



Friends Society
(Established 1969)

ANNUAL REPORT: 21-22

(July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022)



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Registered Under Society Registration Act 1860 - Reg. No. Guj/351/Vadodara
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THE ACTIVITY YEAR (2021-22) AT A GLANCE

Friends Society has been making a significant **difference in the lives of hundreds of people every year** since last 53 years – for those who attend our activities (beneficiaries) as well as volunteers who conduct these activities.

(Note: FS was able to conduct limited activities due to pandemic restrictions)

SCOPE and IMPACT of our work (activities)

- **733 beneficiaries** (57% were patients benefiting from blood donation, 23% were persons with disabilities benefitting from support for education, medical and livelihood need, remaining were youth, women and other people in the community)
- **327 units of blood** were collected in various blood donation camps organized in communities and industries in Vadodara. One unit of blood helps 1.3 patients on an average. Hence we estimate that at least 425 patients in the SSG Hospital benefited from this blood collection.
- Around **50 people** from the surrounding communities used the reading room and the library that FS operates. The Petit library was open for **132 days** and the reading room for **264 days**.
- **54 volunteers**, who were mostly college students, conducted service activities and participated in various FS initiatives.
- **44 beneficiaries** were issued Eshram cards. This is a government initiative. FS facilitated the registration.
- FS helped **11** of its beneficiaries with intellectual disability to receive monthly assistance of Rs 1000 from Government scheme
- FS helped 12 beneficiaries with visual disability to receive Corona vaccination.
- **39** beneficiaries with visual disability were provided services of scribe for writing various exams



ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday school is conducted every Sunday, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, at the Petit Library campus since 1983. Objectives are to facilitate supplementary education, medical rehabilitation, mobility improvement, and social integration of non-institutionalized children with disabilities who live across Vadodara. They are in the age range of 10 to 25 years. Jalaram Trust a charitable organization provides free lunch for them. Children are brought to the campus and returned home by auto rickshaws hired by FS. Attendance at each event is around 25 to 30.



However, this year Sunday school restarted on 3rd October 22 with necessary precautions for Covid 19. Total eighteen sessions of three hours each were conducted on Sundays. Music therapy, art therapy, Physio therapy sessions were conducted along with games, dance, singing etc. On an average, 14 beneficiaries took advantage of the activity. On an average, 9 FS volunteers participated with 3 qualified staff engaged for art therapy, music therapy and interns giving physiotherapy to beneficiaries.



A picnic for the 18 Sunday school beneficiaries along with 14 other beneficiaries with visual disability was organized at Mangala farm near Karjan. They were accompanied by 19 FS volunteers. After light refreshment at the arrival, they played musical chairs, enjoyed DJs, played games, went to pool and had rain dance there. The best part of the day was watching how the visually impaired children helped each other with all the activities. The beneficiaries were playing and smiling around.

Here is the feedback from a beneficiary about the picnic. "I completely agree with Pravin that the picnic was very good not for the features like facilities and all but personally I and my friend Aadil think that the volunteers and the other students were also good and also supportive, and that thing made more cheerful environment in that place"



A donor had distributed track suits to all the Sunday school beneficiaries. Like every year, this year too the Sunday school beneficiaries were provided with kites, threads, sweets during makarsankranti.



Some achievements: Hashim Gohil, our beneficiary, won the first prize for wheelchair hurdle race and javelin throw during district level competition at Khel Mahakumbh. Sunday school beneficiaries participated in PRERNA, a national level social event at the faculty of technology & engineering, MSU, Vadodara. They were trained for the event at Sunday school. Prize details - Jayesh Tadvī MR Instrumental music 1st prize, Fahad Shekh MR Singing 1st prize, Jayendra Makwana MR Dancing 1st prize.

Sunday Club:

Sunday Club generally meets every 6 weeks at the Petit Library Campus (Petit library) on Sunday afternoons for 2 to 3 hours. However during the year under report this activity was not conducted due to Pandemic and other reasons. Members are adults with some form of disability, mostly physical limitations. Most were past beneficiaries of FS as children.

FS organized E shram cards registration camp at N M Petit Library campus for beneficiaries with disabilities and FS staff members. 44 beneficiaries were issued Eshram cards. This is a government initiative. Eshram card holders are given following benefits.



1. Rs.2 lakh Life insurance against accident case
2. Cover Ayushman (Govt. of India initiative) Medical facilities up to Rs. 5 lakh
3. It is linked with Ration Card. So beneficiaries can avail food from any Ration Shop in India.
4. Financial help for building a house, skill development course.
5. Pregnant women worker will get financial help in case not able to do job for herself and kids.
6. In the future, Pension amount will be directly credited to beneficiaries accounts.

ACTIVITIES FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

PROGRAMME FOR FUTURE LEADERS (PFL)

This programme is intended to enable high school students develop into socially responsible, effective, and efficient leaders of tomorrow.

During the year, under Reach Youth to Teach Youth (RYTY) program to provide online coaching to underprivileged children, 30 students were enrolled. They were provided online tuition (teaching) for about 1200 hours by FS volunteers between August 21 and October 21.

A drawing competition for kids participating in RYTY program was organised on Independence Day. Prachi, Veer and Shreya were the first three winners. They were awarded drawing book, notebook, compass box and pencil box. Others were given consolation prize.



PROGRAMME FOR UNIVERSITY YOUTH (PUY)

This program is intended to increase the knowledge and awareness of young volunteers on a variety of topics of interest to them. Volunteers come up with ideas for topics to be discussed, coordinate speakers and manage communications. This program was started in 1970.

During the year, an awareness session on mental health was conducted by Dr. Mansoor Jamshed at N.M Petit Library for an hour. He explained mental health issues, symptoms and remedial measures.

ACTIVITIES FOR PATIENTS

BLOOD DONATION

This program is aimed at collecting blood that can be used for the low-income patients at the Sayajirao General Hospital (SSG) and also aims to increase awareness about the value of donating blood, providing guidance to those who cannot donate blood due to some reason (such as low hemoglobin), and to help dispel myths about blood donation that people may have. This program was started in 1969, the year the FS was established.

During the year, blood donation camps were organized at six locations resulting into collection of 327 blood units. A few days before each camp, volunteers would canvas the people at the location of the camp, hold talks with them to educate them, and encourage them to attend.

During a camp, lasting from 3 to 6 hours, volunteers coordinate with blood bank staff and the host organization, prepare the venue for blood donation, registers blood donors and provide guidance to those who could not donate blood.



ACTIVITIES FOR FATEHGANJ COMMUNITY

BALWADI ("Ankur Balwadi")

Balwadi was started in 1982 to provide opportunities to low-income families to get their pre-school children on the right path from an early age. The children are 3 to 5 years old. The program was designed with the help of early childhood education specialists from the M.S. University. It has developed a reputation of being one of the best Balwadi in the community.

Balwadi activity was conducted online from July 21 to January 22. Initially the number of beneficiaries was 4 as many did not have the extra devices at home for online education. Later the number increased to 20 in February 22 when the government guideline allowed us to conduct the activities offline. The activity was conducted for 149 days from July 21 to June 22 including the online classes.



The activity included teaching the kids alphabets, counting 1-10, identification of colours, fruits, vegetables, trees, shapes, body parts, animals. They were also explained about Indian festivals, basic personal hygiene etc.

Balwadi building is more than forty years old now and needed some renovation and repairing. Thanks to the donor companies and individuals with whose financial support we could renovate the Balwadi. Happy to share that the FS volunteers themselves carried out painting on internal walls of balwadi making its look very beautiful.

Also the Balwadi now has a smart TV that was purchased from donation from an old FS member. New water cooler is also purchased for Balwadi with donation from Jayshree Swami. We wish to place on record our gratitude and appreciation to both the donors.



PUBLIC READING ROOM AND LIBRARY

For more than 50 years, FS has been operating the reading room and library for the local area residents. They come to read newspapers and magazines six days a week, 3 hours every morning.

The library has about 5,000 books in three languages and on a large variety of subjects. It is open for two hours a day, three days a week; in addition, many of the 40 library members visit to exchange books.

One part-time staff member and 2 to 3 volunteers help with library transactions as well as with cataloging, organizing, and maintaining books.

During the year, Public Reading Room and Library was open for 132 days. Total registered members are 41. Average attendance at the public reading room is about 8 readers.

SEWING AND EMBROIDERY CLASSES

VOCATIONAL TRAINING CLASSES

These classes are designed to provide skills to women from lower socio-economic communities – the skills and certificates which can help them increase their earning potential to supplement family incomes. In addition, various activities are aimed at their educational and social development. The beneficiaries are 16 to 45 years old. Classes are held two hours a day for five days. Sewing and embroidery classes are yearlong and vocational training classes (Mehndi and beauty parlour) are one-month long. 19 trainees enrolled for Sewing class and 9 for vocational training class. The sewing class trainees were given certificate on successful completion of their training. One day picnic was organised for all the trainees and staff of sewing class on 30th March 2022. They enjoyed it a lot as, being housewives, they seldom get opportunity to have such outings.

YOUTH CLUB

Youth Club is held six days a week for two-hours at the Petit Library campus (Petit library). It provides friendly atmosphere for pre-delinquent children from surrounding low-income communities. The atmosphere is conducive to learning and fostering discipline and self-control to reduce delinquent behavior. The beneficiaries are children in the age range of 7 to 15 years.

Youth Club activity was restarted on Petit Library campus from March 2022. It was conducted for 29 days between March and June 22. On an average, about 8-10 kids participate daily, sometimes as many as 20 to 22 attend.

A week long summer camp was organised for the beneficiaries. Children growing up in a less privileged circumstances experience a childhood that often defies the imagination of 'innocent childhood'. So is the case of the camp where our main focus was to cater to the needs of the kids for their overall development. The curriculum provided education about Etiquettes, Mental health & Sanitation. The activities were structured in such a way that a kid at the end of the 8-day session should feel a little more confident and be proud of himself/herself irrespective of any socio-economic background.

Typical activities in general for youth club participants include:

Entertainment / fun activities: antakshari, storytelling, singing songs, dance, garba, clay work, passing the parcel, tactile painting, Zumba.

Awareness / educational sessions: team building games, interactive sessions on language barrier, education and career opportunities, chess competition, identifying objects, public speaking,

Sports: kabbadi matches, musical chair, three-legged races, cricket, 'dabba fod,' football, basketball and bowling. When proper setting or equipment are missing (such as for bowling or basketball), volunteers improvise and still all have fun

Occasional events: Uttarayan, Republic day, Independence day, Rakshabandhan, Janmashtami, Navratri, Diwali, Christmas, preparation and participation in FS' annual event SHAURYA, picnic, and so on.



ASSISTANCE TO INDIVIDUALS

Individualized assistance, help that is not a part of group activities, was provided to adults and children with various disabilities. Key assistance activities:

Scribes for beneficiaries with visual disability

- 39 beneficiaries with visual disability were extended support of writers for their various academic and competitive exams like junior Associate (Customer support and sale) at SBI, assistant tribal development officer Class III Gujarat government, B.Ed. exam, M.A. exam, Office assistant at banking personnel recruitment etc.

- The scribes were provided at Ahmedabad, Vadodara, Androkhia - Dist. Sabarkantha, and Rajkot,
- We would like to share below some of the highlights of this activity.

Mrs. Divyaben Dholka offered to write all five papers for Nimisha Gondaliya (beneficiary with visual disability) for her B Ed semester IV exam. Divyaben's son and daughter have earlier offered services as writers. Her husband Kalspeshbhai Dholka donated money in beneficiary account to cover expenses of transportation etc for exam purpose. Divyaben also helps in finding writers. She stays at Ahmedabad.

Darshanaben Hasmmukhbhai Prajapati born 1993 from Patan (beneficiary with visual disability) passed UGC NEET exam. And will be enrolled in a Ph.D. programme. Every month she will receive fellowship of Rs 35,000 for five years till she completes her doctorate. Rushi Naik wrote her exam.

Message from Hitesh Tandel (beneficiary with visual disability) to Ami Patel (Trustee FS). "Hello mam the first update of the result has been declared by the University. It's because of you and the help of scribe I managed to clear that first paper. I'll always be grateful to you for helping me throughout my whole educational career. I don't even know if I can payback, but do let me know if there is a need thanks a lot for everything."

Assistance in terms of equipment and devices

- Executives from NetWeb Software Pvt. Ltd visited Petit Library campus and donated *Wheelchair* to two of our beneficiaries Mahmmadhashum Jafarbai Gohil and Fakirmohammed Gheewala. Also when they got to know about Fakirmohammed Gheewala requirement of a computer on an urgent basis, they donated a computer also. FS thanks Netweb for this noble gesture.
- One of our beneficiaries with visual disability Dilawar Raj had a fire in his house due to short circuit. All wiring and household was damaged. Through some friends, FS could help Dilawar to undertake repairs. FS could also arrange to provide him mattresses, clothes and other household items.
- Household items including cupboards and beds were provided to Navin Rohit, Petlad and Pravin Dabhi at Bamrol (Both beneficiaries with visual disability)



Livelihood and employment support to persons with disabilities

- Darshanaben Nayaka (beneficiary with visual disability) from Surat whom FS supported for interview travel and logistics has been selected as Music teacher by Navodaya vidyalaya. Congratulations!
- Under the government scheme "financial assistance to persons with intellectually disability (mental sub normality)" an amount of Rs. 1000 is paid monthly to such persons with more than 50% disability. FS helped 11 of its beneficiaries to receive this benefit.
- Through FS intervention, Inner Wheel club provided Tabla to Bharat, Harmonium to Alpesh and two Manjira sets to Bharat and Alpesh. They are both our beneficiaries with visual disability. They also provided a Haathlaari to Bhima Shankar our old cheer up beneficiary.
- FS continues to distribute ration kits to about 60 beneficiaries with visual disability every month with the generous donation from a well-wisher.

Medical Assistance to Persons with disabilities

FS facilitated vaccination for 12 beneficiaries with visual disability at Fit 365 Gym in a camp organised in collaboration with United Way of Vadodara. Beneficiaries: Dilawar Raz, Tabrez, Nilesh, Joshna, Jyoti, Prakash, Sangeeta, Harshad, Leela, Sumanben, Hardik, Aadil.

Raju Rathwa (beneficiary with visual disability) stays near Godhra. Previously he was at the school for the blind at Subhanpura and used to visit FS for Sunday club with his friends. Recently he came here with his father for an operation of abdomen. He was admitted in Gotri medical hospital. However the operation was not possible there. We contacted Dr Chirayu Chokshi. He readily agreed and examined him without charging any fee. He also called Dr Sameer, a surgeon in SSG. Patient was admitted and treatment started. He was operated on 13th August 2021. Dr Apexa Patwa head of Anesthesia (and a FS well-wisher) also helped. We are thankful to all three doctors.

Dhara Ghanava, our beneficiary with visual disability, who studied at Vadodara and now working in a school at Rapar was in need to consult a doctor at Bhuj. We requested FSites to come forward if they had any medical contacts in Bhuj. As a result, Dr Vikram Patel and Dr. Sagun Desai shared information about Dr Mahadev (Bhuj). He was kind enough to guide us for medical checkup, even though he was attending a marriage function.

Educational Fee reimbursement to persons with disabilities

9 students with disabilities were supported for education by reimbursing their education fees. The total amount so contributed was Rs. 60440.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Independence Day was celebrated on Petit Library Campus and Hemendra Bhatt (Hemubhai) was Invited as a chief Guest. Hemubhai has been extending his services as art therapist to our beneficiaries of Sunday school .He proudly hoisted the Indian national flag followed by Sapling Plantation.

The Republic Day was celebrated with the pomp and zeal throughout the length and breadth of the country. The day was also celebrated at our Petit Library campus with great enthusiasm. We all gathered at the campus at 10:00 a.m. in shades of our tricolor flag. Bharat Mehta, our chairperson unfurled the national flag with loud cheers and salute followed by a few song performances by Shailesh Shah (Trustee). Towards the end, chocolate delights were distributed amongst everybody. Along with FS members few beneficiaries from youth club and kids from Balwadi also attended the function. It was a day of rejoicing and happiness at the Petit Library campus.



We acknowledge with thanks CSR funding received during the year from Narayan Powertech Pvt. Limited, Amtran Magnetics Pvt. Limited and HAKS Foundation.

FS participated at the NGO fair organized by Faculty of Social Work on 15th March 2022. FS activities were show cased through leaflets, reports, brochures and posters.

FS was invited by CIVICA, an IT firm at their office with its beneficiaries with disabilities on 9th June 22. 9 beneficiaries visited them and planted trees around their office premises.

We welcome Girija Vishwanathan, Hetal Trivedi and Dipti Shah as our new life members during the year.

ABOUT FRIENDS SOCIETY

Friends society is Vadodara based voluntary youth organization for community service. Donations to Friends Society are exempted from Income Tax under section 80(G) 5 of Income Tax act, 1961.

FS is registered with Ministry of Corporate Affairs, India for undertaking CSR activities. The Registration number is CSR00007705.

Membership Fee: For students Rs 50/- per annum, for non-students: Rs 200/- per annum

Membership year: July to June

Life membership Fee: Rs 2,000/-

Cheque for fees and or donations may be issued in the name of Friends Society. Please mail to Friends Society, Petit Library, Fatehgunj Main Road, Opp. Parsi Agiyari; Vadodara 390002

For online transactions, use the following information:

Name of the account: Friends Society,

Name of the bank: Bank of India, University Road Branch, Vadodara

Bank Account Number: 250510100007809,

IFSC code: BKID0002505

For such online transactions, please send us information about you and / or donor, that is listed below - by sending us an email:

friendssociety813@gmail.com

- details of the transaction id
- amount
- your (or donor) name
- postal address
- mobile number
- A scan of PAN to issue the receipt and to get form 10BE issued in the name of donor for income tax deduction purposes

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