



# 2022-2023

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# Annual REPORT

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## Autism Awareness Day



On Autism Awareness Day, we celebrated with colours, water balloons, hand printing, and many other fun activities! This vibrant day was filled with joy and creativity as children engaged in these activities with enthusiasm.

## Capacity Building Program on Prevention of Child Abuse

A Capacity Building Program for Parents on the Prevention of Child Abuse was conducted for parents from the Village Rehabilitation Centre, Selimedu, with 29 parents of children with special needs participating. The session, led by Mrs. Vijaya, Life Skills Trainer at Satya Special School, emphasized that children with disabilities are often at higher risk of abuse or neglect due to the added caregiving demands that can cause parental stress.



Parents were advised to teach children the correct names for private body parts – chest, buttocks, mouth, lips, and genitals – and to help them understand that no one should touch these areas. Puberty education was also addressed: boys may develop muscles, grow taller, grow pubic hair, experience voice changes, and have nocturnal emissions, while girls may develop breasts, start menstruation, grow pubic hair, experience mood swings, and have abdominal pain, with the need to change sanitary napkins in private. Hygiene practices, such as washing hands before eating, were reinforced.

The session highlighted that abusers are often known to the child – neighbours, relatives, or teachers – and that children with intellectual disabilities may be unable to communicate abuse clearly, requiring parents to watch for behavioural changes, unexplained injuries, or withdrawal. Corporal punishment, including hitting, pinching, kicking, whipping, prolonged kneeling, or burning, was strongly discouraged, with Ms. Vijaya stressing that such practices cause lasting harm and must be replaced with positive discipline. She urged parents to abandon outdated beliefs such as “Spare the rod and spoil the child.”

Parents were introduced to the POCSO Act, a gender-neutral law focused on the welfare of children, which defines sexual abuse broadly – including penetrative and non-penetrative assault, sexual harassment, and pornography – and prescribes strict punishments, up to life imprisonment and fines, depending on the severity of the offence. Guidance for parents included monitoring their children's health and daily activities, encouraging open communication, teaching them to identify and report inappropriate touch, and ensuring they memorize a trusted person's phone number.

Participants found the session eye-opening and practical, with feedback noting increased awareness of issues faced by girls, the harmful effects of corporal punishment, and a commitment to applying the suggestions shared.

# Dental Screening

A Dental Screening Camp was held at the Selimedu Centre in collaboration with dental health professionals, with the objective of promoting oral hygiene and detecting dental issues in children at an early stage. All participating children underwent comprehensive dental check-ups, and parents received guidance on proper oral care practices, including regular brushing and maintaining healthy dietary habits to prevent tooth decay. Follow-up treatments were advised for children who required further dental care. The initiative was well-received by parents, as it not only facilitated early detection of dental problems but also enhanced awareness about the importance of maintaining good oral health.





## **Selimedu Centre Honours Kamaraj's Legacy in Education**

The Selimedu Centre marked the birth anniversary of Shri K. Kamaraj, fondly known as the “Kingmaker” and celebrated for his visionary contributions to education. The program commenced with floral tributes to his portrait, followed by speeches from teachers reflecting on his life, values, and significant role in advancing education in Tamil Nadu. Students took part in cultural activities, presenting poems, songs, and short talks on his achievements, particularly his introduction of the mid-day meal scheme, which continues to benefit millions of children. The celebration served as an inspiration for students to value education, embrace leadership, and uphold the ideals of simplicity, honesty, and service to society.

