



YEAR BOOK 2019 - 2020



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Director's note

Dear Parents,

As we live in lockdown and manage our lives during this unprecedented period, we hope to take you back in time with us through the year 2019 – 2020 and share endearing vignettes of your child's time with us.

Our students and teachers have had quite an eventful year full of heart-warming, hilarious, enjoyable, and fulfilling moments. They have travelled, played, sang, danced, cooked, and snacked together, and, in the process, discovered themselves a little more.

As we guide our students to cope with a confusing and complicated world outside, they teach us silently, through their actions, to love gently, feel strongly and to stay honest to ourselves. We thank our parent community for entrusting us with their children's future.

“ They have travelled, played, sang, danced, cooked, and snacked together, and, in the process, discovered themselves a little more. ”



It has been thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding for us to watch them blossom under the care and guidance of our dedicated team.

As we navigate through these uncertain times, it is unclear what lies ahead of us, but we will overcome this together. All of us at CADRRE wait eagerly to welcome our students to the new academic year and forge many more happy memories together.

CADRRE expresses its heartfelt gratitude to its donor patrons - Chandaria Foundation, UST Global and K. Nandakumar and Suntec Business Solutions. We also thank The George M. Thomas Foundation, Trivandrum International School, and Malayala Manorama for their support during the first year.

Regards,
G Vijaya Raghavan
Honorary Director, CADRRE

Our school - *A home away from home*

Schools should be second homes for children as they spend a good part of their childhood here. Parents always look out for schools that provide a conducive, safe, and enjoyable environment for their child, even more so in the case of schools catering to children on the spectrum. At CADRRE we understand this and ensure that everything we do is in the best interest of our students.

We strongly believe nature and nurture go together in shaping a child's personality, ability to think for themselves and their outlook towards life. This philosophy is deeply ingrained in the design of both our centres and our day-to-day activities at school where children are encouraged to explore, discover, and learn.



PMG Centre



Sasthamangalam Centre

Located in the heart of the city, both our centres are a perfect blend of vintage charm and contemporary aesthetics. Our centres are nestled in beautifully landscaped premises and are equipped with libraries, play areas, dining areas, sensory rooms and walkways, conference rooms, ADL (Activities of Daily Living) rooms, walk-in aviaries, and well thought out classrooms that suit the unique needs of our students. Each nook and corner in our centres have been designed keeping in mind the age-group it is catering to and its purpose.

To ensure parents are not kept in the dark about the happenings at school, all rooms used by the children are under camera surveillance, and parents have access to these cameras through an app.

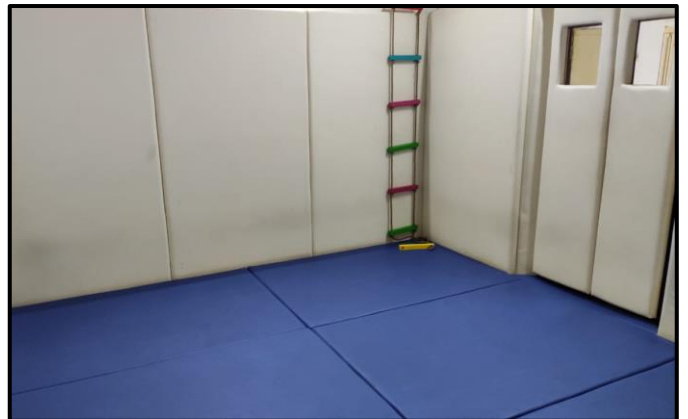
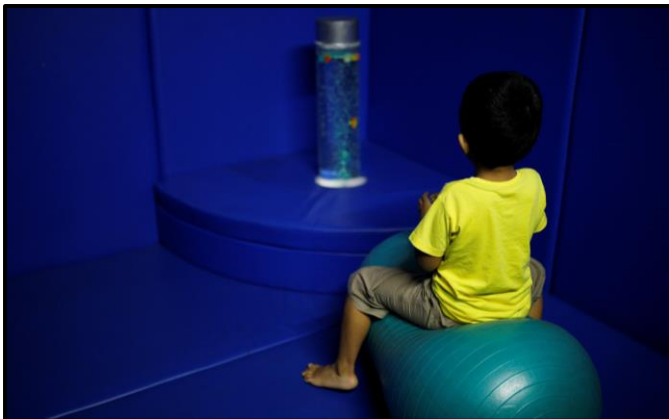
Our water play area, which is perhaps the most unique idea of our school, is loved by children and teachers alike.



CADRRE's library-cum-theatre is another favourite spot for children who are spoilt for choice when it comes to books, interactive games, or toys. They also get to watch movies here and learn through virtual reality games through a VR glass.



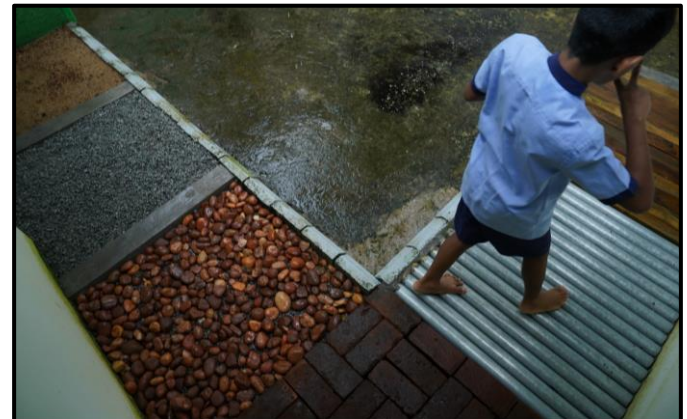
The blue room is a hideaway for our students who need some peace and quiet to calm themselves and collect their thoughts, or sometimes even to even catch a short nap.



Our dining areas at both our centres are brightly-lit intimate spaces that facilitate mealtime interactions amongst students and teachers and make this an enjoyable experience.



Complete with sandpits, sensory paths, beautifully landscaped gardens, and an aqua sensory path – our play area is a multifunctional space as most other spaces in the school, where learning takes place along with having fun.



A cheery room with sunlight streaming in through its large windows, our art room is perfect to get those creative juices flowing onto the canvas.



Our walk-in aviaries, colourful sensory walls, green indoor courtyards and several such spaces all add to the beauty and charm of our school.



In the coming years, CADRRE envisions to have its own self-sustainable campus that is on par with best institutions in the world and serve as a model for others in our country to replicate so that many more children on the spectrum may have access to better facilities.

The CADRRE Model – *for children*

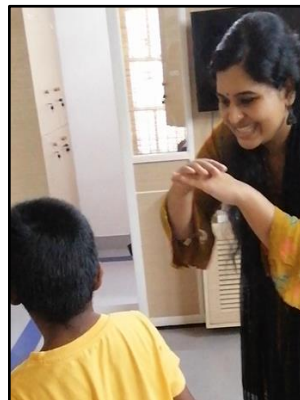
CADRRE is perhaps the only autism school in India that advocates an interdisciplinary model that aims at the holistic development of the child. Our model provides a unique blend of mainstream academics, life skills, and therapy for the wholesome development of the child in school settings - physically, psychologically, emotionally, and socially.

Our interdisciplinary team together with parents, evaluates and draws out an individualized education plan (IEP) for each child after identifying their individual learning styles and strengths. Group and individual goals are drawn up for the children as per their assessment which is reviewed and updated as the children meets the goals mentioned in their IEP. Group sessions are encouraged as compared to one-to-one sessions to facilitate social interactions, communication (verbal and non-verbal) and learning in a dynamic environment. Experiential learning is integral to our program and this is incorporated through our field trips, ADL rooms, role plays and other fun activities.

Our curriculum is designed with the intent of helping our younger students' transition and integrate into mainstream schools and to continue to shadow them until they are capable to live meaningful independent lives. Those who continue with us focus on functional academics, life skills and different vocational skills such as baking, pottery, 3-d printing and so on. The main domains which are covered under our curriculum are:

Speech therapy – In these sessions focus is placed on developing three major areas – speech, language, and communication. During these sessions emphasis is placed on overcoming oral sensory issues and motor deficits; developing a child’s language comprehension & expression skills along with ability to follow language syntax and semantics and; encourage them to communicate using different modes of communication such as using sign language, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) or speech generating devices and so on.

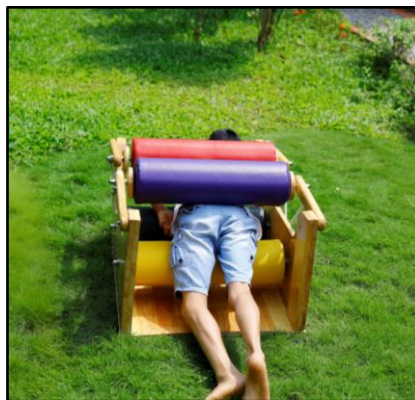
Sign Language – Recently, a program in sign language was introduced for our children in addition to their speech therapy sessions. This was introduced based on studies which showed that learning sign language in addition to verbal speaking skills enhances the child’s cognition and learning abilities. We also expect our children to grasp it quickly as many of them are visual learners.



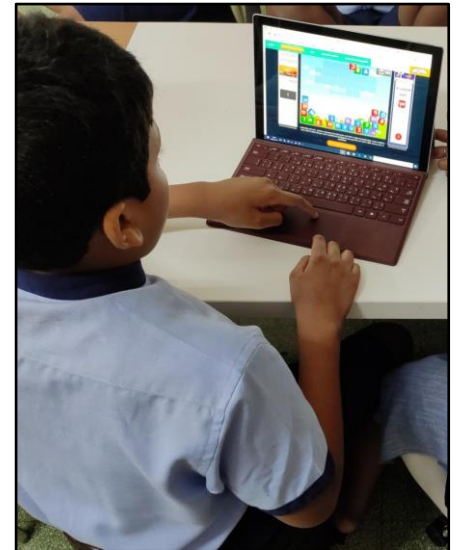
Psychology – At CADRRE our psychologists work with children to understand and develop their socio-emotional, cognitive and perceptual skills in addition to managing the various relationships with people at home and school. A variety of approaches are used to help them connect with the child and develop a working rapport with them to facilitate a better learning environment. Tailor made interventions pertaining to each child’s needs and goals are developed to impart new skills to them and inculcate behavioural changes if necessary. Many of our activities are centred around activities such as art, music, and play.



Occupational Therapy (OT) – Our occupational therapists engage children through a series of fun activities using the sensory wall, playing in the blue room, water play, obstacle courses and sensory circuits; that develop their cognitive, physical, social and motor skills. These activities may be customised after considering the physical, social, emotional, sensory, and cognitive abilities and needs of students. An intervention plan is developed keeping these in mind and incorporated into the IEP and daily schedule of the child. A plan usually comprises of a sensory diet necessary to keep children regulated along with group and need-based individual sessions that facilitate learning and regulation. Some of the common goals that therapists work on involve eating, grooming, using the bathroom, and developing gross and fine motor skills such as writing, colouring, using cutlery and so on. Toilet training is one area that has been very crucial amongst many of our students and, one that parents have been extremely grateful about.



Information and Communication Technology (ICT) – In ICT children are acquainted with using a laptop or desktop through activities such as identifying alphabets on the keyboard that improves hand-eye coordination and playing online games related to their academic goals. Junior students use an adaptive keyboard (Clevy keyboard) that has bigger keys and intelligent colour coding to represent different functional areas on it for children to work and learn ease. Older students usually stick to the usual keyboard and are more into functional activities such as typing out a grocery list as part of their ADL curriculum or learning to type for the purpose of communication.



Music therapy – Music classes are a favourite amongst many of our students. Music therapy has the exceptional ability to elevate moods and uplift spirits. This is true for most people, especially individuals on the autism spectrum - many of them who have unique and remarkable abilities in appreciating and understanding it despite the challenges they face. A serene environment with acoustic music of familiar songs that have repetitive lyrics or rhythm is ideal for creating a musical experience that engages them emotionally and cognitively. We encourage our children who respond positively to explore different styles of music and instruments.

Dance - Dance is a form of expression in which the body, mind and soul step in tune with the music. It taps into the deepest emotions and uses the body as the canvas to express Those feelings. In addition, it bolsters positivity, improves posture and instils confidence. It is a fun and creative therapeutic way of utilising the healing power of dance to help individuals on the spectrum by stimulating the brain, addressing sensory needs, encouraging communication, helping with motor skills and, most importantly, learning to accept themselves.



Art – Creating art is a cathartic experience. It gives children with special needs a voice of their own. Through the medium of art, they can explore and understand their surroundings and themselves better. Children are introduced to different styles of art and craft to gauge their interests and skill sets. They are given paper and different media such as crayons, paint, sketch pens, stamps, pencils etc. from which they can pick and choose. While some of them love getting messy by splattering and dribbling paint, others prefer crayons and colour pencils to work with. Activities such as handling a pair of scissors, applying glue, and using crayons and paint brushes also develop their fine motor skills. They get to explore different materials, textures and styles of working that facilitates personal growth and expression. It taps into the creative potential of our children and with that, the self confidence that many lack but deserve to feel.



The CADRRE Model – *for parents and caregivers*

Parents, caregivers, and others who interact with the children regularly form an integral part of the CADRRE model. As part of our initiative to provide ongoing education and support to families with individuals on the spectrum, our team provides need-based counselling sessions to them. Our team has also developed training modules specifically for parents and grandparents of individuals on the spectrum. Each module is about an hour or two and aims to familiarize parents and grandparents on the many methods used to manage autism.

Our last workshop held was on sexuality in relation to autism that was conducted by Renu Singh, parent of a teenage girl on the spectrum, special educator, and consultant trainer with Project Suvridha, Enfold trust, Bengaluru. Enfold India brings together stakeholders from the field across the country to address issues pertaining to gender and sexuality with emphasis on prevention of child sexual abuse through education and training.

Exploring and experimenting with one's sex and sexuality is common as an individual comes of age. This applies to individuals on the spectrum as well. However, individuals on the spectrum are vulnerable as most of them are not equipped with the ability to recognize something that is not right or good for them. So, it is imperative that they are taught to understand the concept of consent and safety. The main aim of the workshop was to throw light on this subject and teach parents and teachers how they can help their children develop an understanding of sexual development and how not to fall prey to people who may take advantage of them.

The workshop stressed upon how children could be taught about sex and sexuality as early as when they start to dress/undress, bathe or start to use the toilet themselves with or without assistance or when they show signs of going through puberty. It touched upon teaching children about their body, toileting skills, good touch & bad touch, recognizing their feelings and learning to differentiate between healthy and unhealthy relationships. These skills could be taught to children using visual aids (pictures/drawings/photos), social stories or videos or activities. Parents and teachers may customise their teaching material according to the goals they have for their child.



Learning made fun

As part of our curriculum there are plenty of fun events that are planned around the lesson plan for each class. These activities not just widen the students' scope of imagination but also enlivens the learning experience. It gives them an opportunity to live and experience these real-life scenarios in addition to developing their ability to think on their feet and social interaction skills. Children are also exposed to unfamiliar situations and circumstances so that they can be taught how to deal with such a situation.

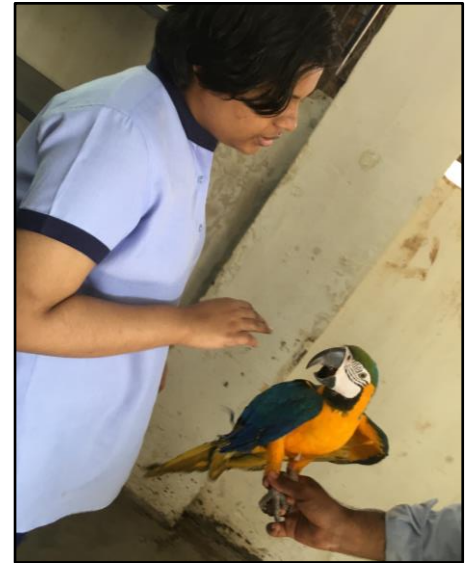
Role Play

This is a popular activity at school held every year. The theme for role play last year was community helpers. Our students participated enthusiastically. There were several young doctors, smart military personnel, a dashing professor, several enthusiastic chefs, and a handsome navy man. It was a fun break for our teachers and students from their usual routine. Students had fun taking turns in guessing the 'new identities' of their classmates.



Pets Day

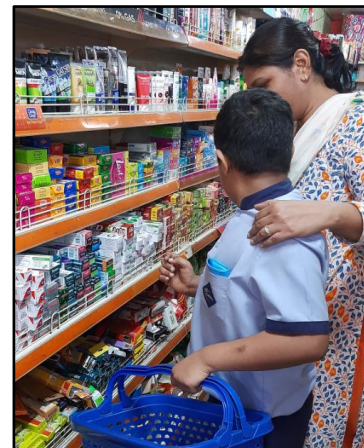
Those of us who have pets are familiar with the unconditional love they shower on us. Their undiluted affection and loyalty, in addition to their innate ability to sense nuances of human emotions such as fear, sorrow, anger etc. and help their owners cope with it, is the reason they are used as therapy companions. To give our students a sense of what it feels like to own a pet and have a companion in them, is why CADRRE in collaboration with Pets Club organized a pet's day at school. We had cuddly puppies and kittens, a baby turtle, a gorgeous macaw and furry rabbits drop in at school to spend time with students. Our students had the opportunity to hold and touch them, interact with them, and try their hand at feeding and grooming them.



Functional Fridays

These are fun sessions that children look forward to eagerly as they are a change from the Usual routine in classes. Functional Friday sessions vary from cooking to shopping to grooming to cleaning to gardening and other life skills that are indispensable in everyday life. Skills imparted to them in class are refined and put to test during this time.

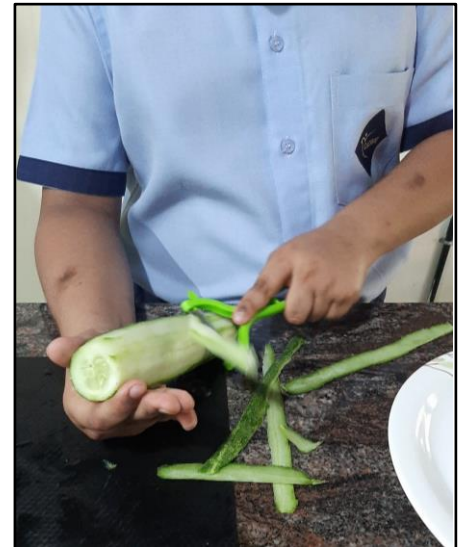
Cooking sessions are thoroughly enjoyed by both teachers and staff. Our little chefs whipped up some healthy green salads, crunchy bites, refreshing drinks and other treats such as dosa and chutney, sandwiches and more. These are very interactive sessions and planned in such a way that children could do them with minimal support from teachers. Children are taught to follow instructions through picture cards on how to chop vegetables, to mix ingredients, wash utensils, and so on. Once they finish cooking, they share it with their teachers and friends and have it together.



During shopping children are taught how to prepare a list of things to buy, follow aisles in a shop and pick up items on the list and handle money while billing.

Grooming sessions are when our children are taught how to brush their hair, button or zip their clothes and identify and use grooming products such as powder, moisturiser or shampoo and so on. These instructions are taught through picture cards and by imitation in ADL rooms.

Tidying up and sprucing up one's own room and home are also taught to children. Here children are taught to sweep the floor, fold their clothes, lay the bed, dust the furniture and so on.



Excursions

Excursions are enjoyable as it happens beyond the confined walls of a classroom and the experience sticks with them longer than any classroom activity. Children are encouraged to explore, discover, learn and relate to concepts they study in a classroom, to real-life scenarios and situations. This experience also quells several inhibitions that children on the spectrum face such as exploring new places, moving in crowds, handling the overwhelming sensory input on a road or inside a theatre and teaches them to manage themselves in such a scenario and helps build confidence in them. These trips also equip them with skills to deal with the unexpected or unforeseen which is a common challenge among those on the spectrum. Last year our children visited various places such the Playaza gaming zone at Travancore mall, Akulam tourist village, a theatre and so on.

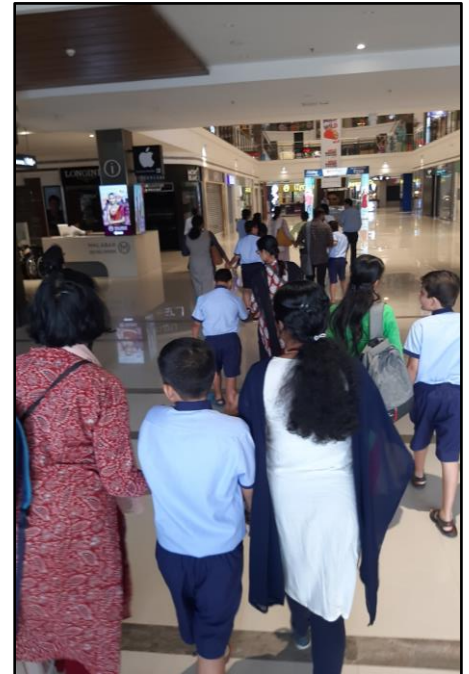
Outing to Playaza – July 2019

Students and teachers had a fun trip to Playaza, an indoor gaming arena at Mall of Travancore. Students were transported to a world of fun, adventure, and entertainment as they took turns to try out various activities and rides such as soft play, carousel, merry-go-rounds, trampoline and so on. While their juniors were frolicking about, our older students from the teen class went shopping in the mall along with their teachers as part of their ADL routine.



Catching a movie at Carnival Cinemas – February 2020

Many of our students were in for a new experience when we took them to Carnival Cinemas at Mall of Travancore for a special screening of Dr. Dolittle. Carnival cinemas accommodated changes such as making the acoustics more tolerable , ensuring dim lighting, and letting children to move around to make the whole experience more pleasurable and special for them. Many of them found Dr. Dolittle fascinating for his ability to communicate with animals. Those who found the sensory experience overwhelming could leave and spend time outside.



Picnic to Akkulam tourist village – November 2019

Our students were elated to visit the Akkulam tourist village. They seemed to enjoy the long bus drive to the park through meandering roads with lush greenery on the outskirts of the city. At the park, the scorching heat didn't seem to tire our students who were enjoying all the rides the sprawling park had to offer. They also spent time splashing around and playing in the pool.



Our photo moments

We had two big moments to celebrate last year. Some moments are so rare and so special that we enjoy reliving them from time to time as they add more colour and meaning to life.

Kerala Governor, Arif Mohammed Khan and wife, Reshma Arif drop by CADRRE

October 24, 2019 was a red-letter day for CADRRE as Honourable Governor of Kerala Mr. Arif Mohammed Khan and his wife, Mrs. Reshma Arif visited our Sasthamangalam centre to learn more about the school and spend time with our staff members and children. The Governor and his wife were received by G. Vijaya Raghavan and other members on the advisory board.



Protocols and official procedure took a back seat as the couple went around greeting and interacting with everyone including the children. They were seen sharing some lighter moments with the students as they high fived one of our toddlers and lifted another who rushed towards them. The couple was shown around the centre and familiarized with the challenges a person on the spectrum is posed with and the many ways it could be managed. They took the time to learn and understand the various facilities in the school which are not common to mainstream schools. They appreciated the efforts of the team and wished the school success to scale greater heights and be a role model to other schools across the country serving individuals on the spectrum.



CADRRE's Fundraising Sale

CADRRE for the very first time exhibited the artwork of its students aged 11-17 in a public platform. Each product was crafted with a loving eye for detail and celebrated the many hidden talents in our students. **Our buyers could pick whatever their eye fell upon in exchange for nothing or a price they thought it was worth.** There were plenty of goodies for buyers to choose from such as bookmarks, coasters, paper weights, block-printed pouches, jewelry and handmade soaps.



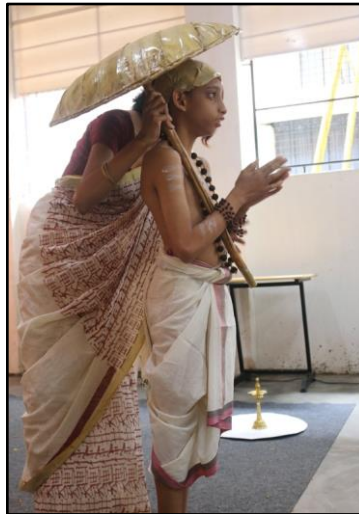
Celebrations and festivities

Every festival is celebrated with great gusto by teachers and students alike. These celebrations are usually occasions for families of our students and staff members to get together and know each other better.

Onam revelry

The fragrance of flowers from strings of marigold and a beautiful pookalam (floral carpet) adorning the school premises, filled the air with their heady scents. G. Vijaya Raghavan, welcomed the guests to the Onam celebrations that were held at the Sasthamangalam school premises.

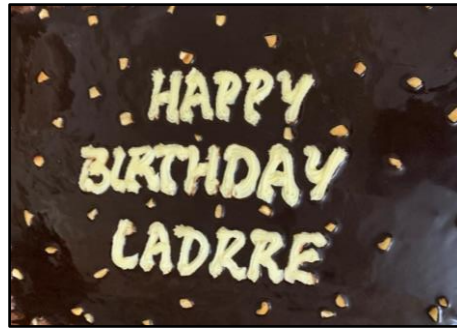




Dressed in their traditional best, our teachers and students walked the ramp hand in hand, flaunting their swishy silks, stiff khadis and soft cottons. Parents turned shutterbugs as their children waved and smiled at the gathering. While some of our students shook a leg to popular songs along with teachers, others painted the various moods and shades of Onam through a tableau, whose highlight was Mahabali surrendering to Vamanan.

CADRRE Celebrates its Anniversary

We celebrated our anniversary on September 6, 2019. Our team organized a surprise get together of all the staff - members. G Vijaya Raghavan shared a few words on CADRRE's milestones with the teachers and invited our youngest staff member to cut and distribute the cake.



India's 73rd year of Independence

We celebrated India's 73rd independence among students, staff members, and speakers invited for the conference. The tri colour was hoisted at both our centres. Children came dressed in their ethnic best in colours of white, green, and orange with tiny flags pinned to their outfits.



Christmas Cheer

Christmas celebration was an intimate occasion of just near and dear ones. Our centre at Sasthamangalam was adorned elegantly complete with a dazzling Christmas tree and an adorable snowman huddled up next to a cut out of a fireplace. Children came dressed in Christmas colours of red and green adding to the festive mood of the celebrations. Teachers and students sang carols and danced amidst much cheering. Children received gifts from their secret Santa and posed for pictures too.





Navratri Celebration

International Autism Conference 2019

The International Autism Conference, an annual conference, hosted by CADRRE endeavours to bring together the brightest minds working in the area of autism to share their knowledge with others that will dispel myths that surround autism and build an inclusive society.

CADRRE's multi-disciplinary approach was well received by all the speakers present at the three day International Autism Conference, hosted at the Leela Raviz Kovalam, that saw the participation of 150 delegates from around the country. There were 23 talks and ten paper presentations, a majority of which corroborated the efficacy of CADRRE's multidisciplinary model.

The conference was inaugurated by Dr. Catherine Lord in the presence of other speakers and advisory board members.



Innovations

Catherine Lord, a professor at the David Geffen University, University of California Los Angeles, with over 50 years of experience in working with children on the spectrum recollected her journey with developing ADOS, a popular assessment tool, its limitations and using the tool to not just determine inadequacies in an individual on the spectrum but also their capabilities. She also discussed the trajectory of development in individuals with autism tracked through longitudinal studies she conducted with colleagues and urged parents and professionals to join hands to bring out best results in children on the spectrum.

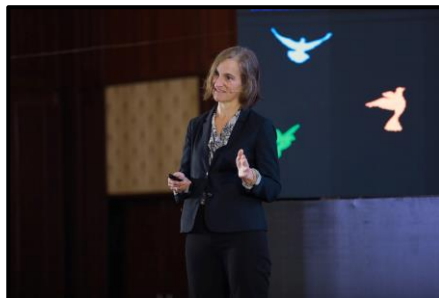
Program Manager of the elite Roim Rachok program, Efrat Selanikyo, took the delegates through the training modules of the program that trains individuals on the spectrum, utilising their skills as special as their needs, to serve the defense forces in specialized areas such as software quality assurance, information analysis, aerial photo analysis and maintenance of electrical optic equipment. She stressed on how employers of individuals on the spectrum ought to provide good support systems for individuals on the spectrum at the workplace to empower them and change the way the world sees them.



Research

Research is core to CADRRE's program that it envisions for itself and hopes to collaborate with the best minds around the world for this purpose. The conference is one such platform that brings together researchers from reputed institutions around the world to share insights from their work and hope the exchanges encourage new collaborations that could spark breakthroughs in improving support and care for individuals on the spectrum and their families.

While Dr. Vinod Menon, professor of neurosciences at the Stanford university elaborated on the neurological basis of social behaviour in autism; Dr. Gagan Joshi, medical director of the Bressler program at Massachusetts General Hospital shared insights on associated psychiatric comorbidities in high functioning individuals with ASD and Dr. Naveen Nagarajan, post- doctoral associate in human genetics, university of `Utah, spoke about the outcome of a very path breaking research of particular gene mutation which caused repetitive behaviour in mice similar to patterns observed in individuals with autism. HOD of Ayurveda pediatrics at Vaidyaratnam P.S Varier Ayurveda College, Kottakkal Dr. Dinesh shared the Ayurveda protocol for assisting individuals on the spectrum overcome challenges they face.





Disability advocate, parent of a boy on the spectrum; Gita Gupta spoke how therapists and clinicians should be able to look beyond autism when an individual on the spectrum displays unusual behaviour and the importance of research that should be integrated into providing robust standards of medical care for individuals on the spectrum. She is Director of the Anurag and Gita Gupta Foundation that supports research projects with a potential to bring about significant changes for individuals with autism by providing seed level grants to support ideas to go from conception to proof-of-concept.

Therapy & Education

Therapy and academics are two sides of the same coin as far as autism is concerned. Professionals working in this area are constantly required to be uber creative, experimentative and patient. IAC 2019 had several professionals heading institutions for those on the spectrum and therapists who work closely with autistic children, come share their journey with autism.

Cynthia Anderson, Senior Vice President, May Institute spoke on community-based research, accessing efficacy of assessment and intervention modalities in real world settings. Program Director of the Program director of FUSE program and FUSE preschool, Lauren Weeks, echoed Cynthia's claim that therapists and caretakers of autistic individuals should focus on adaptive behaviour in a real world setting as much as possible to help them live independent and respectful lives than teaching skills out of context which they might find difficult to comprehend.

Ralph Sperry, Chief of clinical services, Boston Higashi School and Ajith Mookorth, Head of the Autism Program, Dubai Autism Center, touched upon developing curricula for individuals on the spectrum. While Ralph touched upon autism prevalence in India and worldwide and essentials for living (EFL) which is a curriculum, assessment and skills tracking instrument, Ajit talked on developing curriculums for schools focusing on individuals on the spectrum.



Apraxia, an oral motor disorder, hinders speech in individuals on the spectrum. Tracy Vail, co-owner of Let's Talk Speech & Language Services shared several methodologies that parents and therapists could use to elicit speech in autistic individuals with apraxia. Feeding, a huge concern among children on the spectrum, was also discussed at the conference. Joan Surfus, Clinical Coordinator of Occupational therapy at Paediatric Therapy network, and adjunct assistant professor of clinical Occupational therapy at University of Southern California, who is an expert in working with children with unusual feeding and eating habits shared strategies to manage it with delegates.

Pavan Antony, a professor of special education at Adelphi university touched upon providing opportunities for higher education for individuals on the spectrum, which is a burgeoning and often ignore segment of society, and how community can contribute to this cause.

Dan Phillips, founder of the Tech Resource Centre Marin and the Nika project briefed delegates on the sheer variety of cost-effective assistive technology for encouraging communication available in the market that CADRRE and other schools working in the disability field could consider.

CADRRE Model

G. Vijaya Raghavan, Hon. Director CADRRE, presented a project report on CADRRE's five-year plan. His team presented on the CADRRE model and case studies from last year.



A Unique Conference

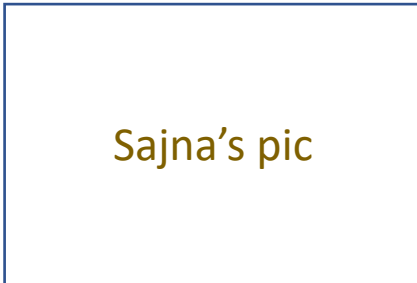
CADRRE's conference had multiple breakout sessions, titled round table sessions, that provided ample opportunity for the delegates to interact with the speakers and have their concerns addressed directly.

Another highlight of the conference were the dance and music sessions between talks with a sprinkling of cultural references for our speakers and delegates which were welcome breaks. These fun sessions were facilitated by Soumya Sanathanan, music teacher at CADRRE; Nayana Chandran, literacy teacher with CADRRE; and Haritha Mohan, speech language pathologist with CADRRE.



Entertainment

Sajna Vinish, a singer by profession, graced the occasion and rendered Carnatic pieces for the audience. We also had Pradyunn Ravi, Akhilesh R S and Hareesh Babu, individuals on the spectrum perform for us.



Our annual calendar

CADRRE brings out a desktop calendar every year that highlights an aspect of autism. Apart from being aesthetically designed, these calendars spread awareness and educate people about autism and its many facets. The calendar also highlights different aspects of our school in it.

While the first issue for the year 2018 highlighted successful people on the spectrum who have managed to create a niche for themselves in their respective fields; the second issue celebrated mothers of children on the autism spectrum, who have gone that extra mile to not just help their own child but also other individuals on the spectrum.

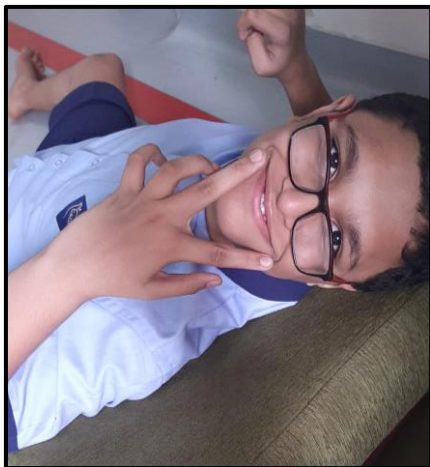
Our calendar for the year 2020 puts the spotlight on employers and organizations who are pushing the envelope by recognizing the special characteristics of individuals on the spectrum and employing them so that these individuals can lead independent and meaningful lives.



Pushing Boundaries

Ruwaydah has constantly surprised her teachers through her patience and persistence. Tactile hypersensitivity is an issue she struggles with, especially, while working with materials that are sticky, gooey, slimy, or moist. She disliked handling clay in her pottery classes and glue while learning decoupage. However, she did not let down her teachers or give up on herself. Gradually, with time, she began to get

comfortable with handling these materials with little or no assistance. She was one among the three students who worked on the decoupage coasters that were given as souvenirs to the delegates of the international autism conference hosted last year.



A little effort is all it took for our teachers to discover Sacheth's flair for understanding numbers, learning language and pottery. Within less than a year of joining us, he surprised his teachers with his ability to process instructions – something our staff members assumed might take longer after reading reports from the previous school.

Giridhar started writing alphabets and communicating through sign language only recently which was extremely rewarding for our teachers who have been trying to introduce new ways of communication to him hoping he would relate to one of them. However, the icing on the cake was when his mother narrated an incident where Giridhar signed that he wanted to use the toilet at home.



Pooja has plenty of fascinating stories and nuggets from her everyday life to share with everyone. She has come a long way from being picky and choosy with whom she opened to. Like all beautiful things that take time to bloom, Pooja took some time to come out of her shell and become the people's person she is today. She enjoys the company of her sister's friends, her cousins and friends at school and has plenty to share with us about all of them.

Wow moments

This is a morning ritual staff members follow diligently everyday wherein teachers begin the day by recalling a cherished moment from the previous day and sharing it with others to set the mood and spirit for the day. It could be a gesture, a smile, a touch or sometimes even just a nod from a student that made their day fruitful and rewarding.

Below are select highlights from last year:

- Age appropriate milestones tend to be delayed in most cases with children on the spectrum. The milestones vary from child to child and it is quite distressing for parents. When a teacher is successful in enabling the child to achieve the goal, the joy is doubled - a sense of accomplishment for the teacher and happiness for the parents. This was exactly the case when one of our pre-schoolers, a picky eater, recently started handling the spoon on his own and eating rice. He seemed quite oblivious to the wide grins plastered on his teachers' faces each time he daintily picked up the spoon with food on it and brought it close to his mouth.
- “Those who don't believe in magic will never find it”. As professionals working with individuals on the autism spectrum, we need to embrace the essence of this quote by Roald Dahl. There is always some child waiting to surprise you when you least expect it. Recently one of our toddlers sprung a surprise on his teachers when he waved his hand in response to his teachers who were bidding him farewell before he left for home. This was a moment of celebration considering he had never responded before.

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- There are few of us who don't feel elated when someone remembers our name and greets us. This joy is doubled when a child remembers your name. This might not come across as big deal for many but for an autistic child to remember the name of a staff member who does not teach him is a moment to be cherished.
 - Puberty is a curve ball thrown at us. While some of us grapple with efforts trying to comprehend it, others sail through it as though it never happened. For girls on the spectrum, it is even more challenging and to prepare them for menstruation is a daunting task for parents, caregivers, and the child. So, when one of our students verbally communicated to her mother that she was menstruating and requested to be taken to the toilet, it was a eureka moment for the parents and the teachers alike.
 - All attempts to teach the alphabet to one of our students had proved unsuccessful until his teachers started using clay to model the alphabets for him. It was his enthusiasm to work with the material that gave her the idea. Soon he began responding to his classes.
 - Did you know the first word a student from our junior class uttered was 'finish'? It was a special moment for teachers who were grappling with different ways of trying to get him to communicate verbally when, finally, one day he said 'finish' after he was done with lunch.

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- Actions speak louder than words. This is so true of many children with autism who speak volumes through their quiet gestures. One of our teachers was in for a pleasant surprise when her student helped her with setting up the classroom for an activity by moving chairs and arranging toys. She was elated by her student's thoughtful gesture. He offered her a helping hand without being asked to do so.
 - Social interactions can be a huge challenge for individuals on the spectrum. So, one can imagine the jubilation our teachers felt when our toddlers were seen playing hide-and- seek in class. It was a treat to see them acknowledge each other's presence and enjoy each other's company.

Parent testimonials

Dear Cadrre team,

What a wonderful year it has been!

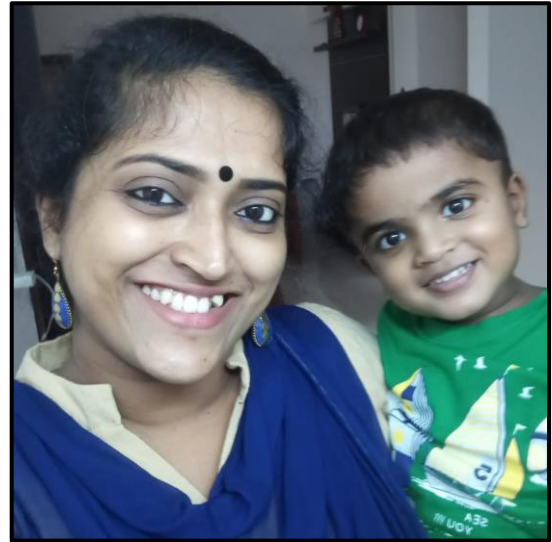
Words alone cannot express our gratitude for all the time the whole Cadrre team has spent with our naughty little girl. All of the love, time and long hours your team invested in Zaara has shown a lot of change each and every day. We feel that she has become more confident in learning new things. We feel blessed that she got chance to enrol in Cadrre. Academically the team are creating superstars of each one of your students. Thank you so much for everything you do each and everyday. We are sure she will always look back at this time in her life very fondly and remember Cadrre as being one of her most important mentors.

With bouquets of gratitude

From Parents and Grandparents of Zaara

Sangeeta Venugopal, Vihaan Arjun's mother says,

“CADRRE was a decision we had to make as parents after much deliberation. Our son was just 3 years old and not a native of Thiruvananthapuram, so there were many factors to consider before deciding to come here. I believe that it was one of the best decisions we took for our son. He adapted quickly to CADRRE and their ways of teaching. In this past one year, his social skills have improved a lot and he is moving towards his various milestones at his own pace.



His poor eating habits were one of our major concerns, which was addressed by the CADRRE team in a calm and systematic manner and one that showed great results. CADRRE has supported me in my journey as a parent of a child with ASD. Their parent training modules helped me in communicating to my parents and in-laws on how they could interact with their grandson in a better way. The one-on-one session for parents with a psychologist was useful and much needed. I really appreciate the efforts taken by CADRRE for the development and wellbeing of my child. I am looking forward to another beautiful year with CADRRE.”

Reena Mathai, Evan's mother says,

God Why me? Why did this happen to me? - is the first reaction. Denial, anger and finally depression follows next. The journey this parent must undertake is hard. Only a "The twinkle in the eyes of a happy mother and the sparkle in the eyes of a proud father are not uncommon to mankind on the birth of their child. Each minute the focus is on the new-born and, its wellbeing and protection are their primary concern. Sadly, the reality that this prized possession of ours is AUTISTIC was the deadliest realisation we underwent as parents. Why strong support can help us.

THE Autism School was a blessing from the almighty to me and other parents who have children with ASD because this institution is one of a kind. The principles this school is based on are such that any parent would get answers to all their queries and doubts.

We owe all love and gratitude to G. Vijaya Raghavan sir who has provided us the best because our children too have the gates of academics open to them surpassing all their limitations. Each child is a butterfly flying in the wind. Some fly high and some low. We needn't compare each one because each one is special and different. Our children can also be butterflies flying carelessly like any other because their special nature is valued at The Autism School.

CADRRE's team comprising Malini ma'am, Lekshmy ma'am, Sulekha ma'am and an efficient team of young and vibrant teachers are to be praised for the wonderful world they provide our children. Our children can be themselves. They need not be like others. And they are being enabled to improve their abilities and skills to step out into this world. I can see how happy my child is to go to his school and I owe them all love and gratitude. The school is truly a model to the world. Its wellbeing is our pride. We are always supported in everything and anything by The Autism School to bring up our child like any other normal child."

Evan and his mother's pic

“ Our children can also be butterflies flying carelessly like any other because their special nature is valued at The Autism School. ”

Gayathri, Harinandan's mother says,

"My son 8 years old is in CADRRE since December 2018. Ever since I heard about CADRRE I was keen to get my son join there as I felt he would get the routine of a school, academics, all therapies, peer interaction and multisensory exposure like yoga, music, art under one roof. My son instantly settled down to the routine at CADRRE. Through the guidance of the teachers, he has progressed in many areas especially communication. Though its a group approach, every child's individual needs and learning styles are incorporated in the class setting. There is also excellent communication between the staff and parents throughout the year. But what touched me most in the genuine empathy among all staff towards the children and their families. The last 1 ½ years has been an enriching experience for my son and I thank the entire CADRRE team for helping many families like mine navigate through the autism maze."



Our support staff members

Our support staff members are an indispensable unit of our team. Our support staff members are a very dedicated team who are with our teachers and students round the clock during the time our children are at school.

They play a huge role in ensuring our children have a clean, safe and supportive environment to explore and learn. They help our children not just with classroom activities but also feeding during mealtimes, attending to their bruises and scratches, using the washroom and many a times, just keeping them company. A crucial part of their work involves ensuring our children are safe, especially during play time and field trips.

The support staff members also assist our teachers with preparing teaching material and lending a hand in managing the class.

In a nutshell, the work they do is crucial for the smooth functioning of the school and a day without them is unimaginable!



Our Students

PRESCHOOL STUDENTS

Aarav Krishna - He is the youngest of the class who has a great flair for music and a budding percussionist. He is a cheerful and happy child.

Aadidev – He is the silent observer and deep thinker of our class who comes into his own in the company of his teachers.

Ethan – He is an amicable child with a winning smile and endearing laugh.

Julia – She is the happy-go-lucky girl of the class with a very cheerful and pleasant disposition.

Niharika – She is a very affectionate child who is intelligent and artistically inclined.

Rayan – He is the acrobat of our class who enjoys working with numbers and puzzles. There is never a dull moment with Rayan around.

Teerth – He is extremely enthusiastic and loves taking part in all the activities at class. He is a lovingly child who gets along with everyone.

Tharun – He is a delightful ball of energy with an infectious smile. Tharun is an enthusiastic and curious learner.

Vihaan – He enjoys dancing and gives the best hugs that can cheer up anyone who is having a dull day.

Vinay – He is the go-getter of the class, who is as clear in thought and action. He enjoys singing and is a very observant and a fast learner.

Arnav -He is a meticulous artist who surprises his teachers with some exquisite masterpieces. He enjoys his classes and looks forward to them.

Aarav – He is a spontaneous dancer who can freestyle with great ease.

JUNIOR STUDENTS

Mahadevan - He is most happy in the company of books. He is extremely gentle and sensitive.

Madhav – He is a lively child and loves coming to school. He enjoys singing, dancing, and playing.

Sreehari – He has a very pleasant smile. Sreehari is blessed with an excellent singing voice and enjoys performing for his teachers and friends.

Imraan – He is a happy child and an artist who brightens the class with his beautiful pictures.

Harinandan – He is pleasant and good natured. He loves listening to music and is extremely good at communicating through gesturing.

Eshaan – He is the most tech savvy child in our class who enjoys listening to stories and rhymes.

Siddharth - He is a very affectionate child with a pleasant demeanour.

Deva – He is an animal lover who can spend hours just watching them.

Abhiram – He is the runner of our class gifted with an incredibly beautiful and innocent smile. He can win anyone’s heart with his warm hugs.

Guruvandanan – He is the budding choreographer of our class with a naughty and mischievous smile. He takes part in all the activities. He was chosen to dress up as Mahabali for our Onam program.

Rishi - He is a very gregarious and sociable child who loves attentions from his teachers and peers. He loved greeting everyone in the morning as they came to school.

Zaara – Extremely naughty and playful, Zara was the only girl in our class. She played the role of Mother Mary for our Christmas tableau. She enjoyed coming to school.

PRETEEN STUDENTS

Nikhil – He brings to life the entire Chota Bheem gang at CADRRE by calling out the names of the characters and repeating dialogues from it.

Joel – An animal lover, Joel is always ready for a visit to the zoo. He can spend hours poring over books on animals and can recognize variants of the same species. For instance, he can instantly differentiate between a hammer head shark from another group of sharks! Now, how many of us can do that.

Hazeeb – He is content as a person and finds joys in the simplest things that life has to offer such as playing a game of ball, clapping along to a song, or just eating some good food.

Tanzeeh – He is the livewire of our class who is full of energy. Tanzeeh has a lot to offer to anyone whom he befriends.

Evan – Focussed, attentive, disciplined and immaculately dressed – Evan is the perfect student whom any teacher would love to have in class.

Kashyap – Kashyap has an endearing smile. He is a budding musician who can sing and play the table.

Kaushik – He has the most adorable head bobble. He has a great flair for sign language and has surprised his teachers with his ability to grasp it.

Vihaan – Vihaan is a happy child whom everybody wants to befriend. Extremely naughty and energetic, Vihaan is great fun to have around.

Aditya – He is the go-getter of our class, trying his best in everything, be it studies, music, or dance. With his tight hugs and tickle game requests, we too enter a zen like zone watching him enjoy his favourite music tracks

Adithya – He is a whiz at working with numbers and the apple of his parent's eyes.

Gyan – Creates a whole family of animal characters through his drawings in minutes and we can't but acknowledge his vibrant presence with his loud exclamations and determined arguments. He is incredible at karaoke too.

TEEN STUDENTS

Ruwaydah – Ruwi is a very gentle person who is extremely romantic at heart. She enjoys long drives, listening to music, dancing, treating herself to some good food and painting. It is a delight to watch her work in the art studio.

Pooja – She is extremely sociable and loves being in the company of books, stories, and music. Pooja is fascinated by tales of prince & princesses', castles, tiaras and all the magic around it. Her ability to memorise and recite poems is commendable.

Sacheth – A quick learner, Sacheth has a great sense of humour. He can put a smile on anyone's face with his dance moves, and improvisation of songs close to his heart.

Giridhar – He is jovial and every ready to help his teachers and friends in class. He has an endearing and mischievous smile.

Our Team



