# Annual Report



**2020-2021** 

# **Autism Society West Bengal Annual Report 2020-2021**



#### **Registration Details**

Under the societies Act - (Registration No S/IL/13372 of 2002)

**Department of Social Justice and Empowerment - NO. 312(com)** 

National Trust. NO - WAUT15510978715

**Contact Details** 

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# Message from the Founder Director

Lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic was difficult for most people as it had thrown life out of order for people across the globe. Changes in familiar activities, places or people make all of us feel anxious. However the lockdown was especially stressful for those with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as people on the autism spectrum may not be comfortable with the idea of change.

Autism Society West Bengal (ASWB) is a parent initiated non-profit organization in Kolkata that champions the right of individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to participation in areas of education, employment, and social events. A school for autistic individuals, Dikshan, a pre vocational unit, Aarohan, parent training unit, ASPIRES are at present under the ASWB management. Proven methods like social stories, visual supports, structured teaching are used regularly in school. Effective strategies are taught that help the child plan and prepare for any changes. In their classes and parent training units the students are taught that change may occur in their daily routine. As the individual with autism need order and predictability in their lives parents were encouraged to use visual supports at home. This training came handy when a nationwide lockdown was clamped mid March, 2020.

The 2020 lockdown hardly gave the parents of autistic children time to prepare for the unprecedented change. So the school authorities helped. At the start of the lockdown social stories about the lockdown and how one could cope and adjust were distributed via WhatsApp. Social stories helped the students understand that staying at home was not a punishment but rather something to protect them and others from COVID-19. Parents were requested to keep their children meaningfully engaged. Their regular training in school on 'Activities of Daily Living (ADL)' came to the rescue. Students were encouraged to help in the household chores.

Video conferencing and online classes with the special educators made the students feel connected. Parents were encouraged to share pictures of their children helping at home in the school-parent WhatsApp group. Technology helped in the keeping the social connections in the time of physical distancing. The students also celebrated different events virtually viz. Rabindra Jayanti, Independence Day, Teacher's day, Christamas Eve, Republic Day. It is

ironic that autistic students of Dikshan & Aarohan units of ASWB who find change inherently difficult coped quite well during the lockdown using structured teaching and the necessary visual supports.

The Corona virus impacted all spheres of life worldwide. This year teaching-learning underwent a drastic change. Online became the new normal. Autism Society West Bengal took many new steps. It was a year of learning and re-learning. 2020 taught everyone to Reset, re-adjust, re-start, re-focus.....As many times needed. Learning never stops.

Indrani Basu

Director

# Message from the Secretary

The year 2020 was like no other, so far. 'Being flexible' acquired a whole new dimension in 2020 for students, teachers and parents of the Dikshan unit of Autism Society West Bengal. These were unprecedented times where everyone needed to adapt and learn new skills. Lockdown and social distancing made everyone realise how difficult it was to remain isolated from friends and community. It was made everyone realise how technology can bridge the distance and people from everywhere could be together virtually.

2020 was a test to see if we could embrace the new while remembering the old. These students amazed everyone by their flexibility and resilience. Their attitude has given many parents a lot of hope that their children have the power to adapt and triumph in the face of adversity.

During 2020 the school management body tried to make sure that the students experienced all those activities that would take place in school during the pre COVID 19 days. After these long months the students were habituated with this online mode of interaction. They had adapted to the New Normal beautifully. But this transition to this method had its fair share of trials.

The special educators devised ingenious methods to tackle any difficulty. It was their sincere efforts which resulted in a seamless teaching methodology during these difficult times. But

their efforts could not be fruitful unless the students and their families cooperated too. For students of the Dikshan unit of Autism Society West Bengal 2020 was a year of trials and triumphs. So 2020-2021 was the year where Autism Society West Bengal (ASWB) rediscovered strength and team work. It was a year of introspection, innovation, resilience and survival.

Dr. Mitu De,

Secretary

# 2020-2021: YEAR OF THE PANDEMIC, LOCKDOWN AND UNLOCK PHASES MAJOR EVENTS.

The Corona virus impacted all spheres of life worldwide. This year teaching-learning underwent a drastic change. Online became the new normal. Autism Society West Bengal took many new steps. It was a year of learning and re-learning. 2020 taught everyone to Reset, re-adjust, re-start, re-focus.....As many times needed. Learning never stops.

School was closed from 16<sup>th</sup> March, 2020 in compliance with the State Govt. notification due to COVID-19. Later a 21 day nationwide Lockdown was announced from 25<sup>th</sup> March, 2020. In order to instil a sense of normalcy parents of the students were encouraged to keep the students engaged. The long months of practicing ADL in the table top paid off as most students did amazingly well in the household chores. The special educators advised parents on increasing the visual supports required by the students. Students spent time on their favourite leisure activities. Special educators used Social stories to convey the safety protocols that needed to be followed. Hand washing, using hand sanitizers, wearing masks became a part of the curriculum during online classes. Knowledge empowers so the special educators presented information about the Corona virus using models, charts and other visual supports so that the student knew why everything was different.

During the second quarter of 2020 Autism Society West Bengal (ASWB) embarked on a new journey. Someone once said change is the only constant. Special educators of ASWB were trying to adapt to the changes that lockdown had brought into our lives. ASWB started online

classes for all students of the Dikshan & Aarohan units in early April, 2020. Teachers, students, office staff, parents all adapted themselves with the technology available. Our students, for whom any change is quite stressful, have shown us they can cope up with reasonable accommodations. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 2020, World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) was celebrated differently. Students made posters which were posted in our Facebook page. The long days of the lockdown unleashed the latent creativity among the budding artists of our school. Beautiful artwork was created for WAAD. Physical distancing in the times of Corona could not dampen the spirit of the YAAR (Young Adults with Autism Reach out) participants. The 1<sup>st</sup> online YAAR held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May, 2020 was a great success. It paved the way for more online events. ASWB hosted the first Face book Watch Party on 17th May, 2020; the online' Rabindra Nazrul Sandhya' offering tribute to Rabindranath Tagore and Kazi Nazrul Islam. Rabindra Sangeet and Nazrul Geeti and poems of these two great writers were used in the cultural program. Pictures of the students in various roles appropriate to the song/poem chosen were shared by the parents. These pictures were used by ASWB technical support team to make videos for the FB Watch party. Online Occupational Therapy classes and Online Yoga were introduced. Art and craft was introduced during online classes too. Students commemorated World Environment Day by using their creativity to make posters.

As Lockdown gave away to Unlock phase during July to September, 2020 there was introduction of various new online programs; online yoga and exercise classes, online group activities along with the existing programs. ASWB management team wanted their students to experience all the typical school activities as far as possible despite all schools remaining closed due to COVID-19. So they had online Independence Day & Teacher's Day celebration. The Monsoon camp in July was a fun filled event. There were virtual tours, storytelling sessions, Bollywood Dhamaka where popular film songs were played. The songs that were played were according to the choice of students. During online baking class students had fun making and eating cookies. Group classes were introduced so that the students could see their classmates. Students were elated to meet their friends online during group classes. Group classes were fun as there were games, lucky draw and other fun activities. However the teachers reminded students on maintaining safety protocols even though we were going through Unlock phase. Independence Day and Teachers' day were celebrated online.

During the last quarter of 2020 more exciting online group activities were held. Just before the Durga Puja there was a virtual tour of the Pujas in the districts. The special educators many of whom were from the districts compiled a neat video on their neighbourhood Puja. Online Bijoya Celebration with videos of the idol immersions fascinated the students. There was an Online Christmas Party with real cakes and carols. During Saraswati Puja in February 2021 there was a live screening of a small scale puja that actually took place in the school. The students participated online. This day was made memorable when pictures of the past Saraswati Puja were presented for them. As the vaccination process started the special educators prepare lessons on vaccination.

The online YAAR was held every month with various topics for the 'adda' sessions. During YAAR young adults, both with and without autism gather online for an 'adda' session. Topics ranged from Food and foodies, Favourite Tour destinations, Remembering R D Barman, Valentine's Day & Saraswati Puja. Non verbal students got the opportunity to participate whole heartedly sharing PowerPoint presentations.

Many online were envisaged and executed with the sole motto that ASWB would strive to make lives of all our beneficiaries a bit easier and relieve stress in the times of COVID-19.

Changing gears: Shifting to the online mode. The social media was used extensively to connect with all and share our online activities.



## Online Activities/Classes



# Online Celebration of different events:

Through these online activities ASWB was trying to replicate different events virtually as far as possible so that students and trainees don't miss out any activity due to the pandemic.



### SOME COVID RELATED FREE WORKSHOPS ORGANISED BY ASWB



# Free workshops and Parent Training

Free workshops and webinars were organised by ASWB as we felt that in these uncertain times due to the pandemic intervention and parent training need to go on or less precious time would be lost.



# Training Workshops organised by ASWB



#### WORKSHOPS/CONFERENCES WHERE RESOURCE PERSONS WERE INVITED FROM ASWB



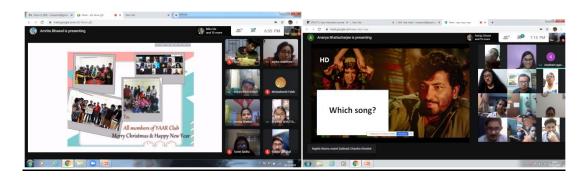
## Awards & Recognition:

Founder Director Ms. Indrani Basu Aswb was awarded by Doordarshan Kolkata, on 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2021, International Women's Day, for her role in making the voice of individuals with autism be heard and making interventions available in Kolkata. The program was called 'Sob badha periye' meaning 'Overcoming all obstacles.' She has touched the lives of many and empowered families to move forward and overcoming all obstacles.



### Online YAAR

All YAAR sessions starting from May, 2020 have been in the Online mode



# Online Robibarer Baithak

ASWB started online monthly Sunday Meet with parents of our students and trainees. It was hoped that this online interaction would ease the drudgery that crept in with the Lockdown.



## **Beneficiaries**

- 1. Dikshan
  - a. Junior Section 13 students
  - b. Intermediate section 15 students
  - c. Aarohan Vocational Unit 8 students
  - d. Dikshan 2 3 students
- 2. Online Counselling 47
- 3. Early Intervention Unit
- a. Online Parent training Programme 6 weeks 24
- b. Online pro bono Parent training Programme 1 month 19
- c. Online Intervention 117
- 4. Online Occupational Therapy Classes/sessions 35
- 5. Individuals attending mainstream with support from ASWB -35 + 4 = 39
- 6. Families and professionals who attended ASWB online webinars 512
- 7. YAAR 30
- 8. Cognitive Behaviour Therapy -2
- 9. Job Skill training 7

#### Autism Society West Bengal (ASWB) Governing Body Members for 2020 -2021.

	Sl.	Name	Post held	Gender	Nationality	Occupation	Name of	Residential Address
	No.		in ASWB				Father/	
			GB				Husband	
L								
	1.	Mrs. Roma	President	Female	Indian	Retired	Mr. A.K.	5C Wedderburn Road,
		Basu#					Basu	Kolkata 700029
							(Husband)	
							·	

2.	Dr. Sougata Deb*	Vice President	Male	Indian	Medical Practitioner	Late Upendra Chandra Deb	4A/17 Dharmatala Road , Kasba , Kolkata 700042
3.	Dr. Mitu De*	Secretary	Female	Indian	Professor	Dr. S. R. Dey (Husband)	A 7/5 Purbasha Housing Estate  160 Manicktala Main Road.  Kolkata – 700054.
4.	Mrs. Mitasree Biswas *	Joint Secretary	Female	Indian	Health Service	Dr Abhijit Biswas (Husband)	29/3C, Chetla Central Road Kolkata -700027
5.	Mr. Sudip Ghosh*#	Treasurer	Male	Indian	Service	Late Pranab Kanti Ghosh (Father)	Mohan Garden Murari 1/1,Kamalgachi Kolkata 700103
6.	Mrs Shraboni Chakraborty*	Member	Female	Indian	Housewife	Mr Amit Chakraborty (Husband)	331,Roy Bahadur Road,Kolkata -700034
7.	Mrs Ranjana Chakraborty*	Member	Female	Indian	House wife	Mr.Debashis Chakraborty (Husband)	52A,Jubilee Park.  Tollygunj  Kolkata – 700 033.
8.	Mr. Ashoke Kumar Basu*#	Member	Male	Indian	Retired	Late Prabhat Kumar Basu (Father)	22 Anjuman Ara Begum Row KOLKATA 700033
9.	Mr. Arun Kumar Sarker*	Member	Male	Indian	Retired	Late Upendra Chandra Deb (Father)	159,N.S.C Bose Road,Mo Avenue Govt Housing Estate, Flat K-5,Kolkata- 700040

<sup>\*</sup> Being a parent led organization, most of the members of ASWB GB are parents of persons with autism

<sup>#</sup> None of the governing body members are related to each other.

The governing body is elected every two years.

# Team of Teaching and Non Teaching staff for the year 2020 -2021

1	Chandrani Chakraborty	Academic In charge
2	Shibani Biswas	Special Educator
3	Dolon Paul	Special Educator
4	Pranabesh Bhunia	D Ed Cordinator
5	Manoj Kumar Mahato	D Ed Faculty
6	Binay Samanta	Special Educator
7	Rajkumar Bera	Special Educator
8	Piyali Chakraborty	D Ed Faculty
9	Amrita Bhawal Barman	Special Educator
10	Priyanka Saha	Special Educator
11	Shampa Rani Sahoo	Special Educator
12	Swati Dasgupta	Special Educator, upto July 2020
13.	Kaberi Ghosh	Special Educator, upto July 2020
14.	Sanjit Kumar Ghosh	Special Educator
15.	Jhuma Choudhury	Special Educator
16.	Sukanya Das	Special Educator
18.	Babu Patra	Classroom Assistant
19	Manisha Bhattacharya	Clinical Psychologist
18.	Insana Konoki Mazumder	Occupational Therapist
20.	Madhumita Dhar	Admin/Accountant( upto March,2021
21.	Arpita Chatterjee	Project Coordinator
22.	Amitesh Das	Office Assistant
23.	Nababrata Guha Roy	Accounts Assistant
24.	Shreya Bhattacharjee	Programme Coordinator
25.	Sefali Naskar	Care Giver/ Classroom helpers
26	Bishaya Bayen	Care Giver/ Classroom helpers

27	Mina Bibi	Care Giver/ Classroom helpers
28	Nazma Bibi	Care Giver/ Classroom helpers
29	Sabina Bibi	Care Giver/ Classroom helpers
30.	Mamoni Sardar	Care Givers/ Classroom helpers
31	Lakshman Mondal	Gate keeper
32	Joydeep Sarkar	Gate keeper
33	Shankar Vella	Sweeper

# Online Workshops (Webinars) organized by Autism Society West Bengal during 2020-2021

Date	Name of the workshop/webinar	Resource Persons	Participants
25 <sup>th</sup> July	Oral Health Care for Special Child during Covid Pandemic	Dr Prof Shabnam Zahir	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
8 <sup>th</sup> August	In search of Psychological Immunity during Pandemic	Dr Prashanta Roy	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
26 <sup>th</sup> & 27 <sup>th</sup> September	Parent training workshop	Ms Indrani Basu,Director ASWB & ASWB Team	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
10 <sup>th</sup> October	Comunication & behavioral support for Individuals with Autism	Ms Indrani Basu, Director ASWB, Ms Chandrani Chakraborty, Academic Incharge ASWB,,Ms Amrita Bhawal Special Educator ASWB & Ms Sukanya Das Special educator	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations

		ASWB	
7 <sup>th</sup> November	A Guide to Assistive Living for adults with Autism	Ms Merry Barua	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
20 <sup>th</sup> December	Teaching & Supporting Individuals with Autism — Special Educator's Perspective	Ms Chandrani Chakraborty Academic Incharge ASWB, Mr Pranabesh Bhunia Course Coordinator ASWB, Ms Amrita Bhawal Special Educator ASWB,Ms Sukanya Das Special Educator ASWB ,Ms Priyanka Saha Special Educator ASWB, Ms Shampa Rani Sahoo Special Educator ASWB,Ms Piyali Chakraborty Special Educator ASWB,Ms Jhuma Chaudhuri Special Educator ASWB,Ms Suchita Roy Special Educator ASWB	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
21 <sup>st</sup> December	Orientation programe for students of Aliah University	Ms Indrani Basu, Director ASWB,Ms Mitasree Bisaws Joint Secretary ASWB & Senior Nursing Officer & Dr Mitu De , secretary ASWB	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
30 <sup>th</sup> January	Teletherapy Workshop on Occupational Therapy	Ms Insana Konoki Mazumder,Occupational Therapist,ASWB	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professionals from other organizations
13 <sup>th</sup>	Teenagers with Autism	Ms Indrani Basu	Teachers, parents

February		Director ASWB & ASWB	and volunteers of
		Team	ASWB as well as
			professionals
			from other
			organizations
28 <sup>th</sup>	Providing emotional &	Ms Indrani Basu	Teachers, parents
February	behavioral support to	Director ASWB & ASWB	and volunteers of
	individuals with Autism	Team	ASWB as well as
			professionals
			from other
			organizations

# Online Workshops(Webinars) where Resource person from ASWB were invited as Speakers 2020 - 2021

Date	Name of the	Resource Persons	Organized by	Participant
	workshop/webinar			S
13 <sup>th</sup>	Social Role Valorisation for	Indrani Basu	Parivaar Bengal	Teachers,
April	Persons with IDD			parents and
				volunteers
				of ASWB as
				well as
				professiona
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18 <sup>th</sup>	Facebook Live program and	Ms Indrani Basu,	Disha Digital	Teachers,
May	discussion about Autism	Founder –	School	parents and
		director,ASWB		volunteers
				of ASWB as
				well as
				professiona
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4 <sup>th</sup>	Activities of Daily Living (ADL)	Ms Indrani Basu,	Faith,Bangladesh	Teachers,
June	for Special Need Children:	Founder –		parents and
				volunteers

14 <sup>th</sup>	Understanding,communica	Ms Indrani Basu,	St.Xavier's	Teachers,
10 <sup>th</sup> Augus t	International Webinar Life Long learning Series — Healthcare Challenges — In new Normal era Myths about Autism & How to support Individuals with Autism in Higher Education	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB  Dr Mitu De – Secretary,ASWB	Lincoln University,Malay sia in collaboration with University of Bengkulu,Indone sia & Techno India NJR Institute of Technology,India	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio ns
23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Panel Discussion on the Mental Health of Caregivers	Ms Ranjana Chakraborty,Governin g body member, ASWB	Ummeed	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio ns
20 <sup>th</sup> June	Interactive session on Autism	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB	FARE,Bangladesh & RTV(Bangladesh)	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio ns
	Role of Families	director,ASWB		of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio

Aug	ting and supporting	Founder –	college,Ranchi	parents and volunteers
	persons with Disabilities for an inclusive society	director,ASWB  Dr Mitu De –		of ASWB as well as
		Secretary,ASWB		professiona Is from
		Ms Ranjana		other
		Chakraborty,Governi		organizatio
		ng body member, ASWB		ns
		Ms Sukanya Das		
		Special Educator		
		ASWB		
19 <sup>th</sup> &	Case Study on the	Ms Indrani Basu,	LMSE	Teachers,
20 <sup>th</sup>	challenges and the	Founder –	International	parents and
Aug	reasonable	director,ASWB	Research	volunteers of ASWB as
	accommodation for	Dr Mitu De –	Conference by	well as
	students with Autism in the mainstream education	Secretary,ASWB	London School of	professiona
	system – Oral Presentation		Management Education	Is from
	of a Paper		Ladeation	other 
	·			organizatio ns
11 <sup>th</sup>	Co-Creating Community	Ms Indrani Basu,	Ummeed	Teachers,
Oct	Spaces for Children and	Founder –		parents and
	Young People with	director,ASWB		volunteers
	Disabilities	Ms Ranjana		of ASWB as well as
		Chakraborty,Governi		professiona
		ng body member,		ls from
		ASWB		other
				organizatio
				n
13 <sup>th</sup>	Families of Special Needs	Ms Indrani Basu,	The Clinical	Teachers,
Oct	Members in the context of	Founder –	Psychology	parents and
	the Pandemic' during the	director,ASWB	Centre,	volunteers of ASWB as
	online event Pandemic and		University of	well as
				אעכוו מט

	Beyond:  Emerging Mental Health Issues from a Multidisciplinary Perspective		Calcutta	professiona Is from other organizatio n
19 <sup>th</sup> Nov	Ped –O- Katha	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB	Department of Paediatric & Preventive Dentistry, Guru Nanak Institute of Dental Sciences & Research	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio n
27 <sup>th</sup> Dec	Facebook Live program – Let's Talk Series – speaking about Autism	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB	Aawam,Hyderab ad	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio n
29 <sup>th</sup> Jan	Home Based parental strategies to deal with a Special Need	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB	National Institute for Locomotor Disabilities,Bon Hooghly	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona Is from other organizatio n
8 <sup>th</sup> Marc h	'Sab bhadha periye'	Ms Indrani Basu, Founder – director,ASWB	Doordarshan Kolkata	Teachers, parents and volunteers of ASWB as well as professiona

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		organizatio n and other
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		viewers of
		Doordarsha
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# More pictures of Online Activities & Workshops organized by Autism Society West Bengal

