



For Private Circulation Only

Foreword

The year 2019 has been a very successful year for Madras Dyslexia Association.

The dream of digitizing our training content became true with the launch of E-Shikshanam in the month of April. MDA Avaz Reader App was launched in the month of January. We started tele-monitoring of our Resource Rooms. We have been able to leverage technology to reach-out to more children with dyslexia.

In this year we conducted a number of training programmes that impacted the Government school teachers of Tamilnadu. We were chosen as winner of MCCI Tafe Award 2019 for CSR. We were also chosen as Champions of Chennai 2019 in this year.

The team at Madras Dyslexia Association has been doing wonderful work, setting the bar higher year on year. The community has been very kind in appreciating all our sincere efforts with their munificence.

Looking forward to a great 2020.

Mr. D. Chandrasekhar

President, Madras Dyslexia Association

About MDA

Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA), a not-for-profit organisation, instituted in 1992, has been working towards creating a “Dyslexia Sensitive” society in a multi-pronged manner. It works with the government, parents, schools and children to help identify and provide support to children with dyslexia from pre-primary stage onwards.

These activities have enabled MDA to empower around 4000 teachers in 2019. Currently MDA is collaborating with the Government of Tamil Nadu to sensitise and train teachers in all the districts of the state to equip them to identify and help children with dyslexia. Through these initiatives Madras Dyslexia Association has been able to impact thousands students directly and indirectly.

Management Board

Office Bearers

The office bearers of Madras Dyslexia Association are:

President: Mr. D. Chandrasekhar

Vice President: Mr. Shyam Sekhar

Treasurer: Mr. Rajagopal Subramanian

Secretary: Ms. Swetha Krishna

Advisory Board

MDA has constituted an Advisory Board. The members of this board have been brought in from various fields of work. The members are:

Mrs. Usha Ramakrishnan

Mrs. Prema Raghunath

Mr. Vinit Wankhede

Mr. Venkat Vishwanathan

Mr. Ravi Venkatramani

Mr. K. K. Raman

Mr. G. Chella Krishna

Mr. Siddharth Chandrasekhar

Mrs. Nirmala Pandit

Mr. Rajagopal Subramanian

Mr. Shyam Sekhar

Awards received

MCCI Award

Madras Dyslexia Association along with Brakes India was awarded the MCCI TAFE CSR AWARD 2019 on 14th August for the phenomenal work done in the field of Dyslexia by training 5000 government and government aided school teachers in the past one year.



Champions Of Chennai

Madras Dyslexia Association was awarded the "Champions Of Chennai" by the KSA Trust, on 17th Aug. The awards to all winners were given away by Dr Akhila Srinivasan, Managing Director, Shriram Life Insurance.

Headway Inclusivity Award

Madras Dyslexia Association was awarded the Inclusivity Champion Award by The Headway Foundation at the IICON (Inclusive India Conclave) on 7th NOV 2019. The award was given away by Mr. Rangaraj Pandey.



Papers and Conferences

International Dyslexia Association Conference

Harini Ramanujam, CEO, Madras Dyslexia Association represented the organisation and made a presentation at the International Dyslexia Association Conference at Portland, USA on 8th Nov 2019. Her presentation included information of the work of MDA and the MDA Avaz Reader App which was extremely well received as no similar product is available in the US.

She also visited the Google Head Office in San Fransisco and gave an awareness talk which was attended by Google employees through video conference.

<https://or.dyslexiaida.org/annual-conference/>



Seminar in NIEPMD

A 2 day National Seminar on Assistive Technological Advancement in the management of persons with multiple disabilities was held by NIEPMD jointly with Indian Association of Assistive Technologist, in their campus on April 13th & 14th. The topic of the talk delivered by Mala R Natarajan was "Assistive reading app for



dyslexic and struggling readers". The talk was well appreciated and resulted in several enquiries for the assistive technology developed by Madras Dyslexia Association.

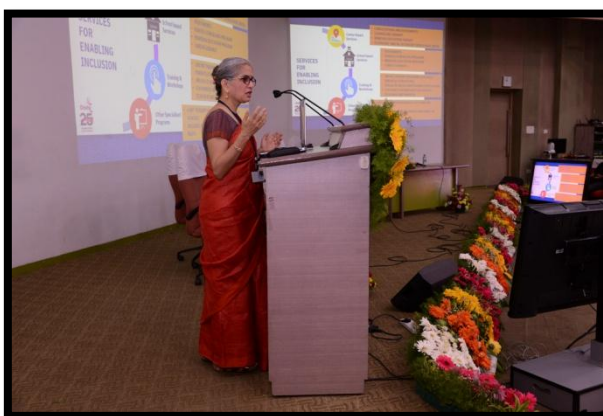
Dyslexia Association of Singapore Conference

Three papers were presented by MDA and well appreciated at the annual conference of Dyslexia Association of Singapore in June 2019. Papers were presented by D. Chandrasekhar, President MDA, Swetha Krishna, and a joint presentation by Harini Ramanujam and Mala R Natarajan.



Symposium

MDA organised a Symposium on Concessions and Exemptions for Children with Specific Learning Difficulties (Dyslexia) on 6th July at the IC and SR Auditorium, IIT Madras. We received around 230 paid registrations from parents, special educators and school heads for the event. The Keynote Speaker Ms. Smita Desai of Drishti, Mumbai, spoke about inclusivity and that these concessions provide equity to the children. There were speakers from each school board to throw light on the provisions offered by the boards. There was also a talk by Mrs. Uthra Dorairajan on the concessions at college entry level and those offered at various Universities. Finally, there was a panel discussion among school heads of different boards moderated by Ms. Susha Natraj.



The symposium was extremely well received by the audience and they left with important and relevant information. The event was also well covered in the print media. All concessions and exemption offered by various boards have been mentioned on the MDA website: <https://www.mdachennai.com/dyslexia/board-concessions>



Exhibition at IIT Madras



MDA was represented by President D. Chandrasekhar and Head, Non Academic Operations, Mala R Natarajan at the exhibition of Assistive Devices at IIT, Madras on 5th November 2019. They showcased the MDA Avaz Reader App to the Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment, Thaawarchand Gehlot.

Awareness Initiatives

Advantage Dyslexia

MDA organised its flagship event, an Advantage Dyslexia from August 18th to 21st to showcase the special talents of dyslexic school children.

Five contests were held for schoolchildren -- on painting, kolam, storytelling, dance and music. Ranging in age from 6 to 16, the children competed in four age categories. Some children registered for the events



through their schools, others are registered by their parents.



This is the sixth time that MDA is organizing a celebration of Dyslexia. It was held for the first time in 2014. All these contests were informative, fun-filled and attitude-changing. Dyslexia

Week seeks to send out a message to schools, parents and children: "It's not about how smart you are, it's about how you are smart."

This year 25 schools participated. The no of participants were 365..!



Awareness At Cognizant

MDA conducted an awareness session for the employees of Cognizant on 13th November.



Employees of

Cognizant from 15 states participated in the program. This program was arranged by the Outreach foundation a CSR unit of Cognizant. 120 participants participated in the virtual session held at various Cognizant offices throughout India. The session was well received. The Cognizant team also visited Ananya Learning and Research Centre.

Allsec Technologies Limited: Awareness Workshop



Awareness Program On Dyslexia



- Dyslexia is the most common learning disability. Individuals with this medical condition have difficulty in the areas of language processing
- 1 in 5 people suffer from dyslexia
- People with dyslexia are usually more creative and have a higher level of intelligence.
- Those with dyslexia use only the right side of the brain to process language, while non-dyslexics use three areas on the left side of the brain to process language.
- Children have a 50% chance of having dyslexia if one parent has it. And a 100% chance if both parents have it
- Dyslexia is not a disease so there is no cure. It's a learning disability that includes difficulty in the use/processing of linguistic and symbolic codes, alphabetic letters representing speech sounds or number and quantities.



CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR LIFELONG MANAGEMENT OF DYSLLEXIA

Founded in 1991 by parents of children with dyslexia, Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) is a non-profit service organization established to take a pragmatic approach to helping children with "Dyslexia". MDA has been functioning for the past two decades in providing remedial help and support to these children, their parents, as well as spreading awareness to the community at large, helping schools set up resource rooms and conducting teacher training programmes.

On the 19th of August'19, a representative from MDA visited the Chennai facility to conduct an awareness program on Dyslexia.



An awareness program for the corporate was conducted for Allsec Technologies. 25 trainers of their HR department attended the session.

Training Activities

1. A Crispiani Method Workshop was held on 11th and 12th February 2019. It was an excellent platform for learning and understanding how to integrate the body and mind to achieve a holistic development for the child.



The workshop was conducted by Professor Crispiani, who is the Scientific Director of Italian Dyslexia Centre, Italy, along with Dr. Eleonora, Psychologist, neuro psycho motor practioner, Italy.

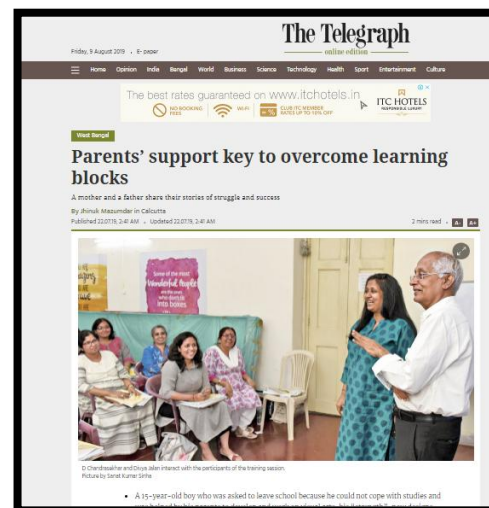
Professor Crispiani mentions that if you don't train today, the child will suffer the consequences in the future. The method helps in the activation, consolidation and stabilization of the task the student needs to perform. All the participants were given certificates.

2. Intensive teacher training course the flagship activity of MDA was conducted twice in the year. In the April batch 46 participants were trained to become special educators. It was inaugurated by Mrs.Lalitha Chandrasekar, Director



of Ramana Vidyalaya school, Sholinganallur. August batch was conducted for the teachers of Vivekananda Educational Society who had expressed interest to become special educators and be a part of the resource rooms which were set up in their schools. Mr.M.N. Venkatesh, secretary of Vivekananda Educational Society was the chief guest. Along with from VES group of 16 teachers, a total of 36 participants were trained to become special educators.

3. MDA conducted its first Intensive Teacher Training program in Kolkata in collaboration with Breaking Through Dyslexia, a not-for-profit organization working in the field of Specific Learning Disability. 23 participants got trained to become special educators.



The program was conducted in the month of July.

4. MDA participated in the workshop conducted by National Institute of Technology, Durgapur on 12th July 2019 on Education of Children with Special Needs. Ms.Lakshmi Hariharan, Special Educator and Head of Resource Rooms



and Mr.D.Chandrasekhar, President of Madras Dyslexia Association, spoke about Dyslexia and steps taken by MDA to tackle Dyslexia on a large scale.

5. MDA conducted a training program for DAV Gurushikshanam, an initiative of DAV Group of schools, a part of the DAV group of schools initiative in training teachers every year. The 50 hour session was conducted in November. This training empowers the prospective teachers to identify children with Dyslexia in mainstream schools and help them.



6. MDA started a project with SCERT for conducting training sessions in 8 districts in Tamilnadu in 2018. The aim was to empower mainstream teachers with remedial methodologies. In all 400 teachers were



trained in the remedial techniques. We conducted the sessions in Cuddalore, Tiruvallur and Kanchipuram during November and December. The remaining 5 sessions were conducted at Vellore, Villupuram, Nagapattinam, Mannargudi and Tiruvanamalai during January to March. The training program was a 5 day program.

7. MDA with the support of Samagra Shiksha Abhiyaan, has asked MDA to conduct Sensitization program to equip mainstream teachers of

various districts of Tamil Nadu to become Master trainers. These Master trainers would in turn spread awareness on Dyslexia amongst other mainstream teachers. The sessions are conducted in 14 districts for 826 teachers. 8 sessions completed so far have been well received. We started the sessions on 12th November 2019 and would complete it on 30th January 2020.



8. Training for Psychology students:

MOP Vaishnav College,
Nungambakkam

The aim of the program was to help the psychology students in the identification of a dyslexic child. The 40 hour foundation program offered a flavor of remedial techniques to the



students. 90 psychology students from 2nd and 3rd year were a part of the program which was conducted in 2 batches.

9. Rotary club of Madras East supported MDA in conducting 7 day training program at 40 schools in empowering the mainstream teachers with methodologies in identification and remediation of a dyslexic child with in the classroom. The project was started in September 2018 and was completed in April 2019. Teachers of 10 Vivekananda Educational Society schools were a part of the beneficiaries.



10. MDA trainers headed by Lata Vasanth, completed 100 training programmes in the year 2018-2019. The programs offered included paid training programs, resource room training programs, free training programs offered under the sponsorship of Rotary club of Madras East and Brakes India Private Limited.





11. In the year 2019, MDA has launched 2 new training initiatives. The PRE-PRIMARY training, a 2 day training program which helps in the identification of children at- risk for Dyslexia and is aimed at teachers handling kindergarten.



The EFFECTIVE LEARNING PROGRAM a 4 day training program has been targeted at teachers who are handling the secondary grade. This program helps the child to become an independent learner.



12.A feather on our cap was placed when on Saturday 2nd March 2019; as many as 13 training modules were conducted by MDA trainers in various venues.



Resource Rooms

With a view to enable a school to provide remedial support to its children with Specific Learning Disability, within the ambience itself setting up of Resource Rooms is facilitated by MDA. At the start of the year MDA had already set up 52 Resource Rooms.

18 new Resource rooms were set up by MDA in the year 2019.

1. AMT Jain School, Madhavaram
2. Padma Subramaniam Bala Bhavan, Mangadu
3. Fathima Central, Saidapet
4. Vidyodaya Vidyalaya, T.Nagar
5. P.S.Senior Secondary School, Mylapore
6. Holy Cross Matricualtion Higher Secondary School, Valasaravakkam
7. Janus Global School, Kanchipuram
8. Sudarsanam Vidyashram, Avadi
9. IMAX Nursery and Primary, Royapettah
10. Shree Niketan Patasala, Mannivakkam
11. Shri Ramadayaal Khemka Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Tiruvottiyur
12. Shri Kasturba Nimchand Shah P Muthaylau Chetty Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Perambur
13. Ramkumar Devi Fomra Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Chrompet
14. Dr. Nalli Kuppusamy Chetty Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Korattur
15. G.K. Shetty Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Ambattur
16. GRT Mahalakshmi Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Manali New Town
17. Sri Narbada Devi J Agarawal Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Vysarpadi
18. Sreevatsan Vivekanada Vidyalaya, Chitalapakkam

Resource room Vidyodaya School: To enable a school to provide remedial support to its students with SLD, within the school ambience, MDA facilitates setting up of resource room. Madras Dyslexia Association and Vidyodaya Schools have proudly coordinated with one another by establishing a Resource room in their premises to handhold



children with difficulties. The children undergoing remediation have commenced exhibiting visible positive changes in their academic performance. The management, extremely pleased with the outcome in this short span is willing to identify one more teacher to undergo the Intensive training program in April 2020. This is MDA's 67th Resource Room.

Ms.Geetha Gangadaran, alumna of the 1969 batch graced the occasion by being the chief guest for the grand inaugural.

Resource room P.S. Senior School:

MDA officially launched the establishment of the resource room in P. S Senior Secondary School, Mylapore. Our President cut the ribbon for the grand launch. The other dignitaries who were present are Shri. K. S. Gopalakrishnan, correspondent, Shri Sunderarajan, Chairman, Smt. Revathy Parameswaran Principal of the school with her team, Ms. Bhooma, Principal of P.S Matriculation school apart from our team comprising of Lata Vasanth and Lakshmi Hariharan accompanied by our monitors of the school Vadhana Raj and Revathi Sachidanandam.

The primary teachers have undergone the 6 days training and have identified almost 60 children who have been referred to the Resource Room special educators. These special educators, Ms. Subashini and Ms. Arokia Nithya are so dedicated and very excited to handhold these children. Several teaching aids have been made by the special educators and the RR looks very colourful and inviting.



Ananya Learning and Research Centre

Sports Day

Ananya conducted its XIX sports day on 11th January at RKM Grounds. Cricketer Sadagopan Ramesh was the chief guest. Children were very excited and displayed their sporting talents to the maximum. Track events, long jump, hurdles, throwing the cricket ball were some of the events that were held. It was a proud moment for the parents to see the children sport the medals and get on the victory stand.



Ananya Annual Day

This was celebrated on 22nd Feb 2019. Students presented well coordinated drama and dance performances.



Kindness week

In the Kindness Week, 13 Students from Ananya participated in the Kindness week event at Peekaboo patterns. It was a fun filled evening with lots of activities for the children.

Visit to TN Police Academy

Students of Ananya Learning and Research Centre visited the **Tamil Nadu Police Academy** at Oomenchery for a field visit. The kids were fascinated to see how police officers get trained. They were taken around to visit the Model Police Station, the



simulated shooting range, the police museum, the swimming pool, and the Apiary maintained by the Police Academy. The academy also served the children and teachers of Ananya a sumptuous lunch. The students and teachers were sent off with gifts. The visit was organised by the IPS Officers' Wives Association.

Children's Day

Ananya Learning Centre celebrated Children's Day with a great show of oratorical skills by the students in Hindi and Tamil. The cherry on the cake was a dance performance choreographed by the students themselves and performed with utmost confidence and happiness. The song used was from the movie Taare Zameen Par. The teachers had also organised an interesting Magic Show for the students.



The MDA After-school Part- time remediation centre at Mahalingapuram also had a treat for their students. The kids enjoyed the screening of the movie "THE LION KING"

Project Day

All parents know their children are smart and intelligent. Yet most schools have the tendency to



use one yardstick to measure this, over – looking the child’s unique profile and combination of intelligences. Ananya Learning Centre broke this stereotype by



implementing Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences Theory. This theory suggests that people are not more, or less intelligent, rather they are intelligent differently and in multiple ways.

Students of Ananya Learning and Research Centre proudly showcased their intelligences on their project day on 21st Dec – ‘PRATIBHA’. Concepts like energy, life cycle of butterfly, photosynthesis, solar were performed through villupaattu, Song, dance and Skit. The process of growing crops - was shown through Naturalistic Intelligence.

Paint-a-thon: United way - L&T/CSR activity

24 members from L&T and our Ananya stars gave a facelift to the school entrance and the pre-primary room by painting cartoons in June 2019. The whole group encouraged the children to paint and they enjoyed painting their favourite cartoons. It was a good exposure for the children. It was an initiative of United Way Chennai.



MDA Learning Centre

The After-School Part- time Remediation Centre functioned very well during the year 2019. In all 30 Students got remedial help throughout the year.

A summer workshop was held in April and was attended by 40 children.



MDA Learning Centre organised a fulfilled Diwali party at the Mahalingapuram Premises. The event was attended by all special educators and staff.

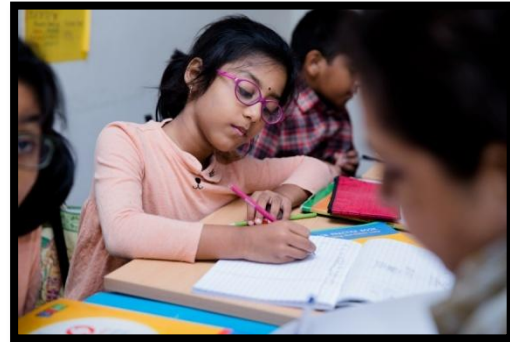
Christmas was celebrated with great fanfare at the MDA Learning centre on Dec 20th 2019.

A small Christmas tree was decorated to symbolise the Christmas spirit. Santa made a surprise appearance this year with gifts for all the kids. The kids as well as the teachers were thrilled beyond words and danced merrily to the carols along with Santa. The happiness on the children's faces was priceless. Overall a fun evening not only to celebrate Christmas but also to bid goodbye to a wonderful 2019 and welcome a fabulous 2020



Assessments

Assessments help us understand the exact academic level of the child, so that an appropriate individualised education plan can be made for the remedial education. Assessments also help students to get appropriate exemptions and concessions in school and board examinations.



MDA conducts three kinds of assessments based on academic levels. In the past year 336 assessments have been conducted.

In order to disseminate information on kinds of such provisions to the stakeholders, MDA had organised a Symposium in the month of July.



With the demand for assessments rising a special two day workshop was conducted by Chairperson Nirmala Pandit with the help of Harini Mohan and Swetha Krishna for all assessors in December.

MDA E Shikshanam

MDA e-shikshanam is a new initiative that provides access to MDA training programs digitally. The programme was launched on 25th April 2019 by IIT Director, Mr Bhaskar Ramamurthy.

Remedial Instruction For Primary School Children With Specific Learning Difficulty - was the first course to be launched under MDA e-shikshanam. This empowers primary school teachers to provide active support to the children in their class with mild to moderate Specific Learning Difficulty or Dyslexia. It also provides basic knowledge on Dyslexia, screening and remediation to other stakeholders like parents and psychologists.



IIT Madras Director Prof Bhaskar Ramamurthy launched 'e-Shikshanam', a free online teacher training programme instituted in association with Madras Dyslexia Association, in Chennai today. The programme provides support to children with learning difficulties.

NPTEL, MDA launch e-Shikshanam

Express News Service

The Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) in association with the National Programme on Technology Enhanced Learning (NPTEL) wing of IIT Madras launched 'e-Shikshanam', a free online teacher training programme to provide remedial support to children with specific learning difficulties. The course is open to primary school teachers up to class 5.

"Through this fundamental course, one can get primed into basic remedial instruction. Though our target is mainstream school teachers, parents who work with their children can also benefit from it," said Harini Ramamujam, CEO, MDA.

There are nine modules which are broken into different segments. There will be a video, typically for 30 minutes followed by case studies for understanding and assignments at the end of each chapter to evaluate yourself. "The whole course is free and by the end of it, you will gain inputs on how to identify a child with dyslexia and how to help mild dyslexic children within the classroom.

After the course, if a teacher is interested in certification, they can take a final exam by MDA," said Mala R Natarajan, head, systems and technology, MDA.

Highlighting the unique aspects of this course, D Chandrasekhar, president, MDA said, "In Tamil Nadu alone there are 5,74,000 teachers and 90 per cent of them are in rural areas. Since the unremediated dyslexic children become social delinquents, this facility will channelise their untapped potential of to the benefit of the community."

MDA has already trained around 2,000 teachers in government schools in eight districts of Tamil Nadu.

The course is open to primary school teachers up to class 5 • Ashwin Prasath

Course content

The team is planning to introduce the course in Tamil and start another programme for secondary training. The subjects covered in this course include an introduction to dyslexia, child development, screening, reading, writing, spelling, math, multiple intelligence and study skills. The NPTEL portal (<https://online-courses.nptel.ac.in/>) will take this course to a wide audience. The link to the course can also be found on MDA's website - www.mdachenmai.com and Facebook page: Madras Dyslexia Association.

Combating dyslexia

Indian Institute of Technology Madras is collaborating with Madras Dyslexia Association (MDA) to launch 'e-Shikshanam,' a free online teacher training programme, to provide remedial support to children with specific learning difficulties. 'e-Shikshanam' is being taken up to train teachers and other stakeholders who work with dyslexic children. It is the first such platform to provide remedial instructions to children upto class V, across the country.

Prof Bhaskar Ramamurthy, Director, IIT Madras, recently launched the course at the IIT Madras campus. Empowered mainstream teachers can facilitate the learning process for children with mild dyslexia within the comforts of the classroom. This inclusive approach buoys the child's self-esteem. This in turn, helps the child scale up his learning and performance.

This course has been produced by NPTEL, IIT Madras for Madras Dyslexia Association and is being hosted on their portal. Four batches of this course have been rolled out. Since the 1st batch, over 1000 enrolments have been achieved.

MDA Avaz Reader App

MDA Avaz Reader-an assistive reading app is one of the endeavours that have been undertaken to provide on-demand support during the different instances of reading. It provides this indispensable scaffolding, nudging the struggling reader towards becoming an independent reader.

The MDA AVZ READER APP have been distributed free of cost to 350 govt teachers who have been identified by the schools.



Parent Support Group

1. **Parent workshop 19, 20 JAN 2019:** The MDA GOLD Parent Support Group organized its first programme, a Parent workshop by Aarti C Rajaratnam on Executive Functioning. Executive Functions are a set of processes related to managing oneself and one's resources in order to achieve a goal or complete an activity. The two day workshop gave a deep insight into how important executive functions are for the well-being of a child, and how parents could improve their functioning. Full of activities, the workshop gave an experiential learning to parents who will now be able to understand what goes on in the little minds and why they behave in a certain way. At the end of the two days the parents admitted that they will now look at their children differently.
2. **PSG starts Monthly activities:**
The AUGUST and SEPTEMBER meetings had Parents of Adults with dyslexia share their experiences of bringing up their children successfully.

a. **The November meeting of MDA GOLD Parent Support Group** was held on 9th Nov 2019. A small workshop on the Theory of Multiple Intelligences was held by Swetha Krishna. The theory delineates 8 different Intelligences that each person has. A large group of parents attended the session.



Swetha's talk gave parents a different perspective to look at their children.

The group meets on most second Saturdays. The membership is free and open only to parents of children with Specific Learning Difficulties.

b. The December meeting of the MDA GOLD PSG had a talk by Mr Vinit Wankhede titled, “Dyslexia Advantages: Myth or reality”. He spoke about a new perspective on dyslexia researched by Drs Brock and Fernette Eide. It expands to include 4 real and distinct dyslexic strengths.



Drs Eide advocate that Remediation and OT and technological assistance are necessary for the reading writing challenges faced by most dyslexics. However they focus on identifying dyslexic strengths. New perspective proves with evidence that dyslexics like Da Vinci, Edison, Branson, Jobs etc were talented and successful because of dyslexia and not in spite of it. The “**dyslexic strengths**” are “**real**”, have “**extremely high real world value**” and are the “**cause for dyslexic success**”. These can be used in education.

To join this group, who are parents of children with Learning Disabilities, please mail to: mdagoldpsg@gmail.com

WAY FORWARD

We were happy to have concluded the year 2019 with the satisfaction of having worked to achieve most of the objectives set for the year.

In the forthcoming year we hope to strive to be able to reach out to many more children with dyslexia, their parents, school managements and its teachers, notwithstanding the various barriers that we may face.

