

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25











Let's work together to create a better tomorrow for individuals with special needs!

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MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES

Greetings!

As the Founding Trustees of Kshitij, we have been happy to devote our time, expertise, and energy to supporting adults with special needs for the past twenty seven years. Since the inception of our journey in 1997, we have remained steadfast in our work in the field of intellectual disabilities. Guided by the 3 P's - Positivity, Patience, and Persistence, we have successfully addressed a critical gap in skill development opportunities for individuals with intellectual challenges over the age of eighteen.

While we have remained committed to diligently managing Kshitij's daily operations, nurturing relationships with key stakeholders, and inspiring donors, we also recognize the importance of evolving with the times. In that spirit, we have chosen to empower younger professionals to take on meaningful responsibilities, encouraging their fresh perspectives to help shape the organization's future. We welcome the newly elected Board of Trustees and Consultant, who began their term in the later part of the year. Our Advisory Team, which has played a key role in supporting the transition of Kshitij to a more professional mode of functioning, stepped down after completing vital tasks. Their contributions will always be cherished.

This year we were delighted to welcome two special adults into the Kshitij family. Kshitij remains dedicated to providing a sheltered workplace for those unable to work in an open environment. Our adults continued to grow and flourish through a variety of enriching interactions facilitated by Kshitij with diverse organizations. These opportunities allowed them to earn accolades, showcase Kshitij products, perform on stage, and engage in fitness and fun-filled activities. Providing counselling to adults and their family members helped address their emotional needs, enhancing their resilience and productivity. Art, music, and physical activities served as therapy for promoting their overall well-being.

Introducing innovative new products and training our adults to work productively on them has always been central to the growth of Kshitij and the adults we serve. Alongside healthy additions to our food line, we expanded into a range of new handcrafted items. These developments were met with enthusiasm from our loyal customers and new audiences, whom we connected with through word of mouth and by showcasing our products at various exhibitions.

The challenge of relocating from Kshitij's rented workplace at Opera House is looming large in the coming period. However, we will persevere in finding a way to continue providing a safe and sheltered workplace for our adults with special needs.

The support of our loyal well-wishers played a key role in raising funds for initiatives and programs aimed at enhancing the well-being and development of our adults. We also reached out to new donors who resonated with the vision of Kshitij. Backing from the Executors to the Estate of the late Freny K. Parekh, the Tobaccowala Foundation, Excel Industries, the Bombay Community Public Trust (BCPT), Electromag Joest Vibration Pvt. Ltd., and others, enabled Kshitij to carry forward its mission and broaden its outreach to individuals across varied socioeconomic backgrounds.

MESSAGE FROM THE TRUSTEES (CONTD.)

We are deeply grateful to all our donors, patrons, teachers, support staff, consultants, and volunteers for their unwavering support and trust that has taken us forward in our journey. Kshitij continues to explore new avenues for growth and expansion. We warmly welcome collaborations with corporates through CSR initiatives, corporate gifting, and employee engagement programs.

We remain committed to exploring new possibilities for our adults, ensuring that they continue to take further strides towards a life of dignity, self-reliance, and fulfillment.



OVERVIEW, VISION AND MISSION

OVERVIEW

KSHITIJ is a registered NGO that has been providing skill development training for the past twenty-seven years, to adults with intellectual challenges arising from brain damage, Down syndrome, autism, and dyslexia, Recognizing the vital need to address the question of "What next?" once children with special needs complete their education in special schools at age 18, Kshitij was established through the dedicated efforts of four mothers, having children with special needs above the age of 18 years.

At Kshitij, we offer programs centered around two key areas: functional and vocational skills training. Adults receive hands-on training in crafting exquisite handmade products and preparing a variety of delicious confectioneries and savouries. Additionally, they are guided in developing functional and life skills to help them navigate everyday challenges with confidence. To support their overall growth, Kshitij also enables therapeutic services like counselling, music and dance therapy, and the like. Kshitij Autism Therapy Centre delivers structured, specialized support for adults with autism, enabling them to thrive alongside peers with other intellectual disabilities.

To enhance self-esteem and maintain motivation, all adults at Kshitij receive a weekly stipend. Social connections are nurtured through a range of activities, including in-house events, interactions with external organizations, and an annual picnic. Kshitij is deeply committed to building an inclusive society where adults with special needs from all backgrounds have the chance to develop their abilities. Hence, it extends its reach to students from the Mumbai Central BMC school for special children by securing sponsorships for their education. From its modest origins to its present-day influence, Kshitij continues to support adults with intellectual challenges on their journey towards dignity, self-reliance, and hope!

VISION:

Kshitij envisions being a professionally managed, self-sustaining, and role model organization working for the welfare and well-being of adults having intellectual disabilities.

MISSION:

- To give meaning and respect to the lives of intellectually challenged adults by progressively enhancing their emotional health and self-esteem, in order that they live an independent life through job-specific skill development
- To operate sheltered workspaces that provide a long-term "learn and earn" environment for intellectually challenged adults and a platform for bonding
- To equip the adults, in terms of knowledge, skills, and attitude and give them the confidence to integrate with mainstream society



VOCATIONAL

The goal for Kshitij related to adults with special needs is to help them live a life of self-reliance, dignity, and meaningful social interaction with their families, communities, and others. The dedicated efforts of Kshitij teachers are always focused on bringing them closer to achieving this vision of a fulfilling life.



Rinku & Reshma cut almonds for chocolates



Vrishin packs the



Hetal and Niren shape the dough into cookies

Equipping our adults with vocational skills is a crucial step in this direction. One such valuable training involves the preparation of a variety of delicious chocolates, cookies, and popular savory items like chivda, chakli, kurmura, and mukhwaas. Over time, many of them have honed their skills in making these items, demonstrating their growing proficiency and confidence in the kitchen.



Saurabh does stencil painting on child mats



Radhika embellishes pouches



Barun decorates aarti thalis

Skills acquired on hand crafted products include stencil painting on child mats and bags, block printing on bags, folders, and stoles, painting on diyas, pots, and cards, as well as stringing fabric envelopes, bag handles, and pouches. Our adults also excel in embellishing rangolis, thalis, candles, and other festive items, showcasing their creativity and craftsmanship.



Dipen strings the torans



Priyanka stencil paints on child bag packs



Sahil strings the latkans

VOCATIONAL (CONTD.)

As part of Kshitij's initiative to promote a greener environment, **Mrs. Bharati Gandhi** taught our adults the skill of planting saplings. This hands-on, active learning experience allowed them to acquire a valuable new skill while contributing to the creation of a product that will help purify and beautify the environment.







Rohan, Roshan, Adil and Radhika are happily engrossed in the process of planting saplings

AUTISM PROGRAM



Krish enjoys exploring the wonders of iPad



Barun applies himself to functional mathematics

The all-round approach followed by our Autism program has led to encouraging results for our adults with autism. This year one more adult joined the group, upping our total to six adults enrolled under the program. Visual schedules, structured teaching techniques, communication boards, and assistive technology continued to effectively address the unique challenges they face.

Two students with sensory issues were desensitized to their challenge and happily started work with a medium that was earlier an irritant for them. Many adults with autism were taught use of the iPad for playing cognitive games. Functional mathematics, puzzles and other cognitive games continued to build their confidence and their skills.

All these interventions help reduce their levels of anxiety and anger, improve emotional regulation, and foster the development of coping strategies, as well as social and communication skills.

FUNCTIONAL - DAILY LIVING

Functional skills training is essential for adults with intellectual challenges as it equips them to develop their practical abilities to navigate daily life. Such life skills help foster independence, improve self-esteem, and promote a higher quality of life for them. Some of these include personal care and hygiene, cooking, shopping for groceries, folding clothes, cleaning workplaces, managing money, amongst other skills.

COOKING

Learning to prepare simple meals is an essential life skill that will help ensure our adults' sustenance in the future. Consistent practice of basic tasks such as peeling, cutting, chopping vegetables, preparing tea, and using a mixer builds their confidence and enables them to carry out these functions with greater autonomy.







Harshal, Adil, Kiran, Rohan, Ameya and Hiral concentrate on chopping various vegetables

FUNCTIONAL ACADEMICS



Saurabh figures out a cognitive game

Incorporating puzzles and play-based activities to stimulate cognitive abilities makes learning fun and effective. Kshitij teachers foster an environment where adults feel motivated and encouraged to continue learning. General knowledge and basic calculations are also introduced effectively through these engaging activities.



Rohan enjoys putting together a puzzle

FUNCTIONAL - DAILY LIVING (CONTD.)

SHOPPING



Satyesh chooses items that he needs



Ameya, Roshan, Radhika place items in trolley



Satyu makes payment for items purchased

Teaching essential life skills, such as shopping, managing household tasks like folding clothes, and cleaning their workspace, not only promotes independence but also boosts the confidence of Kshitij adults. These practical skills are crucial for self-sufficiency, helping them gain more control over their environment and daily routine.

FOLDING CLOTHES









Reshma, Rinku, Roshan, Rajiv and Harish are happy to learn how to fold clothes neatly

COUNSELLING

Professional counselling offers a confidential space for our adults to express their feelings and concerns, and receive understanding and guidance in coping with challenging situations - besides improving their behaviour and emotional resilience. Counselling their care givers goes a long way in sensitizing them to the evolving needs of their children and learning to adopt effective strategies to support them. Professional counselling continues to be integrated into Kshitij programs.

FUNCTIONAL - DAILY LIVING

HOLISTIC FITNESS

Physical exercises, cycling, and cricket continue to be some avenues of physical fitness for Kshitij adults. Physical activities trigger the release of natural mood boosters that can reduce anxiety, depression, and stress. Regular exercise also improves cognitive abilities such as memory, attention, learning and problem-solving skills. All our adults look forward to their recreational activities at Kshitii. especially when they assemble at Mumbai Central workplace with a spacious courtyard to support these activities.



Our group of enthusiastic adults are happy to stretch



Saurabh & Kiran sweat it out



Ameya practises his cricketing skills



Sahil enjoys riding the cycle Rinku loves dodging in the school compound



the ropes



BONDING WITH JAI VAKEEL FOUNDATION



A guided tour of the Jai Vakeel Foundation's vocational training center & school fostered new connections and valuable learnings on 3rd April 2024. It was an enriching experience for our teachers to observe the operations of our co-worker organisation's centre and school for individuals with special needs.

WINNING ACCOLADES AT ZONTA CLUB



It was an uplifting experience for Kshitii adults receive to recognition from International - an organization that works tirelessly to create a better world for women & girls. Priyanka and Reshma, were the proud recipients of trophies, certificates, and monetary prizes awarded by the Zonta Club of Bombay I & III during their Charter Night on 27th April 2024.

CREATIVITY ON THE DANCE FLOOR





A program by the **Dance Riders Academy** on 27th July 2024 brought about trophies and certificates of participation for our creative adults, ensuring that they left with a sense of accomplishment.

LENDING A SUPPORTIVE HAND

The **Dadar Bhagini Samaj** offered a terrific opportunity for our adults to perform captivating group dances, along with prize winning solo performances by **Charmy and Harshal**, on 19th September 2024. Kshitij also took part in their exhibition, which received an excellent response.



CREATIVITY WITH THE BRUSH

Kshitij adults had the opportunity to hone their creative skills at Infinite Perspectives, an exhibition organized by the NGO **Special Hangout**, which took place from June 18th to 24th, 2024. **Sahil** was able to display his incredible painting talent at this event which offered a platform for neurodivergent artists to showcase their work.







SHOWCASING CREATIVE SKILLS

An interactive festival held by **ADAPT (Able Disabled All People Together)** on 4th December 2024 allowed our adults to joyfully participate in pottery, block printing, origami, nail art, tattoo art, and more. The highlight of the event was a lively Bollywood song medley, met with loud cheers and applause. All left the venue not only with their handmade creations but also with cherished memories.







STRENGTH IN COMMUNITY

Ummeed Child Development Centre celebrated the International Day of Persons with Disabilities by hosting a 'Family Day' on 1st December 2024. Filled with fun, food, pets, books, games, music & dance, art & craft, and product stalls, it offered Kshitij families a wonderful opportunity to engage in this inclusive community event.







SUPPORTING OUR CAUSE

Rotary Club Bombay Bayview Charitable Trust played a vital role in providing us with essential festive raw materials during Diwali.

The **Kulkarni family** celebrated their daughter's birthday by sharing cake and snacks at Kshitij's Mumbai Central premises on 30th October 2024.





BONDING OVER FITNESS

An invitation to attend the YOGA BY THE BAY, organized by the **AWMH** (Association for the Welfare of Persons with a Mental Handicap) on Republic Day, led to enthusiastic participation from several Kshitij adults. Wearing matching T-shirts and practicing yogasanas under the guidance of professional instructors, their experience was both invigorating and enriching.





WALKING TOWARDS FITNESS

The **Special Walkathon**, organized by **Aawhan Palak Sangh** on 15th February 2025 was a celebration of special adults and their zest for life. It was heartwarming to see eight adults from Kshitij participate with such enthusiasm. To top it all, Kshitij also clinched the first prize in the Best Poster competition!







FUN N FROLIC WITH ROTARACT CLUB







Young members of the **Rotaract Club of Mumbai Mulund South** brought engaging games, entertainment, and yummy eats for our adults on 31st Jan. and 1st March 2025. Such interactions are invaluable for fostering happy connections, and providing opportunities for relaxation and rejuvenation.

COLLABORATIONS FOR PRODUCT EXHIBITIONS



Bajaj Electricals



Blinds Unity for Self Sufficiency (BUSS)



Fazlani L'Academia Globale

Participation in exhibitions held by corporates, NGOs, and other organizations, continues to be an encouraging source of generating income through display of Kshitij products to a wider audience.

MFA, Abbot India, Trident Hotel, IMC Ladies' Wing, Inner Wheel Club of Bombay, Shapoorji Pallonji Group, Shardull Amarchand, Quotient Ventures, Bajaj Electricals, Dadar Bhagini Samaj, Fusion Fiesta, Bhartiya Stree Mandal, 27 Bake Hous, Kalpatru Sparkle, Ummeed Child Development Centre, Mithibai College, Fazlani L'Academie Global, and Blinds Unity for Self Sufficiency (BUSS), were some of those who assisted our cause by providing such valuable opportunities.



Fusion Fiesta



Mithibai College



CELEBRATIONS







Holi



Ganesh Chaturthi







CELEBRATIONS (CONTD.)







The annual overnight picnic at **Silent Hill Resort** - **Palghar** was a wonderful experience for our adults yet again, providing an opportunity to bond, and build their confidence in a supportive and fun environment. Although being away from their parents, the adults were able to navigate the experience well, in the company of their peers, teachers, and helpers. Such outings held without the presence of their parents are small steps to inculcate independence and confidence for our adults. Living upto its promise of fun, food, and activities, the picnic made for a memorable experience, promoting social inclusion and the opportunity to step out of their comfort zones in a safe, controlled setting.

OUR ADULTS SHINE





The Rural Development & Management Institute (RUDMI) Ahmedabad acknowledges the work of the differently abled. Sanjana received their Smt. Nandini P. Divatia Rural Rehabilitation Award for Disabled, as one of their 24 awardees. A felicitation certificate and an initial financial boost offer was a proud moment for Sanjana and her family!

CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building is crucial for the growth and success of any organization, as it focuses on enhancing the skills, knowledge, and abilities of employees in order to improve their performance, productivity, and overall effectiveness.

FOR THE STAFF



A capacity building workshop on TEAM BUILDING conducted for the Kshitij teachers, staff, and helpers, was one such attempt in this direction. Life coach **Ms. Seema Chandiramani** shared her valuable experience and insights when she conducted this session on 7th May 2024. This initiative not only uplifted the morale of the participants but ^T also provided them a clear direction for moving forward.

FOR OTHERS

Bharti Dhruv, Kshitij's dedicated teacher of long standing, held a session on Rakhimaking on 10th August 2024 for a group of enthusiastic mothers of 'special' children from the Umeed Child Development Centre. All the participants were thrilled with their rakhis crafted during the session, that they carried back home with pride and happiness.





OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

COVERAGE IN THE DAINIK BHASKAR

An article dated November 16th in the **Dainik Bhaska**r highlighted the inspiring journey of Mrs. Bharati Gandhi. Twenty-six years ago, she, along with other mothers of children with intellectual disabilities co-founded Kshitij, to address the gap in services for adults with intellectual challenges, after they stepped out of schools for children with special needs.

Mrs. Gandhi's journey began over 30 years ago when she volunteered at S.P.J. Sadhana School's LD department after earning B.Sc. and LLB degrees. Believing in education's transformative power, she focused on empowering individuals with intellectual challenges.



Kshitij began by training adults to make fabric envelopes from donated materials and has since expanded its skill development program to include block printing, stencil painting, paper bag making, painting pots and diyas, stonework, beading, and food preparation. Functional daily living skills, counseling, OT, physical, and creative activities promote holistic growth, and a weekly stipend reinforces self-worth. Kshitij challenges public misconceptions, and helps these adults to lead dignified, self-reliant, and socially inclusive lives.

SHARING CHRISTMAS CHEER WITH STUDENTS OF GILDER LANE BMC SCHOOL



Kshitij adults are always happy to be part of the celebrations held in the School. Kshitij continues to support students from the BMC School for Children with Special Needs, that is also housed in their premises. This Christmas we were delighted to have the students from the Gilder Lane BMC School join our Christmas celebrations.

OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

A MUCH CHERISHED PUBLIC RECOGNITION





Work in the field of disabilities is one of the most challenging areas into which Kshitij co-founders Mrs. Bharati Gandhi and Mrs. Kiran Malkani had ventured in 1997, along with other mothers of individuals with special intellectual needs. The International Woman's Day brought a heartwarming experience for Kshitij to witness the NIRJARA AWARDS 2025 presented to them by Mr. Raju Waghmare & team Blinds Unity for Self Sufficiency (BUSS), in recognition of their work as women activists in the cause of disabilities.



CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Kshitij trustees Mrs. Bharati Gandhi, Mrs. Kiran Malkani, and Mrs. Beena Modak were honoured to attend the meet hosted by the Maharahtra State Human Rights Commission on 10th December. Held at Chief Guest -Governor Mr. Radhakrishnan's Bungalow, several legal and other dignitaries graced this event. It was an enriching experience to witness the presentations made on Human Rights by diverse groups, such as the differently abled, senior citizens, marginalised communities, and others.







OPERATIONAL UPDATES

CHANGES IN THE ORGANIZATIONAL SET-UP

This year saw significant changes in the Kshitij management and staff teams. We were pleased to welcome Mrs. Mansha Hiranandani, Mr. Niket Dhruv, Mr. Amit Kedia, and Mrs. Mala Chadha to the management team in their new roles as President, Vice President, Hon. Treasurer, and Consultant, respectively. We are confident that their collective experience and qualifications will be a valuable asset for Kshitij. Our existing Trustees Mrs. Bharati Gandhi, Mrs. Kiran Malkani, Mrs. Beena Modak, and Mr. Mahesh Gandhi will continue to contribute their invaluable experience and commitment to Kshitij's sustenance and growth.

Mrs. Mansha Hiranandani brings with her a rich experience in the corporate world and the field of education & counseling, after having exposure to diverse work cultures in three countries. She has been working as a Special Educator with a prestigious school after relocating to India. Mr.Niket Dhruv is the Director - Grubbrr Systems India Private Limited, and the Director and co-founder of Bharat Botanics and MNJR Oils Pvt Ltd. Mr. Amit Kedia is a leading transaction banking professional with more than eighteen years of experience, A strong business acumen, and change management abilities. Mrs. Mala Chadha is a special educator and a narrative therapy practitioner. Having practised in the field of education for over three decades, she has always worked closely with neurodivergent individuals.

On the other hand, we had to say goodbye to our dedicated Advisory Team comprising of **Mr. Rajiv Jain and Ms. Sandhya Jain.** Kshitij CEO **Ms. Batull Tavawala,** Head Coordinator **Mrs. Alpa Mazumdar**, and designer **Mrs. Dina Amin,** also bid farewell due to unforeseen circumstances. We wish all of them the very best in their further pursuits.

IN-HOUSE SALE

The festive season having started with Raksha Bandhan, an in-house sale was held on 19th-20th July 2024. Loyalists were delighted to pick up a variety of rakhis, lumbas, and other festive products. Our adults were most excited to showcase their enthusiastic salesmanship to our happy customers.





TRUSTEES AND THE TEAM

TRUSTEES

Mansha Hiranandani: President

Niket Dhruv : Vice President

Bharati Gandhi : Secretary Amit Kedia : Treasurer : Trustee Kiran Malkani Beena Modak : Trustee Mahesh Gandhi : Trustee

CONSULTANT

Mala Chadha

THE TEAM

Batull Tavawala - CEO (upto 30.7.2024)

Teachers

Alpa Mazumdar: Head Coordinator (upto 31.8.24) Meherangiz Baria: Manager,

Sharmila Bhagtani: Coordinator, Autism Unit

Anisha Fernandes

Bharti Dhruv

Vidya Samel

Kinnari Sanghvi

Priyanka Basuraja

Krunali Gharat

Bhavana Kalangutkar

Meena Maladkar

Other Support

Communication and Outreach

Nilima Budhdeo: Sales and Marketing

Meenakshi Rane: Accounts

Other Staff

Devram Kohli

Lata Dhaygude

Kiran Parte

Prakash Gholap

Shyamapal Valmiki

Kalam Miya



DONORS & SUPPORTERS

We are deeply grateful to all our donors and supporters whose unwavering commitment and generous contributions have played an essential role in the success and functioning of Kshitij's programs. It is because of their thoughtful and wholehearted support that we have been able to make a meaningful difference in the lives of individuals with special needs and their families. We extend our special thanks to them, some of whose names are mentioned below:

DONORS

Executors to Estate of Late Freny K. Parekh

Bombay Community Public Trust (BCPT)

Gandhi Charity Trust

The Tobaccowala Foundation

Shroff Family Charitable Trust

Catalyst Corporate Services

Satyam Charitable Trust

Rajiv Kumar Jain

Reshma Malkani and Viji George

Chanda Uday Varma

Smita Khandeparkar

Kalpana Trivedi Meera Mahtani

Preeti Lekhraiani

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Excel Industries

Laxmibai Dwarkadas Charity Trust

Indus International

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Nikunj S. Parekh H.U.F.

Sujata Gandhi

Maher Dhamodiwalla

Deepak Sohanlal Chhibba

Bhadrika Shroff

Ranjan Joshi

Ajit Agarkar

Sheetal Patkar

Rotary Club of Bombay Bayview Charitable Trust

SUPPORTERS

Forum For Autism (FFA)

My Financial Advisors (MFA)

Blinds Unity for Self Sufficiency (BUSS)

Seema Chandiramani

ADAPT (Able Disabled All People Together) Ummeed Child Development Centre

Dainik Bhaskar

Special Hangout

Ruby Shah

Meena Udyavar

Jyoti Khemani

Manijeh Elavia

Zonta Club of Bombay I & III

Dadar Bhagini Samaj

Amar Tea Pvt. Ltd.

Rotaract Club of Mumbai Mulund(S)

Aawhan Palak Sangh

Saniivani Trust

Shweta Zaveri

Mahrukh Sarkari

Shashi Lulla

Anand Shah

Association for the Welfare of Persons with a Mental Handicap (AWMH)





CONNECT WITH US

VISIT US AT

Gilder Road Municipal School, F6/F7, 1st floor, Mumbai Central. Mumbai - 400008, Maharashtra, India Telephone: +91-9930038094

Patel Chambers (Sheth House) c/o Dr. Vibhas Modak Clinic, 1st floor, Opposite Royal Opera House, Charni Road (E), Mumbai 400 004, Maharashtra, India Telephone: +91- 9930038096

CONTACT US ON

Email: info@kshitij-ngo.org Web: www.kshitij-ngo.org Facebook: www.facebook.com/kshitijmumbai/ Instagram: @kshitij.ngo