



A Report on the Best Practices in Inclusive Education for CWSN in Maharashtra

Multi-Purpose Resource & Training Centres (MPRTC's)



MAHARASHTRA





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I. Status of Inclusive Education:

Inclusive education is when every child is welcomed and valued into the mainstream classroom regardless of ability or disability. It is not just a place but a process. A process that has highest regards for the needs and requirements of children with special needs. Currently, the RTE enforces the policy of Inclusive Education (IE) of CWSN across all schools throughout the nation. However, there are schools that do not follow the required norms and this may be due one or more of the following reasons:

- Lack of awareness
- Lack of understanding
- Lack of training
- Lack of a strong and sustained driving force behind the process of IE
- Lack of resources which include:
 - Financial resources
 - Infrastructural resources
 - Human resources
 - Space
- Large class sizes (numbers per class!)
- Attitudinal issues
- Poor acceptance to change, due to rigidity
- Fear of acceptance of the school within the local community
- Need for 100% results
- Status of school

The above is by no means an exhaustive or comprehensive list of reasons why IE has still not gained the required momentum in Indian schools. This not to say that there aren't schools who practice IE in its truest spirit. But such schools are far and few between and often hard to find.



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2. The MPRTCs

The MPRTCs at various districts in Maharashtra, are one of the finest examples of a concerted effort to realise the dream of IE. This centre is proof of the fact that all it takes for inclusion and integration to become a reality is a handful of passionate and dedicated grass-roots level professionals who strongly believe in the concept and leave no stone unturned to make it happen!

3. The Concept of the Multipurpose Resource and Training Centre (MPRTC) :

The state of Maharashtra has selected one school in urban/semi-urban blocks and made them MPRTCs where CWSN from surrounding schools in the block can come to avail of a broad spectrum of services. These consolidated centres have greater resources and therefore more attention is provided to CWSN with multiple disabilities too. If teachers in mainstream schools face difficulties in teaching or evaluating CWSN, they will receive better support from the Resource centre (along with partial support from Resource teachers). The needs of CWSN who do not attend MPRTC will continue to be catered to, by the teachers of the schools in which they are enrolled.

It should be noted that the MPRTC is not a special school with only CWSN. The MPRTC is simply a larger centre with a greater critical mass of CWSN. The MPRTC helps push teachers to learn ideal methods of inclusive education as they already have a huge workload with the mainstream non-challenged learners. The MPRTC also solicits the involvement of the community, along with key role-holders therein such as the Sarpanch and the Education Sabhapatis.



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4. Need of Multipurpose Resource Centre for CWSN

Children with special needs are spread across vast areas within a given region. It is difficult to locate them and identify their special needs leave alone render services to them by way of support and interventions. This is one of the primary reasons why it becomes imperative for districts across the state to make Multipurpose Resource Centres available at key locations which are accessible to parents of CWSN from far and near. Apart from this, such a centre if well equipped with human resources and appropriate equipment/aids etc. can give diagnostic, remediation and therapy related support to a broad spectrum of CWSN.

5. Objectives of MPRTC for CWSN.

Various inclusive education projects are being mobilized in various parts of Maharashtra. These are called the MPRTC- Multi Purpose Resource Training Centres.

The objectives of these centres are to:

- Identify children with special needs within the community
- Diagnose their specific special needs area
- Render services under the “response to intervention” policy while parallelly identifying mainstream schools to admit these CWSN
- Admit the CWSN into a mainstream school
- Make support services available to the mainstream schools with CWSN so that they may seamlessly integrate these learners into the *fabric of the school*.



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6. Key activities being undertaken at the MPRTC.

The MPRTC has taken the onus of the following activities:

- Identifying children with special needs at the grassroots level:

This is done through various projects and activities such as summer camps, short workshops, talks for parents to “attract” them to come to the centre so that they can initiate the process of making the MPRTC services available to their child. More often than not parents of CWSN are either reluctant or not self-driven/motivated enough to make special needs interventions a priority in their child’s life. And this being the case, it is a long way before these children see a school and partake of the joys of being part of a mainstream learning programme.

Assessment camps conducted for Identification: Assessment camps are set up for formal functional identification. These camps are organized for identification of following children:

- Children with Low Vision / Visual Impairment
- Children with Hearing Impairment
- Children with Orthopedic needs
- Children with Cerebral Palsy
- Children with Multiple Disabilities
- Children with Speech Impairment
- Children with Intellectual Impairment
- Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- Children with Learning Disabilities
- Children with Hearing Impairment and
- Children with Visual Impairment.

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The children, if found at risk with any of the above challenges, are referred by the teacher for formal a functional assessment in MPRTC.



Medical Assessment Camp for Low Vision



orthopedic Assessment



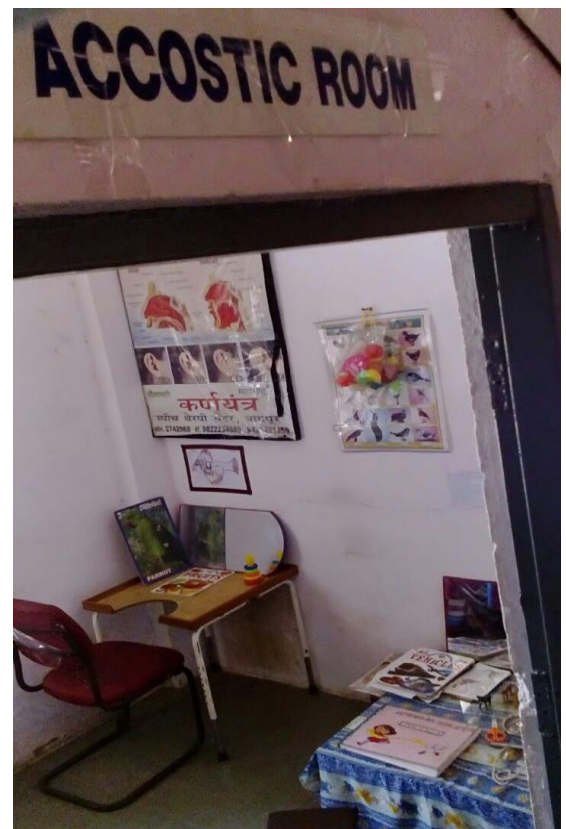
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Corrective Surgery Camp



Convergence with Life Line Express



Audiometric Assessment



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- Rendering a broad spectrum of Special Needs Services to Children with Special Needs:

These include the following:

- Early Intervention Centres
- Diagnostic Services
- Occupational Therapy
- Physio- Therapy
- Counselling Therapy
- Speech Therapy

Academic support in the class room for individual attention to CWSN :- A barrier free classroom space is provided along with adaptive teaching learning material, large print books, braille books, low vision devices, hearing aids, modified furniture etc. Partial support is given by the RT (Resource Teachers) in this resource centre.



Resource Room



Cognitive Development Activity

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Various tactile orientation



Tactile Map orientation



Improving Writing skill



Pre Braille readiness programme

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Children mainstreaming in regular class

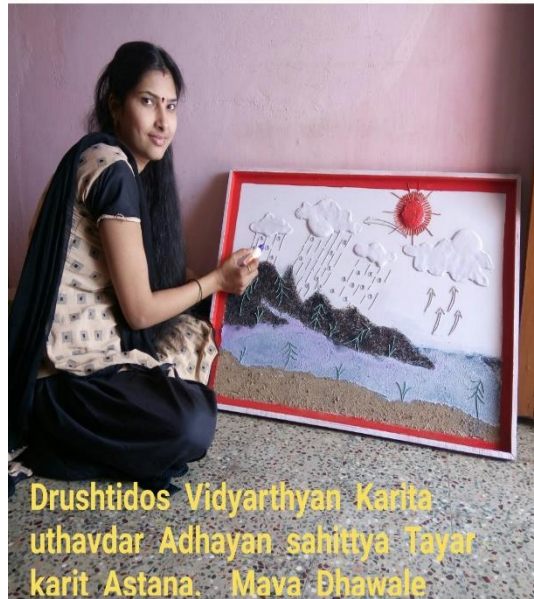


Mobility training to Children with Visual Impaired

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Support through Day Care Centre



Drushtidos Vidyarthyan Karita
uthavdar Adhayan sahittya Tayar
karit Astana. Mava Dhawale

Preparing TLM for CWSN

- Parental activities:

The centre ensures that the parents who are attached or are already attached to the MPRTC are actively involved in various activities and events. These include

- Awareness sessions
- Sensitization programmes
- Education sessions
- Participatory programmes
- Parents as partners in the process of intervention

It is important to note here that the centre renders not just disability based interventions but also severity based ones as it is very important to take that into account while addressing special needs in children.

Preparing CWSN for being mainstreamed into inclusive education programmes:
There are some special needs children who are not “inclusion and integration ready” when they first come to the MPRTC. The team here ensures that the child is prepared to be able to take the simple yet essential rigour of the routine of mainstream schools.

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- Preparing the schools that have been identified, for *welcoming* a CWSN:

A lot of effort is put in by the entire MPRTC and the heads to ensure that the school too is “inclusion and integration ready” for the sake of the child. This as it turns out, is one of the most daunting tasks of the entire inclusive education programme.

Hands-on Teacher training : Case study discussions, Group presentations, individual presentations by RP/RT class teachers for new thought processes, model lesson planning processes are all part of the induction programmes for the team of teachers at the mainstream schools.



Individual Presentations on Field Visit feedbacks for further action plan



Group Discussion with Resource Teacher and Resource Persons

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- Ensuring a smooth transition between a home-based or therapy centre based learning programme to a school based learning programme:



Therapeutic facilitation at home

- There are initial hiccups in the mainstream schools that need to be handled very deftly by the resource teachers and the heads or other therapists, so that the child and the parents are not deterred from the school or from the learning that takes place therein. The resource teachers are diligent in ensuring that these issues are addressed at the earliest.



Therapeutic Assessment & treatment activity

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- Preparing IEPs for CWSN in mainstream learning programmes:



The visiting resource teachers prepare IEPs for each of the special needs cases in consultation with all the other rehabilitation practitioners who work with every case. This is further discussed with the team of teachers at school to give a robust plan to support the CWSN.

- Regular/routine monitoring of the IE programme in each school :

This involves not only support by the resource teachers on a daily basis but also help by the other professionals and the project co-ordinators from time to time to ensure that at no time the core or essence of the IE programme is compromised.

- Feedback by the assigned Resource teachers to the concerned stakeholders in the IE programme viz: Parents, School Heads, School Managements (if required), District Co-ordinator (IE-SSA)
- Reviewing and re-aligning the IEP from time to time for continuous progress.
- Assessing the efficacy and impact of the IE programme
- Conducting trainings for teachers in mainstream schools at regular intervals to equip them and keep them updated about the best practices in IE programmes.
- On-going in-class support for class room teachers on how to address the learning needs of CWSN during their classes.
- Info sharing of various schemes for CWSN.

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7. Some best practices that add to the success of the project:

(Little things that make a big difference!)

- Uniforms for resource teachers



- Modified chairs



- Mothers as Support staff for IE programme



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- *Niraamay* - Insurance schemes for CWSN made available to 475 kids
- Free bus service for CWSN and discounted services for parents or any other adult attending to a CWSN
- Monetary incentive for parents bringing their child regularly for therapy/school based learning for more than 75% attendance.
- Sibling sensitization and mobilization to support the CWSN.
- Whats app group of siblings called “Sweekar”, almost like an SHG or a helpline



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Summer Camps:

A time of fun frolic and bonding the summer camps have become a much awaited event as much for the parents as for the children. Drama, Music, Sports activities and Pre Vocational Skill Training Programme are some of the highlights of these summer camps. During the camps the districts take the initiative to develop children's hidden qualities through all these workshops. The dual intention of these is to also create an awareness among parents and the community at large regarding the MPRTCs in their respective districts. In the last few years this programme has picked up huge momentum among the parent groups too as they are completely involved not just in supporting but also participating in music, dance and drama events on the finale day!



Preparing an Aquarium

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8. Number of Resource Teachers and Resource Persons for CWSN at MPRTCs:

Type	Resource Teachers And Resource Person
Blind	334 RT)
	162 RP)
Hearing Impairment	704 RT)
	227 RP)
Intellectual Impairment	910 RT)
	360 RP
Multiple Disability	25 (PT)
	11 (OT)
Cerebral palsy	29 (PSY)
Autism	
Total	(1948 RT)
	(814 RP)

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9. Number of CWSN covered through these centres and no. of children in the Mainstreaming programme through these centres who are attending regular school and continue to be given partial support from these centre.

Disability	No. of Children Covered through these Centres			No. of Children in the Mainstreaming programme through these Centres		
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total
Low Vision	3318	2680	5998	3318	2680	5998
Totally Blind	392	372	764	392	372	764
Hearing Impaired	2558	1860	4418	2558	1860	4418
Speech Impaired	1661	1175	2836	1661	1175	2836
Orthopaedic	3694	2482	6176	3694	2482	6176
Mentally Retarded	2970	2025	4995	2076	1720	3796
Multiple Disability	6885	7010	13895	5457	6000	11457
Cerebral Palsy	2626	1536	4162	1911	1000	2911
Autism	1542	1125	2667	1398	1000	2398
Total	25646	20265	45911	22465	18289	40754

10. Impact of these centre showcasing voices of various stakeholders.

- Parents of CWSN: The parents attached to these centres receiving services as well as those whose children have been welcomed in mainstream schools are extremely happy and feel very supported. They now harbour a sense of security that comes from the conviction that any help they need is just a phone call away and that they don't need to be anxious any longer about their child.
 - bringing their child with Spl. needs on their own to the school
 - making material available by their own choice
 - a trust factor with the MPRTC team is developed



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- Teachers: The teachers in mainstream schools are always open to being helpful to CWSN in their classes. However, their inadequacies that come from the lack of knowledge and training in special needs, deters them from welcoming CWSN wholeheartedly. The MPRTC is a step towards doing away with this feeling that teachers harbour, by giving them the helping hand of a trained resource teacher during their school hours to help them serve these learners more effectively and more meaningfully.
- School Heads: School heads take great take pride in being able to say that “We are an inclusive school and even share facts and figures regarding the same!” This is indeed a long awaited paradigm shift which showcases the fact that with a sincere and concerted effort all the stake holders in the IE process can benefit from it!
- Children: The IE programmes across a wide array of schools is as or in some manner of saying, a bigger benefit to the non-challenged learners as it if to the CWSN! This is because in a diverse world where “everything around you if *different* from you”, it is now imperative for schools to make such an ecosystem available to ALL the kids so that they go out into the world and are better equipped to handle the diversities they encounter. Having CWSN helps all learners
 - know more about different types of CWSN
 - learn about the specific needs of CWSN
 - the dos and don'ts of co-existing with persons with special needs
 - becoming more helpful thereby learning values of giving/ philanthropy/ benevolence/ charity and most importantly Gratitude.
 - become more sensitive towards all kinds of special needs
 - inspire them to work with and also probably employ persons with challenges in the future.



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- CWSN: there are numerous benefits that CWSN derive from the IE programme
 - sense of being included
 - peer acceptance
 - confidence
 - happiness
 - sense of pride
 - more friends
 - equal opportunities
- Management: The managements of schools also take pride in being the “role model” school of the community by truly practising what they believe in, thereby propagating the concept of Inclusive Education to other schools in an around their district.
- Parents of non-special needs learners: Parents of non-special needs learners feel extremely satisfied that their child is learning to be sensitive and empathetic towards CWSN due to which the foundation stone of life-long socially acceptable attitudes and behaviours is being laid.

II. In conclusion:

The concerted effort by the MPRTCs in Maharashtra is replete with success stories! It is a daunting task that cannot be achieved without the whole hearted support of all the stakeholders. Such projects stand to benefit the entire ecosystem of school education in a positive and completely inclusive way. If an attempt is made to replicate it in other parts of the country it can be a case of immense pride as a “model of inclusive education made available to the large and growing numbers of CWSN !”

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I2. Some more glimpses of the MPRTC activities (Photo gallery):

Therapeutic Interventions Resource Centre



Early Facilitation to Children and their parents in Day Care Centre



Measurement Camp for Aid and Appliances

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Distributions Camp for Aid and Appliances



Measurement wise Calliper



Camp to provide Callipers

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Training for use of Aids and Appliances



Auditory training

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Parents Training and Group Counselling



स. शि. अ. जि. प. बुलडाणा शिक्षक प्रशिक्षण



Discussion of School Management Committee in Resource Centre

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Awareness Stall for available services and equipment for CWSN

