



VASANTHAM e-Newsletter

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VASANTHAM Special School for the Mentally Challenged
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Happy New Year ☺



OUR VISITORS

- Two first year Diploma in Special Education (Mental Retardation) trainees from Balavihar Training School were posted in Vasantham for a period of 3 months.
- Montessori trainees from Little Hearts Fun School visited Vasantham.
- B.Sc (Nursing) students from Apollo College of Nursing
- Regular visits by volunteers from Swasam and Rotary Club of Rajeshwari College of Engineering

STALLS

- Stalls with products prepared by special children were displayed before Diwali at Symantec, iNautix, HSBC, Wipro and TI Cycles companies

OTHER EVENTS

- Parents teachers meeting
- Birthday celebrations of children
- Children met Mr. 'Crazy' Mohan on his birthday in October 2011



Vasantham's Anniversary

The 2nd of October has always been a special day for Vasantham. Gandhi Jayanthi and foundation day of Vasantham falls on this special day. The 22nd anniversary of Vasantham was celebrated in high spirits. Children, especially the ones who have been with Vasantham for a long time cut a delicious cake. To make it more special each child enjoyed tasty Paani Poori which was attempted for the first time. Children relished the excellent snacks. Vasantham would like to take this opportunity to thank all its well wishers and supporters for taking us through this smooth journey for more than two decades.



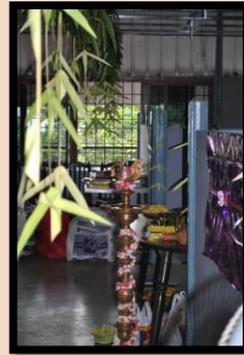
Participation in professional and extracurricular activities along with other NGOs...

- Children participated in the District level Sports meet on the 22nd of December 2011 along with other special schools in Thiruvallur District.
- A special educator attended a National level workshop on "Early Intervention of children with Mental Retardation".
- Speech Therapist attended a parent training workshop for improving communication in children with language issues.

Ayudha Pooja & Saraswathi Pooja

Saraswathi pooja was celebrated at Vasantham in a grand manner on the 6th of October 2011. Children and staff had decorated the entire school premises including the vehicles with flowers and Vasantham wore the festive look. Shri.Suresh Kamath graced the occasion and inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp. He also inaugurated the two new class rooms of "Visalam Academy". Special thanks to Foundation Marc Sauquet who has extended their support to develop the infrastructure for these classrooms. One of our students, Sudhakar's uncle is working on renovating a part of the hall in the 2nd floor into classrooms for regular curriculum.

The children, parents, volunteers and staff paid respects to goddess Saraswathi showing karpooaraarathi and showering flowers. We also had a beautiful "Gollu" set up to celebrate Navarathiri. We had various well wishers and supporters visit the "Gollu" during the nine days festive season. Daily special poojas were performed special poojas were performed daily in the morning and evening with the highlight being delicious "sundaal" served to the kids. It was quite a sight to see children do pranam to God and show aarathi.



Education Festival

Vasantham children participated in the Educational Festival organised by Dream India Educational and Charitable Trust at SV Home, Chennai on the 9th of October 2011. Unlike previous years when only selected Vasantham kids participated in similar programmes, this year a huge lot of Vasantham children participated.

Children participated in drawing competition which was followed by elocution competition. Most children spoke well and we could see great improvement in their confidence levels when compared to last year. Children also recited quite a few Thirukurals, in competition with SV Home kids.

Fancy dress competition was also organised and various avatars including Sri Krishna, Radha, Swami Vivekananda, vegetable vendor, Hindu, Muslim and Christian couples were presented.

The most awaited event of the day, the quiz competition was held post lunch. Special consideration was given for three teams from Vasantham to have direct entry with 6 other teams from SV home. As the quiz progressed, everyone gathered were taken aback by a pleasant surprise, as it was a team from Vasantham school that was leading all the way answering every question directed at them. The myth that special children cannot compete with normals was being washed away by the splendid performance of these children. The highlight of the event was when one kid from Vasantham identified Obama's voice in the audio round. Finally, after a tough competition, one team from Vasantham got to the runners up level. Master Jamshed and kid Gayathiri deserve special mention for their wonderful performance. Master Santhosh, the youngest among the lot was the centre of attention with his participation in all the events without any hesitation or fear.

The quiz was followed by cultural performances by the kids. We had them dance for a few tunes, stage a skit etc. Dream India also felicitated the overall champions from Vasantham and SV home. It was indeed a pleasure to watch kids from SV home cheer Vasantham kids while they were on stage. That was a perfect example of inclusion and acceptance. Vasantham thanks Dream India for supporting Vasantham in all possible ways, especially in getting our kids be confident while speaking on stage.



Diwali

This year's Diwali began with children participating in the celebrations organised by Udhavum Ullangal on the 16th of October 2011. It was a day filled with new colourful clothes, cultural and refreshments. It was a nice gesture from Udhavum Ullangal to get new clothes for all the children. They did visit Vasantham several times before the event and took measurements in order to get perfectly fitting clothes for all the children. Vasantham children extend tons and tons of special thanks to Mr. Shankar Mahadevan, Ms. Rajeshwari and friends for their constant support and interest towards Vasantham.

Diwali celebration at Vasantham was held on the 20th of October 2011. Kids loved the way the hall was decorated in a colourful and bright manner. Kids were walking around in new clothes and showing it to all. The evening program began with lighting the lamp by our constant supporter Mr. Hariharan and family. Lots of kids were gathered in the hall with their parents and siblings. Photographs taken during events conducted early 2011 were projected. This was followed by a magic show by Mr. Gopal. Kids enjoyed the show thoroughly. This was followed by Ms. Jemie's guitar recital, who also sang a song for the kids. One of our student's sister also shook her legs for a Tamil song and entertained the kids. Snacks and sweets were served for all.

Kids got ready for the most awaited event of the day, bursting crackers. Kids enjoyed the colourful fireworks on the sky. Many of them got out of their fear of crackers and enjoyed thoroughly. Volunteers from Dream India, Swasam and Punnagai Charitable Trusts, friends from Dept of SLHS, SRU and parents made sure kids bursted the crackers safe. Dinner was served after kids finished bursting almost 2 full boxes of crackers. Special thanks to Vasantham's board member Mr. Venkat and friends for sponsoring crackers. The evening was a perfect time for the kids to enjoy.



Children's Day

The Children's day celebration took place on the 12th of November 2011. The day started with children dancing to a few tunes. Children had Mehendi applied on their palms. Mr. Natarajan, Dream India Educational & Charitable Trust and Mr. Sekar along with other friends from Tata Consultancy Services organised and sponsored the event. Volunteers inaugurated the function by lighting the lamp.

Various competitions and games were conducted for the children. All the children were given sheets and crayons to participate in the drawing competition. Children made some wonderful pictures. Volunteers and staff helped around to get the children give their best shot. This was followed by games such as object matching, ball collection, bun eating, lemon & spoon and ring throw. Post lunch, a surprise quiz session was organised for the children. Even though the surprise was intended for the kids, it was the volunteers and the audience who finally ended up being surprised to see such good memory. The last time a quiz was conducted was in October. Children did really well and answered most of the questions correctly. Many volunteers and friends who had come for the first time were pleasantly surprised to see the way the children answered the questions.

Volunteers from Punnagai and Swasam Charitable Trusts were also present to entertain the children. Vasantham's well wisher Mr. Abhishek gave the children some delicious chocolates he had bought from overseas. The kids took lots of gifts and goodies back home with a big smile on their faces.



Christmas

Christmas was celebrated at Vasantham with great spirits on the 22nd of December 2011. The Children were dressed like Mother Mary, little Jesus and the special visitors who came over to see baby Jesus. Three Santas of different physiques came in as a surprise and presented loads of goodies to the children. Many kids got chance to dress up like the Santa. They also enthralled the audience with their wonderful dance moves. One of our students, Master Ashley's parents had come with yummy banana cakes for the children. The staff from Vasantham explained to the children about Christmas. We also had quite a few songs. The children had special visitors from WABCO who had come with bags full of T-shirts, chocolates, various gifts and more importantly loving hearts. Games such as musical chair and also drawing competitions were conducted by the friends from WABCO. They also provided various physiotherapy related materials for the children. The children and staff alike thanked WABCO team for their wonderful gesture. The day ended with the children and staff enjoying sweets and the wonderful cake.

Christmas celebrations at Vasantham did not include just the day's events. The whole week of Christmas had the Christmas tree, crib and star tied in the corridor where the kids stood most of the time looking at the decorations. On the 23rd of December 2011, the kids participated in the Christmas celebrations held at the Department of Speech Language and Hearing Sciences at Sri Ramachandra University. Kids were again dressed like the Kings and other people who visited Baby Jesus. The girls were in pretty dresses and shook their legs for Jingle Bells song.

