



Mirra Annual Report

2019-2020

Our Mission

We believe that inclusion is a natural way of the Universe; it is a truth in existence. Experiencing this truth and implementing it in the field of education and in life is our mission.

Facebook: [facebook.com/mirract](https://www.facebook.com/mirract)

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/mirracharitable/>

Website: <http://mirract.com>

ABOUT MIRRA

A Chennai-based charitable trust, Mirra was registered on 2 July 2009 (Regd. No. 797 of 2009). Mirra is in its eleventh year now.

Mirra was born out of a dream of creating an all inclusive space for children to go beyond disabilities, so that they may both give and receive such beautiful things as ideas, openness, dignity, joy and education. The main objective of Mirra is potential realization, empowerment and inclusion of children with autism, learning disability, and other special needs into mainstream schools and community at large. Educate, Empower and Embrace are the three main pillars that drive every initiative at Mirra – driven ably by a nine-member team.

Our Service Offerings

- ✓ Pratikriya (remedials)
- ✓ Aikya (inclusion)
- ✓ Vinithi (training and workshops for parent and staff capacity building)
- ✓ Payirchi (skill development towards a vocation).

The services we offer are aimed at reaching out to parents and children in a variety of ways.

We endeavor to be present for our children by providing them opportunities to learn, live and laugh through our offerings. We have been able to do so with the blessings of the Almighty and hope to continue to do the same.

These past couple of months have taught us this - when we create new possibilities, we become open ourselves to trying new things. This will be our mantra going forward as we strive to educate, empower and embrace our children and their families.

Message from our Founder Trustee, Satish C A

HIGHLIGHTS

- ✓ Mirra completes a decade of service in the field of inclusion and special education
- ✓ Vocational Pursuit Award to Mirra for by Rotary Club, Chennai Towers District 3232
- ✓ Around 4000 hours of remedial support and 162 hours of training provided
- ✓ Continued learning through online sessions during lockdown
- ✓ First webinar hosted by Mirra on story telling
- ✓ Successful pilot of group Sessions on Play and Arts to facilitate communication and expression
- ✓ Parent volunteer driven Music program (Swarathma) and Gardening initiatives
- ✓ Consultation engagement with two schools
- ✓ Direct interaction with some of the schools where our students go
- ✓ External paid projects executed by Mirra Multimedia students
- ✓ Second batch of learning based AEMP (Multimedia program) initiated
- ✓ Greater momentum and focus on parent empowerment and parent wellness
- ✓ Events such as Sensory exhibition on Activities of Daily Living, Science Day on Simple Machines, Beach Day, Field trip conducted
- ✓ Themed Months launched from Jan 2020
- ✓ 5th batch of Shraddha (our training program towards handling multi-ability classrooms) completed
- ✓ Launch of Mirra 2020 calendar completely developed inhouse by our Multimedia students
- ✓ Launch of Mirra YouTube Channel containing videos of events and academic videos made by our students

Pratikriya – Remedial Program

This year, we reached out to about 70 students through our remedial programs - the youngest being 2.5 years and the oldest 23 years of age, and about 40 students through assessments and home programs. The sessions with the children are individual sessions and we have piloted certain group sessions to facilitate communication and expression amongst the children. The services include physical therapy, communication and thinking, functional application of science and math in daily life, functional English, computer skills - basics of coding and Photoshop. We also focus on yoga, play and arts-based therapy and believe in creating a bonding with nature for our children through various initiatives. Parents get empowered to continue the work done in the session at home as they get to observe and participate in the sessions. Presence of the caregiver in the session is mandatory at Mirra.

Highlights

- ✓ Online Sessions during lockdown to continue the learning process and our engagement with the children and parents
- ✓ Therapy sessions incorporating movement, perceptual activities and sensory strategies customized for every individual child attending occupational therapy sessions at Mirra
- ✓ Early intervention children flourishing appropriate to their respective goal outcomes and improved parent awareness as well as participation.
- ✓ Therapeutic activities such as TLP, Chinese Massage and SEE -sensory exhibitions go hand in hand in our enrichment program for our children
- ✓ Successful pilot of Group Play sessions amongst children to increase social interaction
- ✓ 6th batch of Chinese Massage session for parents
- ✓ Themed months since Jan 2020 to facilitate holistic understanding of a theme across all facets
- ✓ Swarathma – Music program for our students facilitated by a parent volunteer, Ms. Vidhya Ganesan
- ✓ Co-ordination of early morning physical training sessions at the beach over weekends facilitated by freelance educators
- ✓ Festival celebrations, accompanied by Music
- ✓ Sensory exhibition on Activities of Daily living (Brushing, Bathing, Toileting, Grooming, Dressing, Feeding) focusing on driving independence in day-to-day activities
- ✓ Sixth science day on simple machines to help the students understand what a machine is, different types of machines and explore the machines around us
- ✓ Field trip to Parampara farm where students took part in farming activities such as sowing paddy, riding bullock carts, feeding cattle and using vintage cooking and cleaning equipment

Aikya – Promoting Inclusion

Mirra's engagement with **TATVA** this past year involved

- ✓ Two visits per month
- ✓ Helped set up systems for Grades 1 to 5
- ✓ Trained head resource person and teachers to develop larger perspective of inclusion
- ✓ Also trained head resource person to build specific skills such as conducting assessments, making an IEP, creating differentiated curriculum, teaching and assessing, systems to manage inclusion as a process – through role modelling, demonstrations, discussions
- ✓ Shared knowledge through specific case studies
- ✓ Observations of students, teachers (all areas), classroom sessions, remedial sessions followed by end of day discussions
- ✓ Parent meetings, as needed
- ✓ Meeting with the principal at regular intervals to discuss updates and training needs
- ✓ Three-part training of teachers in Kindergarten
 - Role of play in physical, emotional, language and cognitive development
 - How to Observe and facilitate during play
 - Understanding my child – use of COMM DEALL development checklist to assess if the child has a delay; how to facilitate progress

We have completed our consultation with Tatva and would be available offline if and when they need us for a year.

Mirra's engagement with **Christwood** this past year involved

- ✓ Observation and assessment of students
- ✓ Guiding bridge programs (remedial)
- ✓ Coordinating with assigned Bridge Program Head
- ✓ Guiding parents, teachers and shadow teachers
- ✓ Discussions on policy decisions with principal and director
- ✓ Collaborating with kindergarten consultant on programs for kindergarten and early primary
- ✓ School ensured every single child participated in annual events and field trips this year
- ✓ Began arts practises for inclusion as an experiment with grade 3 to address issues regarding inclusion
- ✓ Closely guided 8 parents (kg through to grade 3) – helped them in understanding their child better and make changes in their interactions
- ✓ Morning 20 min physical work out sessions for select students of kg and early primary

Other Aikya initiatives include visiting the schools where our students study to get a better understanding of the environment and challenges and sharing our inputs.

In the second week of September 2019, Ms. Durga Aravind consulted at **Shanti School, Kuwait**, to train facilitators, offer guidance and develop a holistic curriculum.

Vinithi – Training and workshops for parent and staff capacity building

Shraddha and MEI are the two training programs conducted by Mirra.

- ✓ 5th batch of Shraddha completed – Our training program to educators and parents on handling multi-abilities. Included new aspects such as arts practises in every session, mentoring participants offline, journaling, more activities to support theory, appointing buddies
- ✓ MEI is the series of Early Intervention workshops by Mirra
 - The fourth chapter of MEI was a webinar held on Saturday 16 May 2020 on storytelling and its role in the development of children.
 - The third chapter of MEI happened on 25 January, 2020. A series of activities helped parents understand the basis of intervention. Parents were left with an understanding of what all they could do with their children, how all and how often they could do engage, how to simplify, the importance of being consistent, the need for being mindful of their interactions with their child, to use the right words and tone, etc.
 - The second MEI workshop was held on July 12th 2019 where the parents of Mirra early intervention group gathered at Mirra to hear a lecture demonstration by Ms Aarti Rajaratnam on Neurodevelopmental and basic locomotive skills in children with special needs
- ✓ Parent wellness initiatives
 - “We’ve got this! Wednesdays” – Initiative to empower parents of children between 11 to 16 years with a session once a month. Discussions have been well received and most parents are active and keen to take the discussions to next level
 - Yoga Day – Workshop for parents and continued online sessions during lockdown
 - Need based mentoring of parents – Sharing strategies and follow up
- ✓ Parent Empowerment to enable parents of PBAEMP in understanding the nuances of project execution from requirements to implementation.
- ✓ Aiding parents to practise the skills learnt in class so that they may be more independent in facilitating learning in their children. This came in handy during the lockdown phase.
- ✓ Colors are known to affect the bodily functions, mind and emotions. Mirra with Aims Média organized a workshop in Stone painting at Mirra for its students and parents and was facilitated by one of the parents, Ms. Srividhya Hariharan.
- ✓ Staff Capacity building initiatives include
 - Dream Mapping session for the staff by Dr. Namita Jacob
 - Executive Functions Training by Dr. Aarti Rajaratnam
 - Arts Practices for Inclusion Training
 - E-Shikshanam course offered by MDA for remedial teaching

Payirchi – Skill Development Program

Development of life skills is considered a key part of the programs at Mirra. In addition to life skills, skills imparted at Mirra are aligned towards pre-vocational skill development so that the students are ready to get trained on an appropriate vocational skill. Activities are designed to enable the students to achieve proficiency on the required pre-vocational skills. Currently, we focus on Multimedia skill development through our Ability Enhancement Multimedia Programme in collaboration with AIMS Media. We also impart pre-vocational skills pertaining to hospitality, handicrafts and horticulture industry.

- ✓ Successful completion of projects by our PBAEMP students. Projects executed by our students include:
 - Paper bag designs for a wedding
 - Sublimation Mug printing (50 mugs) for a wedding
 - Mirra 2020 Calendar design
 - Logo designs for organizations in various sectors
 - Social Media Advertisement design
 - Image Editing
 - Academic material creation in the form of videos with voice over and captioning
 - Photo Shoot
 - Video editing for events
 - Website pages design and development
 - Floor layout design for physical activities
- ✓ Launch of Mirra 2020 calendar developed by our PBAEMP students with facilitation from parents and guidance from the faculty and coordinator
- ✓ Portfolio created showcasing the skill and ability of our Multimedia students
- ✓ Created a group “Atulya” which will be the brand with which our students will be executing projects post Multimedia program
- ✓ Started second batch of Learning Based AEMP
- ✓ Mirra team trained on weaving loom
- ✓ Gardening Activities – From Sowing to Cooking to enable students to learn sustainability and mentored by a parent volunteer, Ms. Kalpana
- ✓ Visit to a functional kitchen to understand various processes and end-to-end operations

Our Goals for year 2020-2021

In our **Pratikriya** remedial program, we would like to do the following in the next academic year:

- ✓ Build theme-based Science Kits, Math Kits and Early Intervention Kits
- ✓ Explore possibilities about promoting physical literacy by bringing in external consultants to work with our children
- ✓ Explore newer modules to improve logical and analytical thinking in our children
- ✓ Explore and use AAC devices for communication
- ✓ Explore Pet therapy/ animal-based therapy

In our **Aikya** Program, we would like to

- ✓ Continue meeting schools that our children go to and engage actively with them
- ✓ Work on Inclusion with Karur government schools in partnership with Vidyasagar
- ✓ Expand our inventory of professionals practicing inclusion and partner with them to create an inclusive ecosystem
- ✓ Focus on differentiated instruction and assessment in the classroom to foster a more inclusive environment as part of our Christwood Engagement

In our **Vinithi** Program of Training and Workshops, we would like to

- ✓ Continue Shraddha and MEI initiatives
- ✓ Conduct workshops on Sexuality education, Play as a medium of learning, Parent empowerment and enablement
- ✓ Create more awareness on disability and inclusion through blogs
- ✓ Training of interns and volunteers in a multifaceted approach to manage children with neurodiversity

In our **Payirchi** program, we would like to

- ✓ Explore Vocational pursuits in the areas of Horticulture, Handicrafts, Kitchen activities, Housekeeping
- ✓ Develop a program design to incorporate various life skills such as thinking, language, communication, math as part of the multimedia program
- ✓ Facilitate creating a business plan for Atulya to plan execution post multimedia course

Gratitude

We are extremely grateful to our patrons and well-wishers for their support. Our patrons have supported us whenever we have needed help with sponsoring a child or an event or have needed specific materials to facilitate learning