



Intact Special School

Intact Special School (ISS) is a residential school for children with intellectual disabilities and associated problems between the ages of 3–14 located in the city of Tiruchirappalli (Trichy) in the southern Indian state of Tamilnadu. The school provides life-oriented education, training in daily living skills along with vocational training in preparation for adulthood, and a great deal of love and care.

Intact Special School was founded in year 1995 and today serves more than 70 children with intellectual disabilities and associated problems. Children are admitted on the basis of IQ assessment and those with an IQ between 51–79 are admitted. This includes children with Down's Syndrome, autism, mild cerebral palsy, and children with multiple problems. Priority is given to the abandoned, economically poor and children from villages who are deprived of rehabilitation opportunities.

A child's story

Indhumathi, 9 years old, is diagnosed with Cerebral palsy and intellectual disability. Her parents deserted her at an early age and her grandmother is the only person caring for her. Indhumathi came to Intact at the age of 4. She had altered gait pattern with knock knees, cleft lip and palate with partial surgical correction, which caused oral articulation problems. She was extremely shy, scared of everything, constantly pushing other children, and had a lack of balance while sitting and standing. With training, care, and therapy, including hippo therapy, her posture and balance has been greatly improved. She is able to tell numbers from 1 to 10 and speaks out aloud. She is making steady progress and is today a happy child.



Methodology

Children are trained in academic and non-academic skills. The general pattern of work is activity followed by rest. Individual programmes, based on Madras Development Programming System are made to suit



the special needs of the children according to age and IQ. The goals set for each child aims to impart 15 skills during the year and an evaluation is conducted three times yearly. The assessment of the child is based on observation of behaviour during daily routines and parents, relatives, teachers, physicians, who have directly observed the child's behaviour are consulted.

Therapies

The school has two full-time physical therapists who work individually with the children, oversee, and recommend alternate therapies, such as speech therapy, yoga, swimming, sensory stimulation, and hippo therapy. Intact EQ, a part of Swedish Intacts Vänner, provide hippo therapy in a center housed next to the ISS campus.

Rehabilitation

The aim is for each individual child to be rehabilitated to the nearest point of normalcy. When the children turn 10 their special skills are identified to provide opportunities and experience for future vocational training.

About Intact

Intact, a non-profit, charity organisation, was established in 1992 by Thomas Ebenezer who, by helping those in need of food, shelter and a sense of security, is living his dream.

Intact works to empower marginalised individuals in society, with focus on people with physical and intellectual disabilities, mountain tribes and poor women, by creating opportunities for independent living.

We want to achieve a society where everyone, regardless of caste, ethnicity, gender, religion, colour and ability is accepted and given equal opportunities to develop to their full potential – without discrimination.