

Newsletter ASDWT

April to June 2022

Hello everyone !

An exciting Regional Conference was organised by ASDWT on 7th April to observe World Autism Awareness Month with participants from ASEAN and SAARC countries including Philippines, Malaysia, India and Nepal. The Theme of the Conference was Training & Employment of Adults with Autism and I/DD, a subject that is being prioritized by us.

Another of our pet projects is the setting up of Ramaq Homes for Adults with Neurodiversity, for which we attended yet another exhilarating session in June with Ms. Neena Wagh of ALAP (Assisted Living for Autistic Persons) Foundation, India. Neena was as usual full of wisdom and great tips for parents on how to go about setting up all kinds of small and large residential facilities for adults with Autism and I/DD.

Parents should know that at present, different experiments are being carried out in India by parents and professional care-givers, supported by organisations like the Keystone Institute India and the International Social Role Valorisation Association who are providing training in the running and management of these residential facilities.



Social Role Valorisation — SRV— is a new concept of building linkages with communities to support persons with disabilities in their own environment, where they can live and work, and are accepted by different networks of Caregivers that are in turn trained in SRV modalities. I am proud to say that ASD Welfare Trust is a member of the International SRV Association and its

Associate Organisation in India, the Keystone Institute. We are also members of the Autism Research Institute (ARI) based in San Diego.

Parents in Pakistan need to start making plans for the future of their children and we are willing to provide support in this area.

In the last 3 months, ASDWT made contact with an international group of Autists all of whom are excelling in their different fields, via 5 Live Sessions organised by UK Neurodiversity Celebration Week. Kazi Fazli and Faiza Rehman from Pakistan also participated as Panelists. It was a mind-blowing experience to see how much stereotyping exists the world over and what all needs to be done in Pakistan!

All the best, Rukhsana Shah



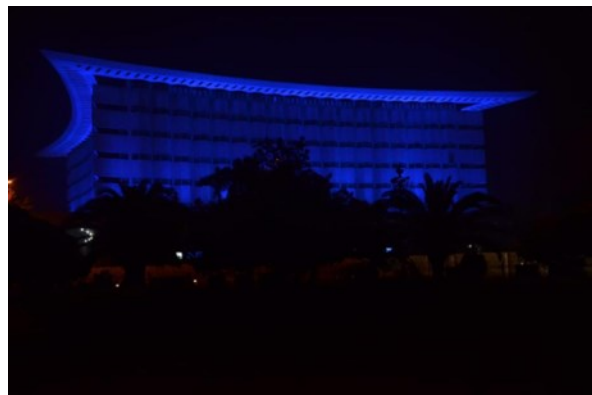
Inside this Newsletter	Page
Special Events	2
Seminars & Workshops	6
Educational Webinars for ASDWT Team	13
Office Location	14



Special Events

Light Up Blue

To mark Autism Awareness Day on April 2nd, ASDWT requested various government and private organizations to light up their buildings "Blue" in solidarity with Autistic individuals. ASDWT is grateful to them all for lighting up their buildings on April 2nd to spread Autism Awareness.



Webinar on Training and Employment of Adults with Autism and I/DD

The Second Regional Webinar on Training and Employment of Adults with Autism and I/DD was organized by ASD Welfare Trust, Lahore, on 7th April 2022, with speakers from India, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, and Pakistan. The webinar was live streamed on Facebook as well, providing access to hundreds of viewers.

Rukhsana Shah, CEO of ASD Welfare Trust welcomed the speakers and participants.

Mr. Cason Ong, Chairman of ASEAN Autism Network (AAN), and representative of National Autism Society of Malaysia gave a brief outline of the work being done by AAN in ASEAN countries and in Malaysia regarding awareness, training and employment of adults with Autism and I/DD.

Ms. Mona Veluz, President of Autism Society of Philippines talked about how the Autism Society had grown in Philippines from 11 parents to 13000 strong members in 33 years. The Society runs structured Employment Readiness Training Programmes for adults with Autism and also for Employers. Ms. Mona's presentation was appreciated by all other speakers and generated a great deal

Dr. Sunita Maleku Amatya from The Autism Care Society, stressed the challenges that Nepal was facing about Autism, due to the lack of awareness. The Autism Care Society was created by parents in 2008. Now Autism is recognized as a separate category in the National Disability Rights Act of Nepal.

Pakistan was presented by Dr. Salma Khalil, COO of ASD Welfare Trust in Karachi. Her presentation was based on the findings of the Annual Conference on Training and Employment with Autism and I/DD. She spoke about the need to sensitize employers and trainers about potential of adults with these disabilities.



Regional Webinar
Employment & Training of Adults with Autism & I/DD
7th April, 2022 - 11:00 am to 2:20 pm(PST)


Mr. Cason Ong
ASEAN & Malaysia


Ms. Mona Magno-Veluz
Philippines


Ms. Indrani Basu
India


Dr. Sunita Maleku
Nepal


Dr. Ismail Shafeeu
Maldives


Dr. Salma Khalil
Pakistan

Please Contact for Free Registration: +92 0331-4199945 – +92 0301-2633805

The presentations were followed by a lively discussion on the possibilities of regional collaborations of exchange of information and human resources for training and advocacy. The session was moderated by Ms. Rukhsana Shah, Founder of Autism Welfare Trust. The Trust has carried out extensive awareness raising programs throughout Pakistan and is currently raising its focus and attention on employment and residential facilities on adults with Autism and I/DD.

generated a great deal of lively discussion.

Ms. Indrani Basu from Action for Autism, India gave a presentation covering the initial journey of autism awareness in India and the sensitization programmes undertaken by Action for Autism. She said that training programs are conducted for adults with Autism and I/DD, but much more needs to be done in this area.

Continue on the next page



Home Page

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Pakistan was represented by Dr. Salma Khalil, COO of ASD Welfare Trust, Karachi. Her presentation was based on the findings of the Annual Conference on Training and Employment of persons with Autism and I/DD that she had organised in March. She spoke about the need to sensitize employers and trainers about the potential of adults with these disabilities.

The presentations were followed by a lively discussion on the possibilities of regional collaborations for the exchange of information and human resources needed for training and advocacy. The session was moderated by Rukhsana Shah who explained how the ASD Welfare Trust is working in awareness, de-stigmatization of disability, training and employment of adults with Autism and I/DD throughout Pakistan.

Screening of Movies (Bhai & Dia)



ASDWT Karachi organized the screening of two movies, Bhai and Dia, produced by filmmaker Hamza Bangash on Saturday 25th, June 2022 at The Pakistan Arts Council, Karachi. The film Bhai was a short clip about Autism, played by Mr. Ayaan Javaid, a young man with Autism, pictured on the right.

The other short film, Dia, was about the travails of a young woman suffering from Schizophrenia.





The programme started with a rendition of the National Anthem on violin played by Ameer Hassan Shah, an adult with Autism from Lahore, followed by a poem written by Ms. Somia Khatlani and animated by Mr. Ayaan Javaid. After screening of movies and panel discussion, a video on ASDWT's work was shown.

Mr. Sadiq Ali Memon, Advisor to the Chief Minister spoke on the occasion and appreciated the work being done by the Trust. Mr. Mohammad Khan Ranjha, Secretary Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Government of Sindh attended the event with his wife. Mr. Jahangir Siddiqui of JS Bank presented souvenirs to the distinguished panelists.



Dr. Wamiq Ali, Dr. Qudsia Tariq, Ms. Sheema Kirmani, Mr. Qazi Fazli Azeem, Mr. Hamza Bangash, Mr. Ali Faizan Anchan and Ms. Wajiha Javaid were Panelists who discussed the need to create public awareness and acceptance of mental health problems in Pakistan.

We would like to appreciate efforts of the ASDWT Karachi Team, Ms. Faiza Ilyas, Ms. Afifa Tariq, Ms. Sanam Kaleem, Mr. Moazzaz Virk, Mr. Shahbaz Mirza and Mr. Mohammad Arif for making this event a success.



Autism Awareness Session for SadaPay, a Fintech Company in Karachi

ASDWT Karachi conducted an Autism Awareness Session for SadaPay on 11th April 2022. The Company was interested in creating awareness for their employees.

Legal Guidance for Parent of children with Neurodiversity

ASDWT Karachi organized a Talk on 'Legal Guidance for Parents of Children with Neurodiversity' on April 22nd, 2022. This session was conducted by Mr. Rana Asif Habib, Advocate and Founder Initiator Human Development Foundation. It was an interactive session in which he explained Inheritance Laws, Wills, Gifts, Guardianship, and the procedure of creating and managing Trusts for children and adults with Neurodiversity.



Quaid e Azam Rangers Special Children School Karachi

On 24th May, 2022 ASDWT was invited by Quaid e Azam Rangers Special Children School for a talk on Puberty and Adolescents' Issues in Neurodiverse children. Dr. Salma Khalil gave a detailed presentation on the subject covering sex education, safety and readiness for transition to adulthood.



Seminars & Workshops

SMB Fatima Jinnah Government Girls School | Zindagi Trust

On April 9th, 2022 ASDWT conducted an awareness seminar on Autism and Learning Disabilities at SMB Fatima Jinnah Government Girls School. The school is being run by The Zindagi Trust— a top philanthropic organisation of the country headed by Mr. Shehzad Roy, celebrity singer and icon.



Managing Sensory Difficulties in Adolescents with ASD



Free Zoom Webinar

Managing Sensory Difficulties of Adolescents with ASD

Wednesday 25th May, 2022 - Time: 2:00 pm (PKT)







Dr. Anjali Joshi
Senior Occupational Therapist,
Programme Director PlayPal,
Member FFA & Fellow of Academic Council of
Occupational Therapy, India.



Ms. Nilanjana Rambothu
Special Educator from Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
Founder Sunshine Autism Care Society
Kolkata, West Bengal, India.

Please contact for registration & zoom link: +92 3314199945 – +923020471707

ASDWT arranged on May 25th a special zoom webinar with Dr. Anjali Joshi, Senior Occupational Therapist and Ms. Nilanjana Rambothu, Special Educator (RCI) India and Founder Sunshine Autism Care Society, India. Dr. Joshi gave a detailed presentation on the link between sensory disorientation and Autism, and how best to manage these with OT techniques. Ms. Nilanjana talked about Sensory Diet and Responsive Systems in persons with ASD. Both of them described different techniques to be used in different situations. It was a very informative session, which was followed by an exhaustive question and answer session.

Importance and Role of Technical Education and Vocational Training

ASDWT Karachi organized a workshop on "Importance and Role of Technical Education and Vocational Training" on June 3rd, 2022. The session was conducted by Dr. Masroor Ahmed Shaikh, Chairperson Sindh Board of Technical Education. He explained the different technical and vocational education, courses, and services SBTE offers for differently abled individuals.

Another meeting was held with SBTE for policy making for person with Neurodiversity on June 16th 2022, on how to tailor the SBTE curriculum, processes and assessments to open up vocational training and qualification and technical education to persons with disabilities (PWDs).

This was a follow-up to the Annual Conference organized by ASDWT Karachi on March 26, 2022 for inclusion and empowerment of adults with Autism and I/DD.



Arts Council Karachi

ASDWT held a meeting on May 27th, 2022 with Arts Council to discuss future opportunities. Mr. Ahmed Shah President Art Council took keen interest in ASDWT work and promised to facilitate events.

Challenges of Non-Verbal Autism (Zoom Webinar)

On the 17th of June, 2022, ASDWT Lahore conducted a webinar about the challenges of Non-verbal Autism presented by Ms. Safa Pervaiz, Senior Consultant, Speech & Language Pathologist at King Edward Medical University. She explained the importance of building pre-verbal skills in autistic children through early intervention by parents and speech therapists. In her presentation, Ms. Pervaiz gave tips for parents to help improve the speech skills of their children.



Free Zoom Webinar

Challenges of Non-verbal Autism



Presenter: Ms. Safa Pervaiz
*Senior Consultant speech language pathologist,
Academic Faculty Member of Speech Language
Pathology, (AHS) King Edward Medical
University, Lahore*

Institute of Learning & Rehabilitation Sciences, Abbottabad.

Lahore team of ASD Welfare Trust, visited Abbottabad on June 22nd, 2022, for an Awareness Seminar on Autism and ADHD at the Women Institute of Learning & Rehabilitation Sciences, Department of Psychology affiliated with Khyber Medical University. Ms. Rukhsana Shah, CEO, ASDWT gave a presentation on Autism and Self-Awareness, while Ms. Farah Amanat, Clinical Psychologist, talked about ADHD & Specific Learning Disorders and their management.



Ayub Medical College & Teaching Hospital, Abbottabad

ASDWT conducted a Workshop at the Department of Psychiatry, Ayub Teaching Hospital, Abbottabad on 23rd June, 2022. The event was opened by Dean & CEO Professor Dr. Umer Farooq along with Head, Department of Psychiatry, Prof. Dr. Aftab Alam Khan. Ms. Rukhsana Shah gave a presentation on Developing Language & Vocabulary in High Functioning Autism, and Ms. Farah Amanat, Senior Clinical Psychologist conducted training on Executive Functioning in Autism.



Abbottabad University Of Science & Technology
Faculty Of Health And Bio-Medical Sciences

3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
NEUROGENETIC DISORDERS AND SYNAPTOPATHIES

Speakers

Patron in Chief:
 Prof. Dr. Tahir Irfan Khan
 Vice Chancellor
 Abbottabad UST

Patron:
 Prof. Dr. Mujadad ur Rehman
 Dean FHBS
 Abbottabad UST




Presenting Autism Ki Pehli Kitab written by Ambassador Hassan to Dr. Aftab Alam Khan, Head of Psychiatry, Ayub Medical College & Teaching Hospital, Abbottabad



Presenting the Book on Autism to Vice Chancellor, Dr. Tahir Irfan of Abbottabad Uni of Science & Technology, Dr. Mohammad Ali of QuadeAzam University Islamabad

Open Session with Parents in Abbotabad

Team ASD Welfare Trust, Lahore conducted a discussion session for parents and professional from different special schools in Abbottabad on 23rd June, 2022.

Mr. Ajmal Waheed Khushi and Ms Samina Kousar from SAM SERC School had organised the meeting as part of Special Olympics Events. Ms Sadia Sajid Principal RISE School, Ms. Zaib - un-Nisa, Principal Orion Inclusive School, Ms. Gulnaz from Kingston School, Ms. Kishwar Meer and Ms. Sajida Saeed from Army Special School, Abbottabad and 30 mothers attended.

ASDWT Team emphasised the need to set up Parent Support Groups in every city as parents learnt most from each others' experiences and provide many new insights in the management of neurodevelopmental disorders. Regular meetings among parents also helped to reduce stress and depression among mothers of children with Autism.



Visit to Women Empowerment Center— Bait ul Mall, Abbottabad

Visit to Deaf Reach School.

On 5th May 2022, ASD Welfare Trust team visited Deaf Reach School Lahore. Mr. Daniel Marc Lanthier - Director welcomed the team. A detailed presentation on the working of school and its different departments was given by Mr. Lanthier along with a visit to various departments and classes.

The School is also providing vocational training to the deaf students. Through a successful collaboration with Sapphire, students are learning stitching skills and are employed by Sapphire. On 14th May 2022, ASDWT again had a meeting with the Principal & Coordinators. It was decided that ASDWT team will give training sessions to teachers so that they can identify any neuro-developmental problems and guide the parents of the students.



Visit to Milestone, Lahore

ASDWT Team visited Milestone, NGO for Persons with Physical Disabilities, on 21st April 2022. Mr. Shafiq-ur-Rehman, President of Milestone, gave a detailed briefing on the work and business model of the institution, which is focused on independence and economic empowerment. He offered to take on board any autistic person and asked ASDWT to guide the organisation on curriculum development for their vocational training.



COTHOM

ASDWT Team visited COTHOM (College of Tourism & Hotel Management) on 31st May 2022. The Team was received by Mr. Babar Sheikh - Director International Development. Mr. Zaheer Ahmed, Chief Operating Officer, also attended the meeting.

Mr. Babar gave a brief introduction on the College and the courses they are offering. He conducted a detailed tour of the college classes and departments. Furthermore, Mr. Zaheer and Mr. Babar agreed to work with ASDWT for the vocational training of adults with ASD and neurodevelopmental disorders.

Punjab Vocational Training Council (PVTTC)

ASDWT team held a meeting with Maj. Shahnawaz Badar, Chairman PVTTC and Maj. Ghazanfar Abbas, Senior Manager Curriculum on June 7th 2022.

Ms. Rukhsana Shah and Ms. Mobashshrah Bajwa discussed the need for vocational training and employment of adults with Autism and I/DD. Mr. Ghazanfar shared the Course Book on Entrepreneurship Training Skills. ASDWT offered to modify the Course for adults with Autism and I/DD, and to conduct awareness sessions to sensitize trainers and peers. After a thorough discussion, Mr. Shahnawaz and Mr. Ghazanfar agreed to work with ASDWT to create a curriculum which would assist adults with autism and help create work opportunities for them.



Roshni Gaon

On 9th June 2022, Ms. Shahida Helssen and Mr. Farooq Alam from Roshni Gaon visited ASDWT Lahore Office, and had a meeting with Ms. Rukhsana Shah and Ms. Mobashshrah Bajwa on their current activities.



C-ARTS

On 11 June 2022 ASD Welfare Trust team was invited for attending inauguration of C- ARTS (Adults) ADHD Centre Korangi, Karachi.

Educational Webinar for ASDWT Teams

Thinking Differently About Autism

ASDWT had organized participation in 5 Panel discussions by Neurodiversity Celebration Week, UK on 20th April 2022. The sessions had over 30 autistic speakers from across the globe, who shared their insights, lived experiences and advice on a wide range of topics. Qazi Fazli and Faiza Rehman represented Pakistan in the Panels.



Dr. Salma Khalil, COO, ASDWT Karachi, with Mr. Sadiq Ali Memon, Advisor to the Chief Minister, Sindh, on the opening of C-ARTS in Korangi.



Synapse Clinic

ASDWT conducted a meeting on June 17th, 2022 with Synapse to discuss about the future collaboration. Dr. Wamiq (Psychiatrist) took a keen interest and offered to facilitate parents of children with neurodevelopmental disorders.

Dawn Article on Work Place Inclusion—2nd April 2022

On World Autism Awareness Day, an article by Ms. Rukhsana Shah, CEO ASDWT was published in "Dawn" on the importance of work place inclusion of adults with Autism & I/DD in main stream economic activities.



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