach (the individual is in the centre and not the autism), based on a consequently humanistic value system

F. Aspects we discussed in the team meetings in the framework of possibilities of improvement

- In some cases, there can be more arrangements to individually support the resident in developing further his strength: Potential is not always fully used; using the potential as a strength and resource, e.g. providing support to the individual in broadening his musical interest / providing offers for broadening motoric activities, e.g. jogging etc.)
- Providing more offers to the residents so that they can explore and increase their levels of self-sufficiency and eventually improve their positive self-concept (e.g. involvement in cooking, grocery shopping etc.)
- Providing more opportunities to the residents, that they can actively participate and bring in own wishes and interests within the structured framework (furnishing individual rooms, participation in the development of daily meal plans)
- Providing opportunities to improve or explore more ways of communicating that the individual can get to know different ways of expressing themselves.
- Providing learning arrangements on the basis of individual interests and strengths
- Balancing between self-determination and external structures (question of locked doors, question of TV programme and when to switch on and off (providing niches for self-determination)
- Shiny and reflecting floors, which can be very irritating, when surroundings are mirrored on it; proposal perhaps carpets
- Lighting: Proposal: Systems to adjust the lighting, light-dimmer-system, from very light to darker, from white to yellow (cold light to warm light)
- Doorbell is very noisy, when one want to rest: Proposal: Wireless Doorbell connected with additional optical signal (light); additional wireless door opener
- Corridors and activities: There is a lot of space for walking, running, skating in the house (long corridors are quadratic shaped and involve a long distance. Activities in the floors are part of the day activities. We liked that arrangement and thought it might be best not to block the corridors, before people have a chance to

get lots of motoric activities in the planned gym and the outside areas.

- Kitchen, Dining room: Noise intensive floors. Noisy chairs. Proposal: Felt pad for legs of chairs

G. Transition, parents and video surveillance

We were shocked when we saw the camera in the common room and the transmission of all activities on monitors. The sitting room has cameras and can be observed on a monitor in another place.

We questioned it as infringement of privacy. What about peoples' dignity, self-determination? What are the pros and cons?

We learnt that the cameras were installed by parents' wish. They have had their children at home before, have cared for them, lived for them from their birth, and now they are out of the house. Parents want to see their children. They miss them.

The detachment process, leaving the parents' house is a very emotional life experience for families on one hand but every person has a human and ethical right to move towards adulthood, moving out of parents' or any other hidden surveillance. Parents have to let go their children, even children one has had cared for over a very long time.

H. Surrounding country, outer community

The Living project is situated in a good location: unspoiled nature, good air, tranquillity.

- **Advantage:** The Countryside is very relaxing without Delhi pollution, nice for walking and contemplation and very near Delhi.
- **Disadvantage:** But it also means more difficult to use community infrastructure as in town and
- The question was how to develop connections with the surrounding community, the village and the farmhouses.

I. How to prevent institutionalisation and stigmatisation and how to develop diversity structures, creativity, and support enjoyment of life? Supported living versus danger of big institutionalising settings

When we discussed Ananda we also reflected that it is very big. Spontaneous associations with a big, anonymous, place with lots of people, are that of institutionalization and segregation from the mainstream society. There are still lots of these big institutions in Germany with their unavoidable institutionalised time

tables and day structures; segregation from other communities; restrictions on self-determination.

A big institution is no place most people would like to live in for a long time and it is difficult to really call it a home. There is a danger of it being counter-productive to self-determination, will demand following institutionalized rules and structures, will develop an artificial culture and community.

We have had lively and enthusiastic discussions in Ananda and AFA about how one could develop not an institution but a home, not a segregated and isolated place but a lively and heterogeneous meeting spot of lots of different people:

Ananda should be an empowering, resource oriented community living place not a big Institution with its de-powering, deficit oriented and stigmatizing structure.

As one StARG member put it:

- My idea is to live in a diverse, inclusive community where there is no differentiation like 'normal' and 'deviant'
- A place where people can be but also withdraw if they need to.
- A place where I can be myself and where I can develop my potentials
- A place where autistic persons find home, respect, chances to be in the middle of the activities or find places to withdraw, a place with stimulation and room for contemplation.

Quo Vadis Ananda: Discussions for the future, How can autistic persons find home, respect, chances to be in the middle of the activities or find places to withdraw, a place with stimulation and room for contemplation? It was exciting to develop visions and future plans and everybody was enthusiastically involved in all these discussions. Proposals were:

- Renting out some rooms for meetings and conferences, for inclusive creative activities, and workshops performances of artists from Delhi or other places (national, international)
- Rooms for 'autistic students and researchers in residence'
- Creating an inclusive high standard rooftop tea room for visitors (and accommodation for a few guests) who come from Delhi or other nearby places to enjoy unpolluted air and a lovely countryside for hikes.

- Placements for volunteers who engage with residents, in the house, workshops, farm and gardens etc
- Developing COS-Transnational India, and StARG India, in the premises of Ananda

Providing simple situations for meetings, coming together in everyday situations, going for walks, teas and picnics under a very welcoming, old tree nearby, bonfires outside the house. Everybody from the house came to the bonfire evenings and enjoyed this event in the open air, communicating in different ways, having little snacks, admiring the fire, the sky and the stars which seemed to be so nearby; experiences one can't have in a big city with all the pollution and all night illumination. Eating, dancing, communicating in different ways, having intensive and sometimes very long discussions, these were the activities StARG members liked very much.

What we saw as a very big chance was that we got involved in the Journey of Ananda nearly right from the beginning. We met the first residents of the house in the middle of their transition towards a new living situation Ananda has so many potentials for becoming an inclusive place of diversity and human and natural pluralism and richness, something very special and full of joy of live.

We all sent our energy to make it happen.
A very hearty thank you, danke and dhanyavaad!

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Over 96% of Government Websites *Hide Disabled Men and Women* on their Site...

Sarah Turner



Disabled people are almost non-existent on government and stock-photos websites, and when they are represented, they are not represented as whole individuals, but are only showed for their disability. We crawled the internet and looked at more than 500 government websites from around the globe and what we found was shocking! While around 50% do show physically disabled people in images, only less than 4% have them on non-health and wellness related pages.

Governments aren't the only ones at fault here. Stock photo websites, like Shutterstock, do not tag disabled people as actual people, but only for their disability.

We call on governmental and stock photos websites to include disabled people and start treating as whole individuals, with varied lives and interests, and no to focus only on their disability.

Disability is far from the taboo it was in previous centuries. Today, this valued section of society is afforded the same rights and concern as those who are physically able. However, when it comes to representation, the disabled community is still severely overlooked, and more often than not, all that is focused on is their disability. While they are 'valued', by focusing only on their disability, we hinder their full integration into society. Nowhere is this more prevalent than online; even on government websites – organizations responsible for ensuring equality – there is a significant lack of disabled people.

To explore this phenomenon, we researched over 500 government websites from all corners of the map. Our investigation unveiled that a majority of the websites tested had no photos of the disabled at all within its online pages. In many countries, this means that disabled citizens remain completely unacknowledged by their governing state. These people, who contribute to society and should enjoy the same human rights, deserve to be better represented. In a world that strives for equality, the disabled still suffer from a systemic prejudice that remains overlooked by most – which brings us on to a more worrying figure:

Less than 4% Showed Disabled People on Non-Medical Pages

Furthering our investigation, we also broke down where on the website disabled people appeared. Unfortunately, for the majority of the examples, they existed on health and medical pages, which once again pigeonholes the disabled and shuns them from complete social acceptance. The discovery that *less than 4% of the pictures existed on non-medical pages* was shocking in some ways, but you just have to browse a few sites to be faced with the reality of the situation.

In other words, as far as government websites are concerned, disabled people exist only to further push medical conditions and concerns.

Out of the 502 websites we explored, only a mere 24 showed photos of disabled people on non-medical pages.

However, even these instances came with some notable issues. None of those found were on the website homepage. In fact, most existed in blog posts discussing a specific organization or person. For example, some Brazilian websites did include articles about the Paralympics. However, aside from pages about the Paralympics, there were no mentions or images of disabled individuals on the website. Even this shows the tendency to shun people with a disability by separating them into a different echelon of society.

The Global Spread of This Exclusion Crisis

Glancing at these figures, you may assume its countries with lower economic status and reduced human rights that are guilty of this online prejudice against the disabled. However, the spread of the results tells a different story. *No pattern exists that determines why the representation of the disabled is globally so low.*

Those who do boast some inclusion include:

- Superpowers such as Russia and the USA
- South American countries: Chile, Brazil, and Argentina
- Japan, Myanmar, India, Malaysia, and Hong Kong in Asia
- Canada and Australia.

However, as we explored numerous government departments for each place, it’s also important to note that no country showed ubiquitous inclusion. Though the US fared well on some sites, *an alarming amount of official state websites included no photos of disabled citizens* at all. The following were all guilty of marginalization: Texas, Alabama, Virginia, Michigan, Utah and many more. Other offenders included the Whitehouse website, plus Australia’s ‘my.gov’ domain and business website.

Perhaps more worryingly, *numerous countries failed to provide any representation on their official government site* – including Taiwan, Slovakia, and even France. Considering some of these examples are members of the EU, this oversight is indefensible.

Metrics Vs Morality

After establishing the reality of this problem, the next step is that we must ask ‘why?’ *Why is this clear exclusion of a vast segment of society occurring?* Are governments acting out of sheer prejudice, or is there a more nuanced explanation? The answer may lie in marketing. State-run websites – like any websites – are powered by metrics. Webmasters tirelessly review



Over 96% of Government Websites exclude disabled men and women from non-health related pages

Despite being a significant part of society, disabled individuals have been failed by governments when it comes to representation. Less than half of the websites we tested contained pictures of those with a handicap.

This needs to change NOW!

stats to ensure their domain is reaching as many people as possible. Herein lies the potential problem when it comes to representation.

Reason #1: Catering to the Majority

It's true that most countries have what can be described as a 'social norm' – a stereotyped idea of how the average citizen looks. *When creating content that aims to resonate with a wide audience, it's sensible to aim for this social majority.* Whether this refers to race, hair color, size or – as in this case – abilities and disabilities, it's a common problem that can quickly isolate those in minority groups.

Reason #2: Fewer Conversions

Somewhat similarly, disabled individuals could be left out of website photos thanks to the domain review process. If government organizations perform A/B tests on their site, *it may be the case that images of disabled individuals encourage fewer conversions and, therefore, reduce the perceived success of the web page.*

However, local authorities have a responsibility to their citizens. Eradicating representation for a large chunk of society is an inexcusable trade for improved website metrics.

Reason #3: Supply & Demand

Governments globally have a responsibility to affect the public narrative. Arguing that there is no demand for better representation in images is superfluous, as it's these decisions that dictate what society finds acceptable. *Normalizing the use of diverse photographs, including individuals from all walks of life, is the only way to create an expectation for inclusion.* Right now, we are so used to seeing a narrow representation on state websites that users aren't even aware of the problem. The aim should be to create a demand for equal representation, not to bend to the systemic prejudices already in place.

The Role of Stock Photo Websites

While governments have a responsibility to vet their websites for this problem properly, the fault doesn't lie entirely with them. Most photos online come from stock photo sites such as Shutterstock. These domains offer royalty-free images that companies can use without fear of copyright infringement. The search features on these sites unintentionally dictate the aesthetics of most of the web. If pictures of disabled people don't exist or aren't tagged under the right keywords, then content creators won't use them on their web pages.

To test this theory, we searched a variety of different keywords – including 'happy person,' 'person smiling,' and 'happy face.' None of these popular tags featured photos of disabled individuals.



Despite scrolling through numerous pages, we were unable to unearth any examples. If you look at the stock photos, an idea emerges – only able-bodied people can be happy, and there is no such thing as a 'happy disabled person.'



However, a quick search of 'person in wheelchair' revealed that plenty of images of happy disabled people do exist – so what's the problem? A quick review of the tags along the bottom quickly highlights the issue:

- wheelchair • isolated • person • old • age • care
- elder • health • insurance • elder • invalid • senior
- rolling • wheelchair-bound • white • woman • one

Despite the fact this woman is happy and smiling, the keywords linked to the photo revolve solely around her disability and age. Because of this, the picture won't ever show up in general searches and is unlikely to be used on non-medical web pages.

She only exists as a medical condition. She's only an older, disabled woman...an invalid even according to these tags!

To further flesh this out, we wanted to do a test. We took eight popular stock photo sites and typed in 'happy people.' We wanted to see how long it took for us to get to a picture of a happy disabled person.

* Please note, if nothing was found past page 5, we stopped looking. No one really looks past page 5.

Shutterstock: No
Deposit Photos: No
Stock Unlimited: No
iStock: pg. 5 (1 image)

Adobe Stock: No
Big Stock: No
Pexels: No
Getty: No

*We'd like to note that for a majority of these photo stock websites, we saw images people of all ages, gender, religion, and races being represented. We even saw images of happy pets!

*While you cannot always tell from an image if a person has a disability, for example – hearing impaired, there are many images where it is possible to differentiate between an able-bodied person and a non. It is the government's job to have images that feature disabled people. This will also help the small boy who is hearing impaired feel that they are being included because there IS someone with a disability featured, even if it isn't their own.

If we're ever going to achieve equality online, resource catalogs like Shutterstock have just as much responsibility for changing the current prejudiced status quo. We urge all photo stock services to ensure disabled people are labeled properly and fairly. If they are happy, make sure to label them as such!

Government Websites Have a Responsibility to Promote Inclusion: A Guide

The statistics regarding representation of the disabled on government websites are worrying, but the real issue is the scope of the problem. While liberal first-world countries still fail to provide visibility for disabled citizens, little hope exists in creating a universal solution. Ableism is rife in society, and while government organizations purport it, this unfair prejudice will never change.

It's easy to cast aside these issues as meaningless, but it's undeniable that media has an incredible effect on how we see the world. Shunning valuable factors of society from these outlets is equally as destructive as excluding them in the real world. We have a responsibility to ensure disabled people, and other minorities, are given the visibility they deserve.

Here's what government websites need to do:

- Add an image that includes a person with a disability on the homepage or a heavily trafficked page.
- Do not just include people who are in a wheelchair, but also include the hearing impaired and blind.
- Maintain oversight to ensure men and women from all the different parts of the community are included.

What Can You Do?

- Let your local government know that this type of treatment will no longer be tolerated. In a world where we need to be inclusive of individuals from all walks of life, this can no longer continue.
- Share this article on Facebook, tweet it on Twitter – let other people know what is going on.
- If you have a website, include images of disabled people in NON-disability related stories, like what we did here.
- Together we can put pressure on governments and stock photo websites to stop this online discrimination from continuing.

This article was published on 4 July 2018 on <https://www.websiteplanet.com/blog/government-websites-exclude-disabled-men-and-women-from-non-health-related-webpages/>



How Government Websites can be More Inclusive of Handicapped People

Step 1
Add images of handicapped people on homepage and other high trafficked pages

Step 2
Include a variety of handicapped people, not just someone in a wheelchair

Step 3
Maintain oversight & guarantee that all images are inclusive moving forward

Share this and let your local government know this treatment will no longer be tolerated

Autism and the Pursuit of Happiness

Ray Hemachandra

Part 5: You as Autism or You as You

(This six-part series is adapted from a talk the author gave at the Autism and the Pursuit of Happiness Conference in North Carolina in the United States. Parts 1 & 2- 'Accept or Reject' and 'Grieve or Live' and Parts 3 & 4- 'Support or Save' and 'Acceptance or Self-Acceptance', were published in the April 2018 and August 2018 issues of Autism Network respectively)

The fifth value contrast I want to talk about, one that addresses an issue shared by parents of autistic children and autistic adults, and also the one most awkwardly worded right now, is: YOU AS AUTISM OR YOU AS YOU.

When I was working on this part of the presentation, my autistic son Nicholas was playing the old electronic game Simon—the original Simon game from around 1980. It's a memory game. It has four large buttons with lights in different colors, each with a unique note, arranged in a grid on a circular board. So you have a mix of senses—distinct touch spatially, sound, and color—involved, assisting your thinking brain in repeating a lengthening challenge.

The buttons flash and make a sound in a random pattern, and the player presses the buttons to repeat back the pattern, which gets one beat longer on every turn and which intermittently plays faster and faster. Nicholas was getting scores of 12, 16, 8—good scores, mostly, but he was just messing around.

I was hoping to use video clips of my son in the talk, so I said to him, "Buddy, I need you to have a good game for my presentation." He looked up at me. I turned on my iPhone's video camera. He looked down at the game. He played. Nicholas maxed out the game at 31 on the hardest level, which he had never done before and which is, I can tell you, very hard for anyone to do: 99 percent of people would not be able to do it no matter how many times they played.

And Nicholas did it simply because I asked him to have a good game. Otherwise he would have just kept messing around—and had an excellent time doing so. It would be so easy, and so common, to say: Nicholas is great at Simon *because of his autism*. Similarly, we

could say that Nicholas remembers and insists upon doing things in the exact specific 'right' way they 'need' to be done—*because of his autism*. Nicholas can't carry on much of a substantive neurotypical conversation—*because of his autism*. When Nicholas would tantrum years ago or be self-injurious—again, *because of his autism*. When he fixates on something and becomes very good at it, like juggling, when he has an intense fear of the water, or when he overcomes his intense fear of the water due to his own obsessive determination: all *because of his autism*.

Parents do this all the time. My child has meltdowns because of his autism. My child isn't potty trained ... lines up all the bottles in the bathroom ... doesn't talk ... is afraid of animals ... or *doesn't show love for me*, because of her autism.

Professionals do it, too. Your child is this way, does this or that, can't do this or that, *because of her or his autism*.

But let's pause here.

Many non-autistic people have behavior issues, are math whizzes, have OCD preferences and dislikes, are socially inept, aren't demonstrative about love, are self-injurious, or are good at Simon.

So is your child—or are you—this way or that way because you're autistic? No. That's really meaningless. You're this way because you're you. There are tendencies and traits common within the autism community, yes, that's because those very traits are exactly how we define and diagnose and identify the community.

People who are like this and that and the other thing are labeled autistic. But it is still just a label. It is randomly assigned and a convention.

We could shift those conventions and so shift the population we call autistic. We *have*, in fact, at different times shifted those conventions. People suddenly are or aren't autistic because of a change in diagnostic definition or systemic evaluation approach. In certain spiritual traditions, labels indicate—or, rather, create or even are intended to create—differentiation. They mark something as separate from oneself. They are used to distinguish oneself from other parts of reality.

So, if autism itself is actually anything, it's a group of individual people who have been collectivized, largely by others using a label whose definition is basically random.

Perhaps there are advantages to certain collectivizations. Collectivized labels and groupings, randomly assigned due to circumstance and culture, exist in countless aspects of our lives: think countries, cities, and towns, fans of sports teams, ethnic and racial designations, schools, or even within schools advanced classes and resource—special-education—classes. These labels can foster identity and culture and a sense of belonging. They also can create a sense of otherness—the other—that can lead to bullying, ostracization, separation, discrimination, and, far too often in human history as well as in the modern world, hatred and violence.

We sometimes stop thinking of individuals as individuals but as ideas, as caricatures of collective identities. This effect can happen both outside a population and inside of it. It most certainly can happen in the thinking of those closely bound around a collective identity—including parents of autistic people. A person can take pride and have a sense of identity in a grouping, and that's wonderful. There's a strength in community, a belonging, taking pride in identity, sharing commonalities, and defying and overcoming together pejorative associations and meanings. But ultimately, regardless of all the labels and the assumptions they create, you're you.

You are the one who is good at math or at recognizing patterns, who is socially quiet or whose senses might overload at a gathering. Whether or not you are autistic. You can't separate the autism out from your child—or from you, if you're autistic. But you also cannot define yourself or the child as autism. It is, instead, part and parcel.

Parents often subsume their child in autistic identity. So do teachers, therapists, and others. Doing so usually means stripping away individuality and employing depersonalized, collective, generalized approaches for collective, depersonalized 'best outcomes', rather than honoring the individual person, the individual circumstances, and the individual life.

Parents can also strip their child of autistic identity: autism as something outside that has happened to the child. To go back to Part 1 of this talk: accept the child, reject the autism. It is equally common, and it is just as injurious as a denial of a child's whole personhood. In fact, although conceptually they are in some ways opposite kinds of thinking, in practice subsuming a child in autistic identity while rejecting and trying to remove that child's autism is extremely common, very tragically for each of those children and for their families, as well.

Autism and the Pursuit of Happiness

Part 6: Independence or Connection

(This six-part series is adapted from a talk the author gave at the Autism and the Pursuit of Happiness Conference in North Carolina in the United States. Parts 1 & 2- 'Accept or Reject' and 'Grieve or Live' and Parts 3 & 4- 'Support or Save' and 'Acceptance or Self-Acceptance', were published in the April 2018 and August 2018 issues of Autism Network respectively)

The final value contrast I want to highlight is INDEPENDENCE OR CONNECTION.

Again, these values aren't necessarily opposites at all. But they are competing values in emphasis by parents, families, support agencies, and general communities.

For many autistic children, we spend their whole childhoods trying to help them build connections and bridges—trying to foster relationships that carry meaning for all involved—with primary and extended family, friends, teachers, therapists, and people in the community. And, sometimes just when those efforts are finally getting some traction and having success, we see the transition to adulthood arrive.

And we flip. Instead, we now hope our children need not rely on anyone. We decide we need to promote their independence.

We need to reduce or eliminate supports so these children or young adults can achieve independence—so they can live more common adult lives, lives that in contemporary culture mean relying on no one but themselves.

But again we should be compelled to ask ourselves what normative looks like—and why it holds value. Or, rather, who it holds value for. What are we working toward and why? Is someone's best, happiest life necessarily the one in which they fit in the most and live the most commonly?

Is achieving independence always the best for these autistic adults, or is it often what's best for us? Of course both may be true, but we are obligated to be clear that we are not confusing the one for the other. In emphasizing independence for autistic adults, not simply as a tool of equipment but as goal and outcome,

we undermine much of what we've been working toward together throughout childhood. We create a goal that fosters isolation. Many autistic adults are isolated and lonely.

Independence as a guiding principal has implications across the spectrum of adulthood. It emphasizes stripping away supports that might contribute to happiness. It limits choices in multiple areas by giving them a requirement that an individual might not be able to meet. In other words, you can play in these arenas only if you can do so on your own.

It potentially impacts, to name just a few important areas:

- what relationships are possible for someone and if they're navigated freely and safely, or if they're avoided
- where someone lives and with whom
- sexuality—autistic people have sexual identities that need expressing, and sexual and romantic relationships are truly only healthy and fully realized in an interdependent context
- how and if people participate in community or if they are isolated
- career—are autistic people steered toward what they enjoy, what gives substance and meaning to their specific lives, or simply toward what is most available and practical ... and likely what other autistics do
- what family relationships look like in adult life.

As in childhood, in adulthood parental and community messages about living are best generated, delivered, and received when coming from places of love and hope, not fear. We all make better choices from a place of love, rather than a place of fear.

With children, as parents we're better able to assess honestly, to change course, and above all to listen—to respect the individuality of the human being we're helping to raise—from that place of love and hope.

Rather than striving to create independence, we should try to build agency in autistic people, as in all people, and then embrace and build a *shared* concept and guiding principle of life interdependence—not dependence, not independence, but mutuality, reciprocity, interactive ties of belonging and support, respect and love.

To be sure, it's not easy. In contemporary society, non-autistic, neurotypical adults often struggle to achieve interdependence in their relationships. It can be thought

of as weakness. It can be interpreted and felt as making you vulnerable, even though I think it actually makes you much stronger.

Also, some autistic adults might prefer independence to interdependence, simply because they have been burned too often by violations of trust, especially when, as children, they were wholly dependent on others who may have largely failed them.

To be sure, I absolutely respect their ability to choose: again, agency must be theirs, because their lives are theirs, not ours, not mine, not yours.

Without question the autistic adult should be the driver of values then and the primary creator of her or his own adult life. That always has primacy: Autistic adults get to express who they are and who they want to be.

But in many families, just like families of non-autistic children, those values reflect the familial culture. So our values matter and should be determined, expressed, and lived purposefully, consciously, with genuine care — thought about, talked about, and realized with intention.

If you are a parent of an autistic child, you realize and hope: that as an adult, like as a child, your child will grow beyond your vision with individual experiences and perspectives that form a life with some shared parts—interdependent, if we are lucky—but that is still lived uniquely.

What gives an autistic adult her or his best chance at happiness isn't different at all from what gives an autistic child her or his best chance at happiness, which again isn't different at all from what gives a non-autistic child her or his best chance at happiness: a lived culture of family and community that *ripples* with values and practices of kindness, support, interdependence, respect, acceptance, and love.

Ray Hemachandra is an autism writer, speaker, and consultant and parent of an autistic teenage son. Ray serves on a half-dozen boards and committees in support of autism and disabled populations, and he has extensive experience as a trade show and conference speaker and interviewer. Ray has a professional background in business leadership. He has worked for newspaper, magazine, and book publishers, and he is the author of a Publishers Weekly Book of the Year and an Amazon Best Book of the Month. Read Ray's articles about autism and other topics at www.rayhemachandra.com

नेमो को ढूँढना

पारूल कुमथा

हिन्दी अनुवाद—पूजा खन्ना

उस बच्चे को ढूँढना जो अजनबियों के आस-पास बेचैन रहता है, आँख से संपर्क का अभाव है, उसका कम से कम सामाजिक कौशल है और जो आमतौर पर अत्याधिक प्रतिक्रिया देता है।

(बच्चे/ बच्चा शब्द का इस्तेमाल लेख में सुविधा के लिये किया गया है, एक ऑटिज्म वाले बच्चे अथवा व्यस्क को सूचित करने के लिए)

एक बहुत ही काल्पनिक शीर्षक के लिये मेरा माफीनामा, परन्तु इसका एक कारण है : जैसा कि फिल्म में था, इतनी बार, एक बच्चा। ऑटिज्म वाला विशेष बच्चा, दुनिया का पता लगाने के लिए प्रस्थान करता है और अपने सुरक्षात्मक घर, स्कूल या काम के क्षेत्र से भटक जाता है। हर मां-बाप यहां तक की हम में से वो जो ऐसे प्रत्यक्ष अनुभव न करने में सौभाग्यशाली रहे हैं, भी नेमो के पिता मारलिन की खोये हुए बच्चे को खोजने की तत्परता में कुछ भी कर जाने की ही सोच रखते हैं।

...हर बार इस बात का डर लिये की कुछ बहुत खराब ही हुआ होगा और यह खासकर सत्य प्रतीत होता है जब अधिकतर ऑटिज्म वाले लोगों के माता-पिता, जो नेमो के माता पिता से अलग नहीं है अपने छोटे बच्चों के लिये बहुत, बहुत, बहुत रक्षात्मक होते हैं।

इस परिदृश्य में जोड़ने के लिए मुम्बई की 29 मिलियन लोगों की जनसंख्या (आखिरी आकलन) से अव्यवस्था और हर कोने में विभिन्न तरह के छिपे हुए खतरे और तनाव सर के उपर से निकलता है जब कभी भी कोई बच्चा खोता है। फोरम फार ऑटिज्म (Forum for Autism) में अपने बहुत सारे खोयी व पायी घटनाओं को पूरा जिया है और सबसे महत्वपूर्ण

सीख यही है कि पहले चार घन्टे सबसे ज्यादा महत्वपूर्ण होते हैं। हमारे पास किशोरवस्था के पूर्व के बच्चे जल निकायों, पूल, नदी, समुन्दर, आदि की खोज में भटक गये हैं। व्यस्क लोकल ट्रेन में 3 दिन आवारागर्दी करते हुए और एक अवसर पर एक आदमी राज्य के बाहर एक पैसेंजर ट्रेन से निकल गया और दो दिन बाद उसे मध्य प्रदेश के घने जंगल वाले स्थान पर रेल की पटरी पर भरी रात में पाया गया। और एक अवसर पर एक अधेड़ व्यक्ति नाई की दुकान से निकल कर एक ऑटो रिक्शा में बैठ गया घर पैदल जाने के बजाय...

इसका परिणाम : फोरम फोर ऑटिज्म में हमें 'खोये और पाये' केस के विशेषज्ञों की अवाछनीय प्रतिष्ठा प्राप्त होती प्रतीत होती है। अधिकतर, हमारी खोज का खुशनुमा खात्मा हुआ है।

यह अन्य माता-पिता सहायता समूह व परिवारों में इस विशेषता को प्रसारित करने की कोशिश है।

औपचारिक पुलिस प्रक्रिया

1. माता-पिता सहायता समूह तथा अन्य संगठन जो ऑटिज्म/स्पेशल जरूरत वाले लोगों से जुड़े हैं को नियमित तौर पर बच्चे की फोटो को नवीनतम (अपडेट) बनाये रखना है (खासकर किशोरावस्था से पहले की उमर, जब विकास का उछाल होना ही है) : एक 10 इंच X 12 इंच पांच मेगापिक्सल और चार पासपोर्ट साईज की फोटो। इसकी खोये हुए व्यक्तियों के ब्योरों का विभाग को जरूरत होती है।

यह मुलायम प्रारूप (soft format) में हो सकती है और जरूरत के समय छापी जा सकती है।

2. पुलिस में उचित शिकायत नम्बर के साथ अपने

स्थानीय पुलिस थाना जहां आखिर में बच्चे को देखा गया था और स्थानीय पुलिस थाना जो आपके घर से सबसे पास है और बच्चे के स्कूल/काम की जगह से भी उस में शिकायत दर्ज करें। यह इसलिए क्योंकि आपका बच्चा घर या स्कूल। काम की जगह पर पहुंचने की कोशिश कर सकता है – उसके स्थायी मुलाकातों की जगह। अगर इनमें से कोई भी जगह पुलिस के अधिकार क्षेत्र की सीमा के बार्डर पर है, तो उस पड़ोसी पुलिस थाने में भी सूचना दें। शिकायत करते समय, एक फोटो (जैसा नाप उपर बताया गया है) और बच्चे के कपड़ों, पैदाईशी निशान व अन्य शरीर का विस्तार में वर्णन करें।

3. पुलिस शिकायत संख्या को लापता लोगों की बेबसाईट और लापता व्यक्ति ब्यूरो के केन्द्रीय कार्यालय में दर्ज करें। कुछ बड़े शहरों में यह बहुत सारे होंगे। उदाहरण तौर पर, मुम्बई में दक्षिण मुम्बई, पश्चिम उपनगर, पूर्वीय उपनगर, थाणे, नवी मुम्बई और कल्याण डोम्बीवली के लिए अलग-अलग है। परन्तु अगर शिकायत दक्षिण मुम्बई सेंटर में की गयी है, उसको उस विस्तार से जिससे स्थानीय परिवहन (ट्रेन) चलती है भेजा जाता है। जिसका मतलब अन्य सारे बताये गये सेंटर पर। अगर आप किसी संगठन का हिस्सा हैं तो इस प्रकार की सूचना का पता लगायें और अपने साथ आसानी से उपयोग के लिए रखें।

4. अपने शहर/नगर के सारे परिवहन व्यवस्था से संपर्क करें। सबके अपने खोये व्यक्ति वाले विभाग होते हैं और जहां एक औपचारिक प्रवेश करने की जरूरत होगी। मुम्बई में स्थानीय बस नेटवर्क, स्थानीय ट्रेन नेटवर्क और मेट्रो नेटवर्क है। साथ ही हम दूर के रेलवे नेटवर्क और राज्य परिवहन नेटवर्क तक भी पहुंचेंगे और यह हमें उन बच्चों के लिये तुरन्त करना होगा जो सफर ट्रेन से करते हैं और ट्रेन से आकर्षित हैं।

5. अगर 24 घन्टे तक बच्चे का पता न चले तो पुलिस से आगे की कार्यवाही के लिए संपर्क करें, बच्चे को खोया हुआ व्यक्ति दर्ज कराने के लिये। एक बार जब शिकायत खोये हुए लोगों के बेबसाईट पर

दर्ज हो जाती है, तब वो पूरे देश के थानों में चली जाती है। वो बदले में राज्य के रेलवे व सड़क परिवहन नेटवर्क से संपर्क करते हैं।

यह मान लीजिये कि पुलिस जब तक खोया हुआ व्यक्ति 24 घन्टे तक लापता रहता है तब तक पुलिस खोज उसे लापता नहीं मानती है, इसलिये जरूरी है कि समांतर खोज का संगठन किया जाये।

खुद की मदद की प्रक्रिया :

इसमें मां-बाप और ऑटिज्म वाले व्यक्ति के परिवार साथ में पड़ोसी और शुभचिंतक को मिलाकर खोजी दस्ता बनाना है। खोज की शुरुआत जितनी जल्दी हो सके शुरु करनी है, याद रहे कि पहले चार घंटे बहुत खास हैं क्योंकि तब तक बच्चा ज्यादा दूर नहीं भटका होगा।

मध्यमवर्गीय विश्वास/ धारणा के विपरीत, जितने ज्यादा लोग खोये हुये बच्चे के बारे में जानते होंगे, उतनी ही कम बच्चे के शोषण की सम्भावना है और उसके पता लगने की सम्भावना तेज।

6. खोये हुए बच्चे के उसकी फोटो के साथ पोस्टर छपायें जिसमें संपर्क करने का नम्बर हो अधिमानतः दोनों माता-पिता का नहीं। यह मां-बाप को और चिन्ता से बचाने के लिए अच्छा होता है।

7. पोस्टर को सामाजिक जालक्रम साइट (social networking sites) पर डालें एक प्रारंभ के साथ कि आप उस बच्चे को व्यक्तिगत रूप से जानते हैं।

8. लापता बच्चे के खास रुझान की तरफ ध्यान केंद्रित करें। हमारे बच्चों के अधिकतर ध्यान केंद्रित दिलचस्पियाँ होती हैं और शायद उसकी खोज में वो कहीं भटक रहे होते हैं। कुछ खास पसन्दीदा ट्रेन, जल निकाय पार्क और खाने पीने की जगह इत्यादि।

9. सार्वजनिक स्थान जहां बच्चा अक्सर जाता है वहां पोस्टर लगायें व बांटे। स्थिर खड़े लोग जैसे सब्जी वाला/फल वाला, चाटवाला टैक्सी / आटो स्टैंड वाला, इत्यादि को नजर रखने के लिए शामिल करें।

10. स्थानीय विशेष विद्यालय / सेंटर से संपर्क करें। यह आश्चर्य की बात नहीं है, मददगार लोग जो ऐसे भटकते हुए विशेष बच्चे को देखेंगे तो उसे वहां ले जायेंगे जहां उन्हें पता है ऐसे बच्चे जाते हैं, और वहां से उन्हें सबसे करीबी पुलिस थाने की तरफ भेज दिया जायेगा।

11. स्थानीय म्युनिसिपल / सरकारी अस्पताल से संपर्क करें। लापता बच्चे का विस्तृत विवरण उनके रिसेप्शन, दुर्घटना काउंटर पर छोड़ दें। यह अन्य ऐसी जगह है जहां शुभचिंतक भटके /बेतुके/घायल लोगों को ले जाते हैं।

12. इसी प्रकार किशोर बच्चों के सुधार गृह और मानसिक रूप से बीमार लोगों के गृह से संपर्क करें। (मुम्बई में फोरम फॉर ऑटिज्म का पता सुधार गृह को है और हमने उन्हें बुद्धिमता की कमी के किसी भी बच्चे के पहुंचने पर हमसे संपर्क करने को कहा है। हमने अन्दाजा लगाया है कि वह बच्चा अगर हमारे किसी सदस्य के परिवार का नहीं होगा, फिर भी हम उसे समझने में अधिकारियों से बेहतर स्थिति में होंगे। और हम अपने नेटवर्क का इस्तेमाल कर उस बच्चे के परिवार का पता लगाने की कोशिश कर सकते हैं)।

13. चाइल्ड लाइन (childline) से संपर्क करें। उनका नम्बर है 1079 उनकी एक प्रणाली है जिसके द्वारा उनकी टीम वहां पहुंच जाती है जहां परेशानी में बच्चा मिलता है। वो फिर बच्चे को उस स्थिति से हटाते हैं और अगर यह खोये बच्चे का मामला है, तब वो लापता लोगों की पुलिस शिकायत जांचते हैं और अगर परिवार का पता नहीं चलता तो बच्चे को सुधार गृह को सौंप देते हैं (फोरम फॉर ऑटिज्म की भी उनको जानकारी है।)

14. एन जी ओ (NGO) जो सड़क के बच्चों के साथ काम करते हैं भी मुम्बई जैसे शहर में एक बड़ी संपत्ति है और उनसे भी संपर्क किया जा सकता है।

15. केबल टीवी के लिये स्थानीय केबल ऑपरेटर से संपर्क करें। बड़े शहरों के बहुत झोपड़पट्टी वाले

इलाके अभी भी केबल टीवी पर आश्रित हैं। ऑपरेटरस आवश्यकतानुरूप दयालु होते हैं और फिल्म को बीच में बाधित कर उस पर ब्योरा दे देते हैं।

16. जहां से बच्चा गायब हुआ है वहां अखबार में एक पर्ची डाल दें। स्थानीय पेपर विक्रेता इच्छापूर्वक उसे अखबार के अन्दर बांटने में पहल कर देंगे।

17. टैक्सी और ऑटो यूनियन वालों से विस्तार वर्णन के साथ संपर्क करें।

18. एफ एम रेडियो वाले व्यक्ति से उसे हर घंटे बोलने के लिए संपर्क करें। बहुत सारी स्थानीय दुकानें और आटो वाले पूरे दिन एफ एम रेडियो चलाते हैं।

19. अगर आपका टी वी चैनलस में कोई जोर है, तो उन्हें स्क्रीन के नीचे स्क्रोल चलाने के लिए विनती करें।

20. बहुत सारी आवासीय समिति, दुकानें और मौल में सी सी टीवी कैमरा होता है। उनसे उन जगहों की फुटेज ले जहां आप बच्चे के भटकने की उम्मीद करते हैं।

अन्य सम्भावनाओं की खोज मुम्बई के एक अवसर का सामना किया जिसमें एक विशेष बच्चा दूसरी रात तक लापता था।

21. पैदल खोजी दस्तों ने उन जगहों को जांचा जैसे सार्वजनिक शौचालय और खाने पीने के जगह उन जगहों पर जहां उस व्यक्ति के होने की उम्मीद थी।

22. एक परिवार का सदस्य (इस केस, में मां) ने एक व्यक्तिगत संदेश उस व्यक्ति के लिये टैप किया, उसमें एक फोन नम्बर व उस स्थान को बांटा, जहां मां कह रही थी कि वो इंतजार कर रही है। (यह रिकार्ड एफ एम रेडियो पर भी चलाया जा सकता है) मुम्बई में हमने रिकार्ड किये हुए संदेश जक्शनों व चौक , खेल के मैदान और पार्क उन क्षेत्रों में बजाये है जिनसे वो व्यक्ति वाकिफ था। रात का समय कम भीड़ वाला व

शान्त समय एक परेशान स्पेशल व्यक्ति को ढूँढने के लिए होता है जो शायद किसी जानकार जगह को खाने/ सोने के लिए ढूँढ रहा होगा।

अधिकतर लापता व्यक्ति चार घण्टे के भीतर मिल जाता है। कभी-कभी घंटे के अन्दर और कभी कभी एक दो दिन में। परन्तु जब भी व्यक्ति 3 दिन से अधिक लापता होता है, तब फोरम के कुछ सदस्यों पर खुद को फौलाद बनाकर मुर्दा घर पहुंचने की जिम्मेदारी आ जाती है। हमारी कभी भी सकारात्मक यात्रा नहीं हुई है और हमें आशा है कि कभी न हो।

निवारक उपाय

फोरम फॉर ऑटिज्म में हम स्टैंड अलोन ट्रैकर और सेल फोन ट्रैकर पर भी छान-बीन कर रहे हैं। हमारे कुछ बच्चे दवा की खुराक और उस पर एक जानकारी का कार्ड अपने साथ लेकर चलते हैं। कुछ ब्रेसलेट या गले में चैन। कुछ अन्य की हर कमीज व टी-शर्ट के कालर पर विस्तार छपा हुआ होता है।

अलग-अलग बच्चों व उनके परिवार के लिए अलग-अलग चीजें काम करती हैं। आपके लिए क्या काम करता है उसकी खोज करें।

आपके बच्चे को कभी-भी भटकने की जरूरत न पड़े। परन्तु अगर ऐसा हो जाये, हो सकता है फोरम फॉर ऑटिज्म के सामूहिक अनुभव आपकी मदद करें।

(सुधा रंगनाथन की याद में, प्रसाद की माता जिन्होंने हमें एक खोये बच्चे को ढूँढने की योजना प्रक्रिया के रास्ते पर डाला ...दुर्भाग्यवश हमने अपनी संस्थापक को एक साईकिल दुर्घटना में 26 अगस्त 2018 को खो दिया)

एक साथ रखा गया पारूल कुमथा (कबीर की मां व प्रेसिडेंट, फोरम फार ऑटिज्म) द्वारा सामूहिक अनुभव पर आधारित, उनमें से बहुत को सुलेखा दोशी, (गीत की मां) व (राजेन्द्र क्षरिसागर) (राहुल के पिता) ने आकार दिया, दोनों सरकार के भीतर व आम जनता के खोजी दस्ते के गतिशील संगठन करने वाले।

<UPCOMING WORKSHOPS>

VENUE:

THE NATIONAL CENTRE FOR AUTISM, NEW DEHI

Empowering the Child with Autism

30 January - 1 February 2019

A workshop where Parents and Professionals will come together to learn and appreciate autism beyond theory.

Learn the practical approach to understand autism and how to implement various strategies.

•••••

Three-day Workshop for Parents and Professionals

3 - 5 July 2019

A workshop for parents and professionals to experience world from their child's perspective and explore approaches to enjoyable learning.

The workshop will explore the different and fascinating learning styles of children with autism.

This is a tentative events calendar and the dates and events are subject to change. Please stay in touch with us to get regular updates and let us know if you wish to be added to our mailing list to get updated information about AFA and our events. For more information contact our Coordinator:

Call: 011-40540991/92

email <anvay.trainings@gmail.com>

AFA invites applications for Special Needs Educators at Jasola Vihar

We are looking for individuals who love the excitement and challenge of mentoring individuals with autism spectrum conditions and social-communication challenges. If you have a sense of curiosity, high-energy and enthusiasm, and acceptance of diversity, then you are the perfect square pegs for square holes. You are creative and organized, yet have the ability to be hands on, be silly, get down on all fours, and learn while you teach.

We offer a positive and exciting work environment with exposure to international best practices, enriching interactions with leading Indian and international autism experts and opportunities for growth for the right candidates.

Visit Action For Autism, Pocket 7 & 8 Jasola Vihar,
New Delhi 110025 and speak to Salini.

Call +91 11 40540991/+91 11 40540992

Or drop us an email at positions.afa@gmail.com

AFA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Action For Autism(AFA) is a parent organization that strives to create an environment where individuals with autism and their families can live as fully participating members of the community.

To support AFA to further its mission, please complete the form below and return to: Action For Autism, The National Centre for Autism, Sector 7 & 8 JasolaVihar, New Delhi 110025.

Please complete in BLOCK letters and mail to Action For Autism

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Country _____ Pin/Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

I am a: (Check all that apply)

Mother Father Other (please specify) _____

Professional: Name of Organisation _____

For Parent of a person with autism ONLY:

Child's Name _____

Gender: Female Male Date of Birth _____
 dd mm yr

Diagnosis _____

Diagnosis received from _____

I wish to become a member of AFA. Enclosed is a contribution (Check as applicable)

Via: Cash Online Demand Draft
 (in favour of Action for Autism, payable at New Delhi)

Online Transaction/Draft No _____ Dated _____

Drawn on _____

Amount in Words _____

Annual Membership Charges:

Parent: Rs. 500 Professionals: Rs. 1000 Institutional: Rs. 3000

Online bank transfer may be made to:

Beneficiary: Action For Autism

Bank: Vijaya Bank, Defence Colony, New Delhi, India

SWIFT No: VIJBINBDDCD IFSC Code: VIJB0006005

MICR Code: 110029007

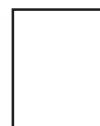
Savings A/C No:

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