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# V-EXCEL EDUCATIONAL TRUST'S ANNUAL REPORT

## 2012-2013

*A report of our journey in the past year as we shape our little successes in the ever-abounding world of special education*



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## From the Director's Desk

Dear Friends,

There are always mixed feelings of nostalgia and apprehension when presenting the Annual Report. The nostalgia, of course, stems from the very act of preparing an Annual Report. As we look back at the many triumphs and challenges, we marvel at the accomplishments and silently resolve to try harder with our failures. The apprehension is a result of the road ahead of us, because the field of special education is not finite in its needs. For every special child we work with, there are a 1,000 more who require good, accessible education, early intervention services, remedial services, therapies, psycho-educational assessments, counselling, as well as vocational and rehabilitation training. It's an ocean out there and we move ahead in the knowledge that with our little drops of contribution, we will be able to create enough ripples of inclusion for a revolution of change.

Our mission is to create an environment where children with special needs can grow to live dignified, independent, and productive lives in mainstream society. We believe in an education that extends beyond conventional teaching to pragmatic learning. We are committed to enriching the quality of education through teacher development and by ensuring right learning inputs to children. With a unique holistic approach, we work on the all-round development of every child, focusing on the child's abilities rather than disabilities. Our vision is to reaffirm our belief in human potential, regardless of caste, creed, race, religion and ethnicity, and become an organisation where individuals with special needs can be served

This year we had several high points, starting with our 10<sup>th</sup> year celebrations and creation of a Sibling Forum for siblings of special children, to our first overnight outdoor trip with children in our school and the creation of an Individual Development Programme to help monitor the child's progress. We are also extremely proud to have set up our third Satellite Centre in Erode!

Our goals for the following year are to set up five more Satellite Centres in rural areas that provide education, early intervention, therapeutic and remedial programmes, and vocational facilities; to establish a Group Home where 6-8 special adults can lead an independent and dignified life in a safe environment; to create a Recreation Club that will provide at least four recreation options like dance, art, music and sports; and to develop human resources in the field of disabilities through the establishment of a teacher training college.

We would like to thank all our donors, partners, sponsors, well-wishers and trustees for supporting our work, and our parents, teachers and children for their faith in us.

Dr. Vasudha Prakash  
Founder & Director



## Highlights of the Year



### **POWER OF TEN**

V-Excel celebrated its decennial year with a major advocacy event for children with special needs on January 10, 2013. This cultural extravaganza named 'Portraits of India' featured a unique poster exhibition on the world of disabilities, fantastic performances by our children including the Great Indian Parade, food and game stalls, and the sale of Indian craft made by our children and other small cottage-industry owners. Our chief guest for the event was Major General Ian Cardozo (Retd), Chairperson of the Rehabilitation Council of India. Guests of Honour included V-Excel's brand ambassador and renowned Carnatic classical singer, Bombay Jayashri; cricket expert, Kris Srikkanth; Mrs. Aruna Anand, India's chess grandmaster's manager and wife; cine actress Rohini; and Mr. Manohar Devadoss, author of the book 'A Quiet Courage'. We are grateful to all our supporters - YMCA, L & T Construction, Britannia, The Rotary Club of Chennai Port City, The Hindu and our radio partner Radio Mirchi.



### **OF BROTHERS AND SISTERS**

LuvMySib, a forum for siblings of special children was inaugurated in 2012 for the specific purpose of giving siblings of special children a space and a platform to express themselves in a homogenous group and to foster communication and rapport between siblings of people with special needs. The forum has been extremely successful with frequent meetings, both indoor (with art therapy and other activities) and outdoor (treks and picnics), giving the group the opportunity to share their stories and experiences. To read more about this, visit the Sibling Forum page on our website: <http://www.v-excel.org/forums/luvmysib.shtml>



## **STUDY CENTRE**

We have rechristened our Academy for Teacher Training and Excellence as 'Academy for Training and Excellence (ATE)' in the light of the different training programmes conducted by us for varying groups and audiences. The highlight for ATE this year was the official status as an IGNOU Study Centre for two courses in the area of disabilities: one is a Certificate course in Early Childhood Special Education, and the other is a Parents Awareness Training Programme, both under distance education. We see this as a wonderful opportunity for the parents of V-Excel as also for those keen on working closely with very young children.



## **OUTDOOR FUN**

In a first ever event for some children, students of Grade 5 and Grade 4 of KLC went for an overnight trip to Yelagiri with their teachers. Amidst a lot of fluttering of the heart from parents, the children amazed us all by their independence, their calm adult behaviour in dealing with a new place, new food and all other unpredictable occurrence. It was a very big challenge for the teachers who volunteered to take it on and managed ably.



### **RURAL CENTRES**

Our newest satellite centre was opened in Erode, thanks to Mrs. Deepa, the mother of one of our students at our Early Intervention Unit. We would like to thank Bally Cares, a social initiative of Bally Technologies, for stepping forth to sponsor all the equipment. The centre shall offer Early Intervention and Remedial services to children with developmental delays and special learning needs.



### **INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

For the first time in V-Excel, a formal evaluation system has been initiated. And we have chosen the Early Intervention Programme for the purpose as it is a programme that is being implemented across different cities. The project is funded by Sametric Research and involves an extensive analysis of the impact of our programme on the lives of children with developmental delays and disabilities. Assessing the effectiveness of our systems and procedures is also an important part of this work. The project aims to gauge success of our EI programme and make recommendations for enhancing its sustainability and how best to replicate it.



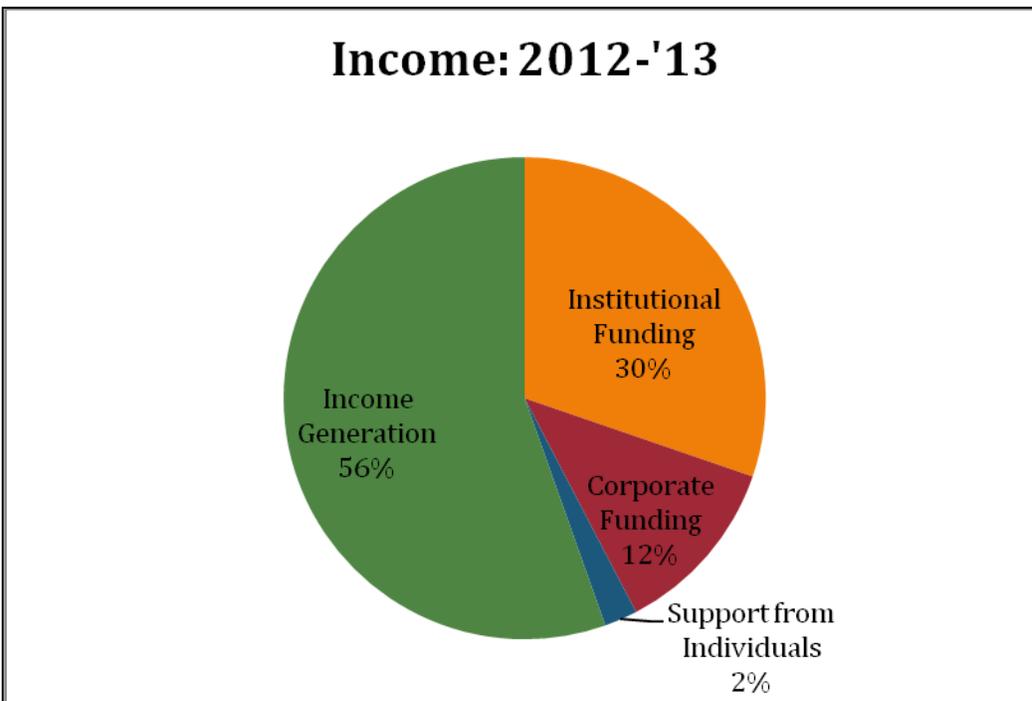
### **FROM HEART TO HANDS**

The Vocational Training Unit has had a busy year with our trainees receiving several orders from organisations and institutions in the city. They received an order for terracotta masks, Warli painting and key bags from Svanubhava Trust. The finished products were extremely beautiful and were appreciated by one and all! VTU also received an order for 250 *thamboolam* bags (type of goody bags), and thanks to the success of this order, they received many more for the festive season. As part of V-Excel's Hobby Club that was launched last year, VTU students tried their hand at photography this year. Soon, our children were quite busy walking the streets of Chennai with their cameras, and those images were used in the creation of the 2013 annual calendar.

## Financial Summary

### INCOME 2012-2013

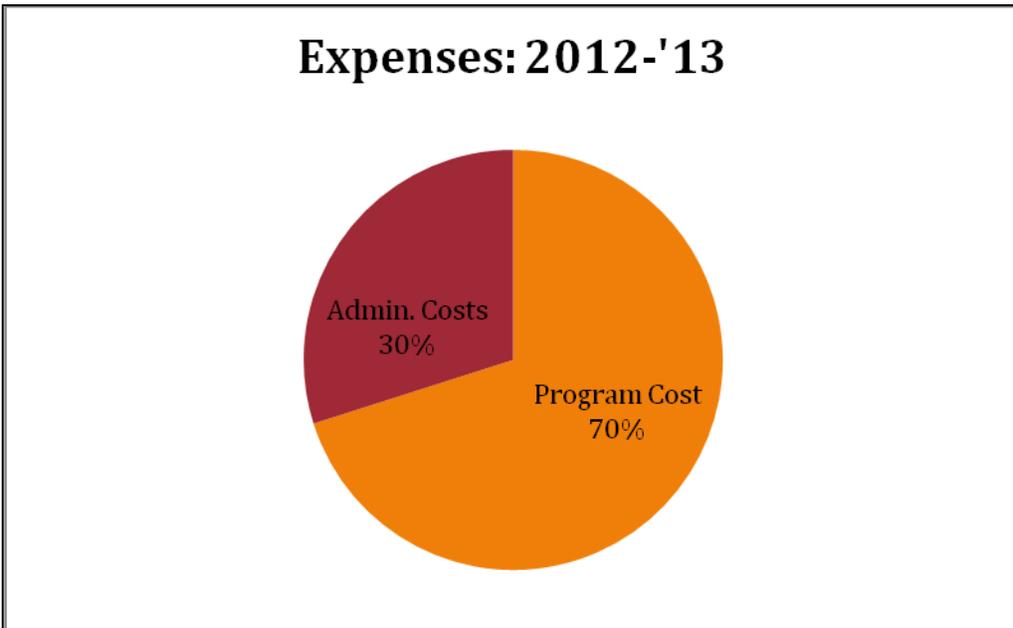
SOURCE OF SUPPORT	INCOME (RS)
<b>Institutional Funding</b>	64,07,334
<b>Corporate Funding</b>	25,59,320
<b>Support from Individuals</b>	4,69,551
<b>Income Generation</b>	1,17,36,459
<b>Total Amount (Rs)</b>	<b>2,11,72,664</b>



## Financial Summary

### EXPENSES 2012-2013

DESCRIPTION	EXPENSES
<b>Programme Cost</b>	70.1
<b>Admin Costs</b>	29.9



## Community Impact: From the Inside Out to the Outside In



- Dr. Vasudha Prakash, along with our Counselling Head Parimal Pandit, conducted a workshop on 'Guilt-free Parenting' at one of the leading IT companies. The feedback very positive and we have been asked to conduct similar workshops in Kolkata and Coimbatore. In fact, in Kolkata, it was conducted for an all-fathers group, with two young unmarried men also attending it to understand what it entails!
- Thirty-five Primary teachers from across 17 schools in Chennai benefited from the workshop undertaken by V-Excel as a part of the Kuruvila Jacob Initiative (KJI). The workshop was the first of the three-module programme planned for resource development in schools. Dr.Vasudha and Mrs.Gita Bhalla, Principal of KLC, delivered the lectures and conducted the activities.
- We had a wonderful group of six young volunteers from the Psychology Department of Ethiraj College for the summer camp. They conducted various interesting activities both outdoors and indoors. The activities were so creative that the children looked forward to coming for the summer camp.
- We had five interns through AIESEC volunteer network from China, Russia, Hong Kong, and Europe. The students of our centre were engaged in a lot of activities, new games, singing and dancing with the interns. Some of our older children enjoyed learning a new language –Chinese – and diligently practiced some of the symbols taught. For the interns it was an all new experience



being with special children and they unanimously felt that they had learnt a lot in the course of their interactions with our children.

- Dr. Milind Sonawane, a Speech Therapist, working as a rehabilitation specialist in a Government Institution at Ireland, visited our Nasik Centre for the second time. Fifteen children with speech and language difficulties were referred to him for consultation. He did a systematic profiling of the children referred to him and has given holistic recommendations.
- Students of Madras University visited V-Excel and were given an introductory talk by Dr. Vasudha, followed by a short tour of our school. We hope that, in the years to come, we are able to attract more and more students like these who can fortify their training practices and are able to join us in our environment.
- In our Nasik Centre, we organised a seminar on 'Behaviour Management of Special Children'. Mrs. Sunita Samant, Clinical Psychologist, was the speaker. About 15 parents attended the seminar and it was well-received.
- Dr. P.S.Lalitha, an Alternative Medical Practitioner, with the knowledge of Reiki, Pranic healing, Crystal Therapy, Magnified healing, Magneto Therapy, Acupuncture (Traditional & Sujok), visited our Shastri Nagar Unit. She shared many interesting experiences with us and spent some time understanding our work. She congratulated us on our commitment and efforts in empowering young adults.
- The counselling department met Dr. Elaine Walker from the US who guided the counsellors on how to organise data for research. She also shared the rubric on which to record the data so that it will be easy to select variables and carry out qualitative and quantitative data

## V-Excel Educational Trust's Milestones

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Establishment of V-Excel Educational Trust Teacher Training for Special Educators Special School for Children with Autism & MR	Remedial Intervention Services Workshops for Regular Schools	Rural Outreach Program (SSA) Program for Learning Disabilities	Association with ESVI Sarada Foundation Launch of Strides, monthly e-newsletter	Vocational Training Services Early Intervention Program	Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) Courses Counselling & Assessment Services	Advocacy Events for Special Needs Corporate Training & Workshops	Integration of Waldorf Education Principles Introduction of Play, Art & Movement Therapies	Major thrust on Parent Training & Counselling Launched Somarth Products by Vocational Unit	Set up of Satellite Centers in Tirunelveli & Nashik with backing of Sringeri Sharada Peetham Presentations at International Conferences	Inception of Stilling Forum & Alumni Association Hooby Club for Children with Special Needs Addition of Satellite Center in Erode

### 2001

- V-Excel Educational Trust is registered as a Public Charitable Trust and develops its vision and mission under the guidance of a sound founding team.
- Dr. Vasudha Prakash returns to India from the USA to set up a centre for Teacher Training and special services for children with mental challenges.
- Academic Concepts, Inc. is registered as a non-profit organisation in the USA.

### 2002

- Kaleidoscope Learning Centre, the special school, is set up as a lab school for teachers. Children with conditions such as Autism, Mental Retardation and Attention Deficit Disorders are enrolled.
- The Academy for Teacher Excellence begins its first training programme on methods used to teach children with Multiple Disabilities and Specific Learning Disabilities.

### 2003

- A young V-Excel is chosen by the Government of India to run the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) / Education for All - programme in ten blocks of Villipuram district of Tamil Nadu.
- The V-Excel Remedial Centre is born out of a rising demand for supplemental remedial teaching for school-going children with learning disabilities and children who were not admitted to regular schools.



## 2004

- Bridges Learning Academy, a pull-out school programme for slow learners and children with dyslexia, is initiated to address the serious concern of academically low-performing students.

## 2005

- V-Excel associates with ESVI Sarada Foundation for using their premises for additional services such as early intervention and rehabilitation.
- Operations move to larger space to accommodate the growing number of children catered to across different services.

## 2006

- The Vocational Training Unit is set up. It focuses on developing suitable employment opportunities for young adolescents with mental challenges.
- The Early Intervention program for children between 0-7 years having developmental delays is launched. It is intended to provide a proactive step for early remediation.

## 2007

- The Counseling and Assessment Unit begins operations. It reaches internal clients and the outside community of corporate employees facing parenting issues.

## 2008

- Demand for Workshops and Training for different target groups like teachers, parents, doctors, professionals, etc. increases significantly as V-Excel's credibility is established. over the years

## 2009

- V-Excel offers many short-term courses in Special Education. The ATE Diploma course is accredited by The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI).
- Kaleidoscope Learning Centre, starts conscious integration of Waldorf principles with conventional special education and witnesses encouraging outcomes.

## 2010

- V-Excel's work in the Rural Outreach Programme of the Government is seen as one of the most effectively run NGO programs.
- The Early Intervention program gains ground. The incidence of mainstreaming in schools at a young age boosts enrolments.

## 2011

- The Vocational Training Unit expands to offer practical and wide range of viable options for employment opportunities for young persons with developmental disabilities.
- V-Excel is represented at two International Conferences, New York (USA) and Reykjavik (Iceland) through shared learnings from Curative Education for children with Autism in the Indian context.
- V-Excel launches its first satellite centres in Nasik and Tirunelveli.

## 2012

- The V-Excel Alumni Association is formed to develop a strong foundation of V-Excelites in the field of Special Education and Rehabilitation.
- The V-Excel Sibling Forum is launched to bring together a cohesive group, understand them and enlist their support for the long-term care of persons with special needs.
- Erode satellite centre is set up and services have commenced

## 2013

- Introduction of IGNOU courses in Early Childhood Education and Parent Awareness,
- Initiated the process for developing Solapur (Maharashtra) as a Satellite Center and conducted training for the local team
- Nashik Centre started a special school given the consistent demand from parents

Our journey continues.....





## V-Excel's Beneficiaries

V-Excel's 'Life Span Education Model', offers complete and comprehensive services for individuals with special needs, starting from birth to adulthood for those with developmental disabilities – Autism, Mental Retardation, Down Syndrome, Attention Deficit (Hyperactivity) Disorder, and Learning Disabilities (Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia). Through our range of services – Early Intervention to prevent the socio-economic burden on families; special schooling that gives the child the opportunity to fully develop his/her potential through accessible good education; and vocational training that empowers the child with specific professional skills – we have managed to change perceptions, reduce the financial burden on families, and are fostering independence in children with special needs.

<b>SERVICE</b>	<b>BENEFICIARIES TO DATE</b>
<b>Rural Outreach</b>	22,000
<b>Workshops</b>	4,250
<b>Counselling</b>	1,200
<b>Early Intervention</b>	580
<b>Remedial Programme</b>	570
<b>Special Schools</b>	400
<b>Teacher Training</b>	365
<b>Satellite Centres</b>	200
<b>School for Learning Disabilities</b>	50
<b>Vocational Training</b>	45
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,660</b>



## Testimonials

“My son Akshayanathan is studying in V-Excel for the past 7 years. I have witnessed tremendous changes in my son and all the credit goes to this excellent school. The school has not only focused on his learning, but also in transforming him to a confident person who is able to meet the requirements and challenges of day to day existence. He loves going to school and never wants to miss a day, which testifies the comfort level with his teachers and the extent to which teachers have understood him. The commitment and sincerity of the teachers are exemplary. They have moulded my son to adapt easily to life at school and home.”

“I have been desirous of sharing with you our joy of my son, Amruth’s development at your school. In the last couple of months I have noticed a remarkable improvement, almost a turnaround in his development. Specifically I find he has become more responsible about his needs and behaviour, and also his interactions and relationships with others including outsiders and immediate family. He has become sensitive, which I think is the most important change in him to enable him to join the mainstream. He is able to take care of his needs without outside intervention and his temper tantrums have come down to insignificant levels. I have mentioned broadly some of my observations and I am happy to mention that my wife who spends the maximum time with Amruth feels his conduct and behaviour have become impeccable. At this stage we are confident of his future and are supremely confident that he will join the mainstream in an honourable way. We thank you one and all in V-Excel for all your untiring efforts in bringing our child with Autism to this level.”

“My daughter’s name is Ritika. Though Ritika is attending a regular school she has problems in coordinating her work, spellings, and writing. I came to know about V-Excel Educational Trust from a newspaper article on Learning Difficulties and how they can be helped. She is now attending Remedial classes at the V-Excel Remedial Centre for more than a year and it has really helped her a lot. She has improved both her spellings as well as her writing skills. Her reading has also improved. She has been really enjoying her classes and the methods that are being used to teach her.”

## Contact Information

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## Company Information

V-Excel Educational Trust is an 11-year-old organisation based in Chennai (with seven centres across the country) and has successfully been running an educational and vocational training institution dedicated to the cause of persons with special needs. As a quality service provider in the field of Special Education, V-Excel emphasises holistic development. The core philosophy is that every child has the potential to learn and that the focus should be on *abilities*, not disabilities. Through pragmatic education, specialised therapies and rehabilitation services, V-Excel empowers special persons to be dignified, independent, contributing members of mainstream society. V-Excel Educational Trust is at #1 Norton 2nd Street, Mandaveli, Chennai 600 028, India. Tel: 91-44-24956373/24620243. Website: [www.v-excel.org](http://www.v-excel.org)

