



ON THE WINGS OF HOPE

NEWSLETTER OF
SOCIETY FOR THE EDUCATION
OF THE CHALLENGED



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Education is the birthright of every child irrespective of whatever handicaps he/she might have!

It is a matter of great pride and fulfillment to SEC (The Society for the Education of the Challenged, Child & Adult) that the institution has completed 60 years. It has been a challenging ride for everyone, the teachers, the office and support staff, the Managing Committee and most importantly the students.

As we look back to these 60 years with gratification, we realise that whatever has been achieved by the Institution has been due to the sincerity with which it is being served by everyone connected with SEC over the years.

The dedicated management by its Executive team and willingness to experiment with different innovative approaches has contributed to the growth of SEC. All levels of staff are encouraged to participate, to contribute and to express their views for the progress in children's development. By creating a democratic environment for its staff to work in, SEC has been ahead of its time in its management ideas.

The responsiveness to the needs of its special children, a concept in social work education is fully exemplified at SEC. The humane approach of the organization has been an integral feature and also its strength.

Life skills are an important approach in youth development. SEC has worked hard with a whole lot of projects and ideas to unearth hidden potentials of the children. The success stories of many of our ex-students are a testimony to the work done at SEC.

SEC does not want to rest here; its aim is to become a complete destination for the total rehabilitation of the physically challenged.

The goals of the Society for the Education of the Challenged are:

- To give normal education to orthopedically handicapped children using special methods
- To eventually rehabilitate and integrate the students into regular schools
- To provide opportunities for further studies, learn a vocation and become contributing and productive members of society
- To create public awareness that education is the right of every child whether physically handicapped or otherwise.



*Sixty
Glorious
Years!*

Needless to add that all this would not have been possible without our Donors and Sponsors

They have been with us at every step in these glorious 60 years of SEC.



Milestones

1960

1963

1965

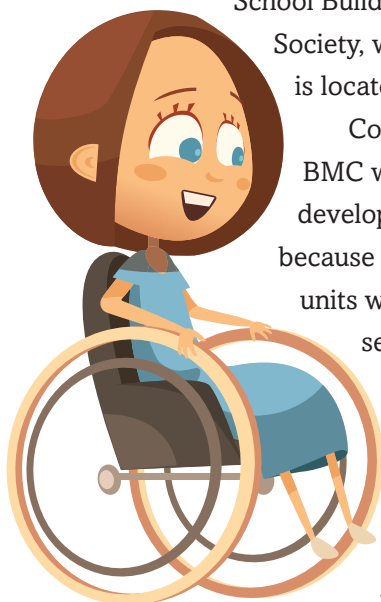
1960 The Society for the Education of the Crippled (Child & Adult) was founded by Late Mrs. Fathema Ismail in 1960. The small beginning was made at the Scout & Guide Hut at Dhobi Talao, Mumbai.

Her vision and concern for the physically handicapped came from her personal experience as a mother of a polio affected child whom she successfully rehabilitated medically and educationally. That a physically challenged child can get educated and become independent was very difficult to envisage in those days. At that time the parents, founder members, staff and volunteers at SEC needed courage and conviction to believe that handicapped children could be educated to stand on their own feet.

1963 In 1963 the Society was given a recognition by the Bombay Municipal Corporation; initially it provided the Society with two rooms at Agripada, where the first batch of 13 students was enrolled, with Marathi and Gujarati medium of instructions.

1965 In 1965 the whole extent of one side of the school and the courtyard in the Agripada Municipal School Building were provided to the Society, where the main school unit is located till today.

Collaboration with the BMC was essential for future development of the Society, because the vision to set up new units was already being planned. A sense of proper school setting was experienced by this shift to Agripada, where together with education, arrangements were also made for physiotherapy treatment to the children.



Buses and transport formed an important feature in bringing the children to the school and to take them back to their home safely.

Besides education, the children were taught to become independent by learning to take care of themselves through ADL (Activities of Daily Living).

Nutrition to the children formed an essential part. The children were from lower socio-economic strata. The nutrition programme was introduced with a banana and milk on arrival and a meal at

lunchtime, which helped them to sustain good health and improve their concentration.

1975 The Parent-Teacher Association was started in 1975 because SEC realized that the role of parents was of vital importance to the well-being of a disabled child. The handicapped children need constant help, understanding and encouragement, and it was important for the parents to understand the child's disability and the extent to which the child could be made independent.

Visits were made to children's homes to understand the conditions of their family environment, the constraints that they faced and how best to overcome them.

1977 In 1977 SEC established a Hospital School at Bai Jerbai Wadia Hospital for Children, at Parel, Mumbai, a facility for children who were in the hospital for long stretches of time. It was essential to help them catch up with the school work and to divert attention away from their illness.



1975

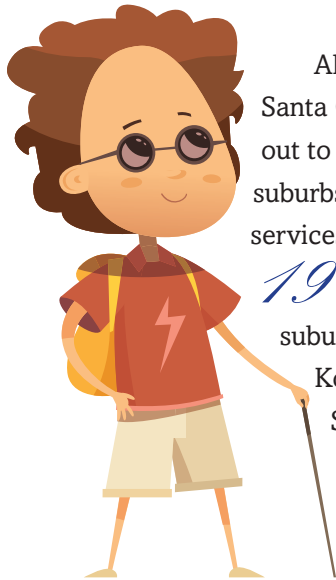
1977

1981

1985

1987

1993



Also in 1977 a second unit at Santa Cruz was started, to reach out to handicapped children in the suburbs with the same quality of services that existed at Agripada.

1981 In 1981 another suburban unit at Raoli Camp, Sion Koliwada was set up. It reflected SEC's desire to reach physically challenged children in Asia's largest slum Dharavi. The unit has since shifted to new premises.

1985 In 1985 SEC celebrated its silver jubilee and took a major decision for reaching out to the disabled in the rural areas. The commitment and dedication at SEC, its organizational capacity and staff support were there to take up challenges to support new ventures and efforts.

An identification survey of the handicapped in rural Maharashtra, Taluka Maval,

District Pune was conducted. The needs of the rural disabled were identified. The rural unit had to be a residential facility, unlike the Day Schools in the urban setting, because of the nature of the rural life and transport problems.

1987, 1993 In 1987 SEC Centre for Independent Living was started at Talegaon, which later shifted to Kanhe Phata in 1993 and named Tehmina Barma Centre for Independent Living, after one of its founding members. The residential unit is now housed in SEC's own premises at Naigaon.

At the residential school the children study from standard 1 to 4 in the unit itself. The older children from standard 5 to standard 10 are sent to another school by the school bus.

SEC in the new millenium

- SEC is since modernized with computerization in offices of all the units; a database of students' information has been created.
- Besides academics and computer training, the children receive special classes in music, Adaptive Daily Living skills, vocational skills, physical education, arts and crafts.
- Not only do the children celebrate all Indian festivals, they also enjoy special days like Teachers Day, Independence Day and Republic Day; they participate enthusiastically in Sports, Swimming and Art Competitions, which encourages them to move beyond their physical limitations.
- The school employs a Certified Orthotist to design and fabricate all types of permanent orthoses, an Occupational Therapist to develop, recover and maintain the daily living and work skills of the disabled children, a Speech Therapist to carry out evaluation and treatment of communication disorders and swallowing disorders, and a Physical Therapist giving mobility for gait and locomotion.
- The Integration and Inclusion programme of SEC founded in May 2019 for the ex-students of SEC provides support in admission to regular schools, skill training, counseling and guidance to enable them to start a business of their own, and pursue many other skills.



Remembering Nergiz Subawalla (1935 – 2020)

Nergiz Subawalla (nee Batliwala) was born in Mumbai in 1935. She graduated earning B.A. and M.A. degrees in Sociology and Psychology. She was a Radhakrishnan Scholar and visited a few countries as an exchange student in the early 1960s. She also completed post-graduation at the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS).

She dedicated her life to social work and gave her pro bono services to the Liaison Committee, the Parsi General Hospital and Hobby Arts Center at the St. Mary's School.

But the work closest to her heart was at SEC, where she gave her services as a Treasurer on the Executive Committee from 1989 to 2017.

Nergiz spent her life for the less privileged segments of society, respecting people for their achievements and not for their wealth or title. Her closest friends were those who shared her values and ideals. Nergiz has left behind a treasure trove of memories and an exemplary life for all those who came in touch with her to remember.



Our deep gratitude to:

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*We are grateful to all our donors and benefactors.
We regret that due to shortage of space we have
not been able to acknowledge each of you individually
by name*

*We are today where we are because of
you*



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DD /Cheques be drawn in favour of 'Society for the Education of the Challenged (Child & Adult)', Mumbai.

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