

Report: Sibling Engagement October-December 2020

The Athletes of Special Olympics Bharat along with their siblings, virtually celebrated the **International Day of Persons with Disabilities**, upholding their abilities and reaching out to more siblings, family members and State leaders, on 2 December 2020. The event was a culmination of a month-long activities and engagements that created an open platform for the Siblings pairs to engage together in multiple activities. Subject-focused sessions were held with their families separately, creating an opportunity for them to deliberate essential challenges and concerns with each other as well as with experts invited for each of them



Event 2 December 2020

Aakriti Gupta and Gayatri Pore, sibling leaders from Jammu and Maharashtra, respectively, took over 80 attendees through an overwhelming journey driven by different Sibling pairs. Advait and his sibling Krish from Telangana anchored the event, stringing together more siblings and leaders from the Special Olympics International and SO Bharat who zoomed into different aspects of making Inclusion a reality, voicing concerns and observations emerging from their personal experiences.

The participants included Athletes, Sibling leaders, Youth leaders, Family members, Guests and Program Officials from India, Singapore, Indonesia and USA. The event drew a distinguished audience that included the Chairman of SO Bharat and a recipient of the Dhyana Chand Award, Mr. Satish Pillai; Ms Meghan Hussey and Ms Alicia Paul from the Special Olympics international, USA; Ms. Lynn Tan, Ms. Avi Tania and Ms. Bella Choo from the Special Olympics Asia Pacific, Singapore Regional office

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Air Marshal Keelor, Founder & CEO, SO Bharat said - *“I am deeply impressed and touched by the determination of the Siblings to engage effectively in the lives of the Athletes, to open the environment of growth and allow them to discover new horizons. It is one of the very prized programs; a fantastic initiative having a high potential. I will hope and pray that we will be able to increase the participation. The Area Directors (State Leaders) have already been told by us and together we will be able to make it a grand program”*

The event was anchored and lead by the Sibling Pairs from different States of India. The session rolled out a concise understanding of the Special Olympics Sibling Engagement Program, the need of deliberating and actioning viable housing and financial planning for Persons with Intellectual Disability amongst other highlighted topics. With an objective of creating Climate consciousness amongst the youth, a session was held on the individual responsibility towards it , with Krishna Khullar, a young athlete in the Autism Spectrum talking about how he keeps his environment green. A student team from the NIFT (National Fashion Technology) Mumbai shared an interactive website design, to augment Socio-emotional learning. Aakriti concluded the event with an idea of an Action Plan that would be actioned by 15 pairs in the year 2021

Agenda

Session	Speaker
Welcome everyone ‘Building Back Better’	KA Advait & Krishna(Emcee)- Sibling Pair from Telangana
About Sibling Engagement	Gayatri + Sanjana Pore(Sibling Pair from Mumbai) Jessica & Shivam Verma (Sibling Pair from Delhi)
Announcement of Shrey Kadian’s nomination to the Special Olympics Global Athlete Leadership Council	Shrey Kadian+ Simran Sahni (Unified Pair)
Climate discussion (takeaway from UNICEF event)	Aakriti Gupta(Sibling leader from Jammu) + Krishna & Vaibhav Khullar (Sibling Pair from Delhi)
Housing and Finance for PWID	Dr Amitav Mishra, General Secretary, SO Bharat
Introduction to Typed Tales- Innovative Website	Saloni Mhapsekar & Kritika Sharma
Action Planning	Aakriti Gupta

CLIMATE CHANGE FOR VAIBHAV & KRISHNA KHULLAR



Vaibhav and Krishna Khullar, the youngest Sibling pair, spoke on Climate action, holding all the viewers together in a pray for ‘Mother Earth’.

Some Projected Activities of Sibling Forum:

1. To **create awareness** on parents about possible ways of **planning life long social security** and care for their wards having intellectual disability;
2. To promote **cooperative movements among parents** and care takers **to help themselves in** ensuring life long social security for their wards having intellectual disability.

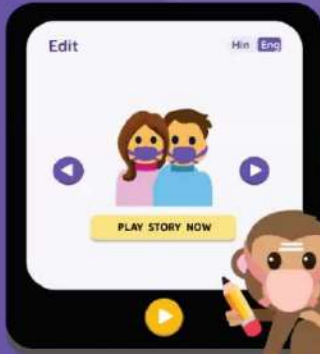
MH From Meghan Hussey to All Panelists
Thank you Dr. Mishra for sharing your knowledge with us! We're fortunate to have you as a role mo...



Dr Amitav Mishra, General Secretary, SO Bharat addressed 'Housing & Financial Planning' for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities, an area that needs more attention for a quality impact

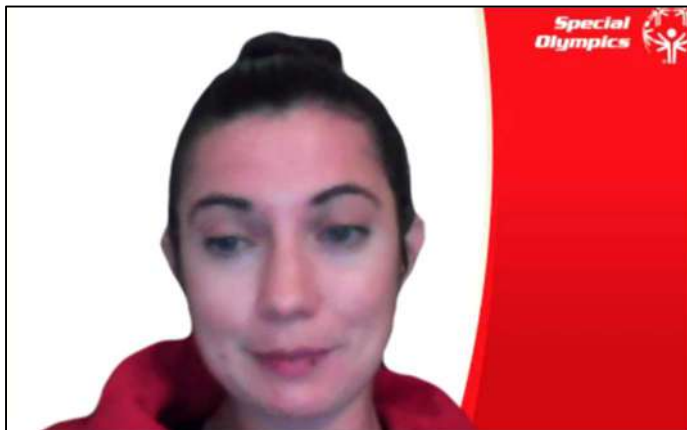
Saloni and Kritika , spoke about the 'Project Typed Tales' leading a team of students from the NIFT (National Institute of Fashion Technology) Mumbai in designing it

Typed Tales



Including the Excluded

DESIGNING INCLUSIVE LEARNING TOOL FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



"As a Sibling growing up Special Olympics was extremely important in my journey, in understanding and accepting my family. Special Olympics is a place where I can connect with other siblings and spend quality time with my family. I can also invite other friends of mine to cheer us on or to volunteer anyhow" - **Ms Meghan Hussey** Sr. Manager, Global Development and Government Relations, Global Youth and Education Programming, SOI

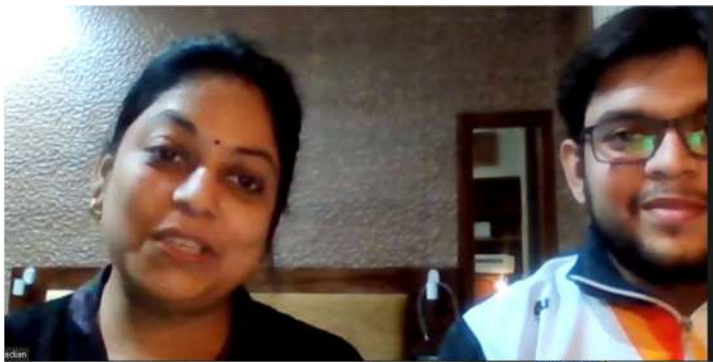
A Special Announcement

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Simran Sahni struck a highpoint in the event that honoured the International Day of Disability 2020, with the theme 'Build Back Better' as she announced a role of monumental importance, assumed by Shrey Kadian, Chairperson of the National Athlete Input Council & Member of the Regional Athlete Input Council

Shrey Kadian has been nominated to represent the Asia-Pacific Region in the Special Olympics Global Athlete Leadership Council.

It is for the first time that an Athlete from SO Bharat has received the honour. The GALC has seven members representing all the seven Special Olympics regions. Shrey will be serving a term of three years in this role, where he would be expected to represent the ideas of the region, plan opportunities that create a platform for training & empowering more Athletes and continue to model Unified Leadership



We were treated like a 'virus' It was as though my son would infect the rest of my family. We were asked to sit away from others in parties, because they feared that my son would spoil other children. But I had faith and a power within myself to support my son. I am proud to see him lead today. Children like him make us, parents, Special -
Shalini Kadian, Shrey Kadian's Mother



About the Special Olympics Sibling Engagement

Inspired by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, the founder of the Special Olympics movement and a sibling herself, Special Olympics has identified the power of siblings as agents of change for inclusion. Siblings of Special Olympics athletes are invited to do more than cheer on the sidelines: they have the opportunity to get in the game as leaders of the Unified Generation both on and off the playing field through Unified Sports and advocacy work. Through a partnership of the Samuel Family Foundation, Special Olympics is able to proactively reach out to siblings by developing resources, holding workshops, and supporting sibling projects to make their schools and communities more inclusive.

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Message from Ms Meghan Hussey:

I wanted to say thank you again for inviting me to be a part of the SO Bharat National Sibling Forum today and congratulations on the wonderful event. I was thrilled to see such a large and impressive group of sibling, youth, athlete, and Program leaders coming together around such important topics. It was truly inspiring to see how much sibling engagement has grown in SO Bharat. What you have done to activate siblings as Unified Leaders in the movement is definitely an example for us to learn from. I am sad that I had to leave before the event ended, but it was absolutely the best way to have started my day.

Month of November 2020

	Date	Session	Conducted by
	1/11/2020	Number Games Orientation of SO/Sibling Forum/Quiz	Shruti, Rishabh, Rithik
	7/11/2020	Emotional Wellness, Mental Health and Parenting	Chitra Shah, Are Director SO Bharat Puducherry
	8/11/2020	Creative Activity/ Lamp Diya Making For Diwali Safe & Pollution free Diwali	Anjali Saini KA Advaith
	21/11/2020	Eye Care – Keeping them beautiful and fit despite expanded screen hours	Prof Monika Choudhary, Clinical Director Opening Eyes, SO Bharat
	22/11/2020	Thanksgiving - Saraswathi Vandana Yoga Session Live fitness daily regime of 20mins based on the Fit5 program	Sanjana & Gayatri Pore Sahil Singh Mr Aryan Talwar, Natraj Studios
	23, 24 & 25 Nov 2020	Orientation Session for State Area Directors	Aakriti Gayatri
	28/11/2020	Relationships & Sexual Health	Dr Mousumi Bhaumik, Teacher trainer Ph.D (Spl.Edn), MSc. (Psychology)
	29/11/2020	30 seconds Elevator Speech (Interaction) Social Communication for Siblings	Alankar, Aakriti, Parul Gupta from Eye to I Communication

To navigate her project through the lockdown Aakriti Gupta, a recipient of the Sibling Innovation Grant re designed her Innovation Grant-fueled project to form a National Sibling Forum. While she identified 5 pairs of Siblings in June 2020 to begin with, multiple activities started to expand Sibling involvement. However, the current grant gave a spurt to the activities, bringing on board more sibling pairs from all over India, who continued to meet frequently. The frequent sessions witnessed an emerging bond of familiarity and friendships and also a sensitization amongst the larger group of Youth leaders

While the Unified activities were planned for Sundays, Saturdays brought the parents together connecting them with Experts in specific areas of their concern. As these sessions rolled out, instances of associated bullying and isolation, the pressing challenge of breaking mind-sets even today, urgency of financial planning and housing, development of contemporary and interactive platforms to spread awareness and address challenges faced by families of PWID- constitute areas that have come under focus in the past month. A forum of bonding and comfort is what the National Sibling Forum is developing as. As the Sibling pairs are coming together, other family members and Youth are joining, with everyone shedding their inhibitions to speak aloud and deliberate.

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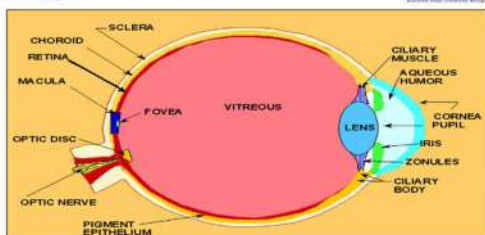
"In celebration of Thanksgiving in a way, We had a Sarvaswati Vandana Dance by led by Me, Gayatri and my sister Sanjana, who is an Athlete from SO Bharat Maharashtra. It was a culmination of praying to Devi Sarvaswati, Devi Laksmi and Lord Vishnu to always keep their blessings on us. Sanjana very proactively showed everyone all the steps and what kind of Mudras are supposed to be used. Sanjana has become aware, little more disciplined and has become responsive and responsible as well"- Gayatri Pore, Sibling of Sanjana , Athlete from SO Bharat Maharashtra



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Sushant University



Following the Session with Prof Monica Chaudhry, Clinical Director, Opening Eyes , SO Bharat, she has offered to extend consultation on eye care to the Athletes and their families during fixed hours on week days



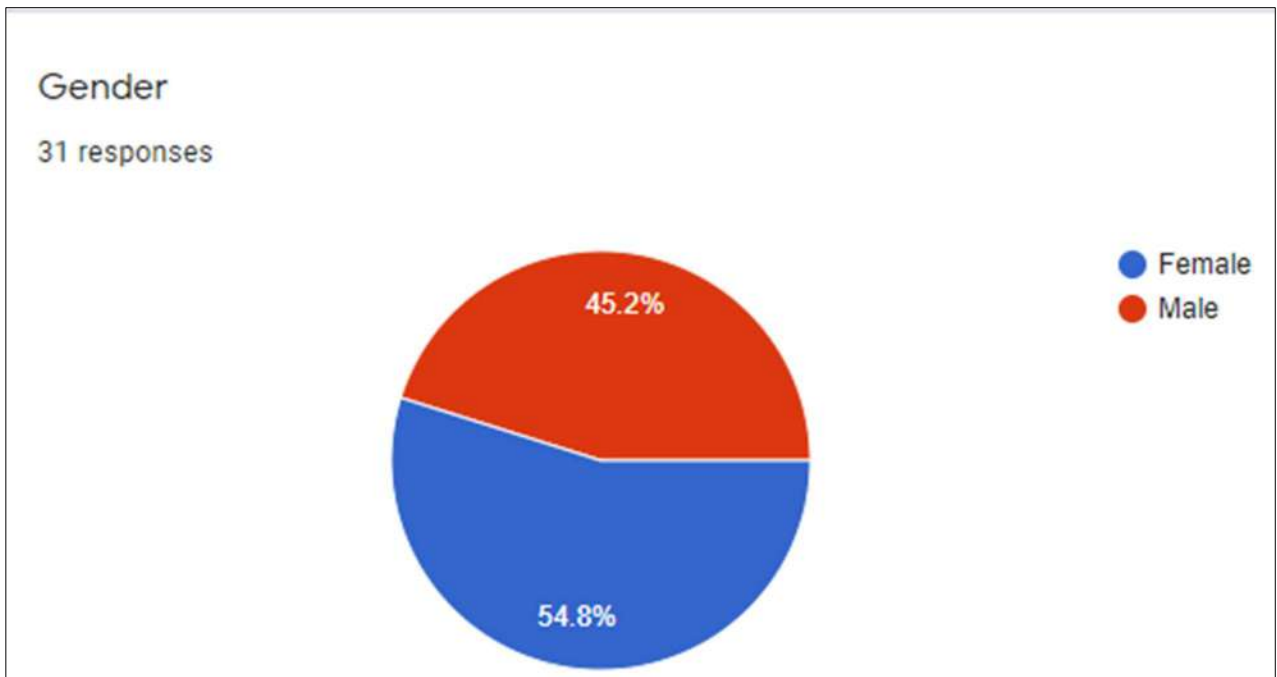
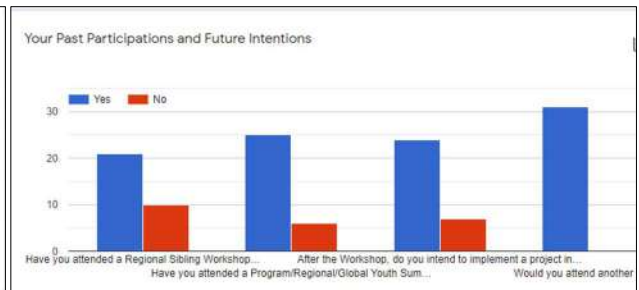
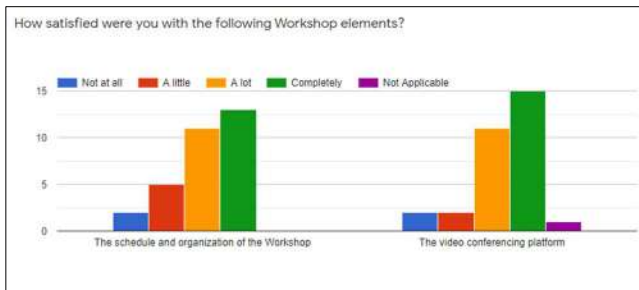
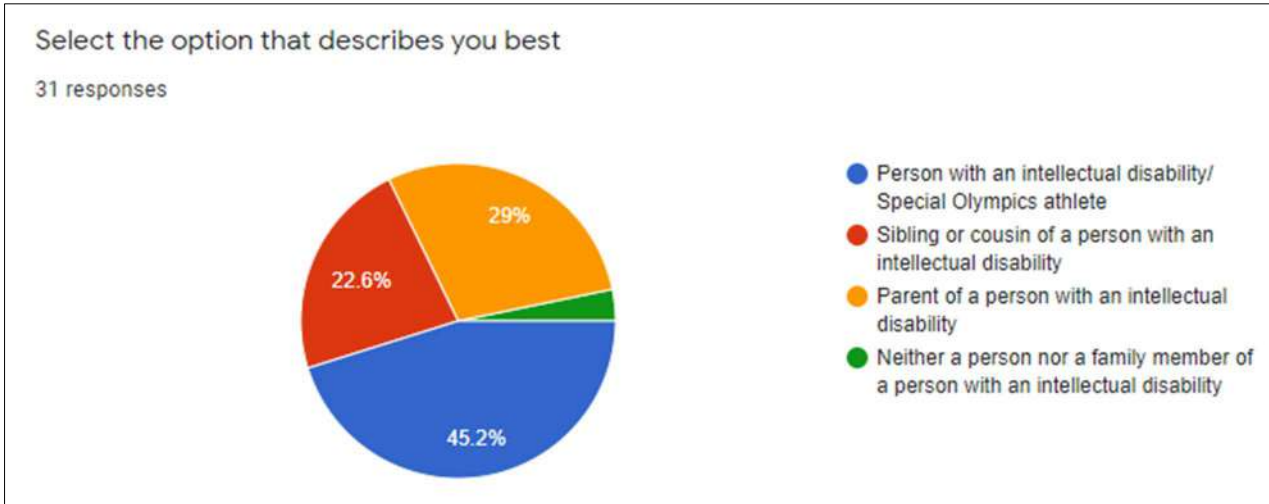
Vaibhav and Krishna are two siblings 9 and 6 yrs of age. They stay in Delhi and regularly attended the sessions throughout. While Krishna is slow in his comprehension and takes time to focus. Although he speaks fearlessly. Vaibhav was diagnosed with Autism. With frequent activities of multiple types, they have helped each other, spent time meaningfully with each other and as a result have started to bond better. Covid 19 lockdown has helped them spend more time with each other. After the session on fitness, they continued to do a routine together, under the constant supervision of their mother

In the words of Ms Neeti Khullar : he lockdown has impacted her children positively. It has given them so much time to engage with each other. They have started to bond so well. "Everyday I see new hope. There is a different aura about the house. My kids are loving it. They exercise together, they enjoy together. The non-academic virtual activities have sharpened the communication skills of Krishna and given him a chance to hand-hold Vaibhav. They both like art and craft. With the other Sibling leaders like Aakriti and Gayatri, I feel safe. I know my sons have someone to reach out to, other than us, who would understand them as well"

Feedback

16 Athletes, 6 Sibling leaders, 8 Family Members (not Sibling) and 1 person who is neither family nor Athlete, from 10 States submitted their feedback basis the workshops held across October, November and the event held on 2 December 2020. The age of the respondents is between 6 and 55yrs. Time given for submitting the responses was 3 days

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This is a phenomenal platform, but we need more time to interact with each other. It will be so valuable to see the Athletes and Siblings reach out to each other and strike casual discussions and share experiences and thoughts. Interaction of athletes with each other's siblings will boost their social and communication skills as well. While focused topics and activities are important, more time for open discussions would instill joy and camaraderie- **Dr Bhavna Malhotra, Parent of Sahil Singh, Athlete from UP**

Plan Ahead

The frequent events held across the months of October, November and December have brought more Sibling Pairs on board and has increased engagements between the Youth leaders and the Sibling leaders.

In view of the proactive participation, specifically of a few Parents, an opportunity will be given to them to conceptualize and conduct sessions, as convenient to their schedule

Supported by the Sibling leaders, 10 Athletes have been enrolled in a Social Communication workshop conducted by Eye to I Communications. The module will spread across 9 weeks, having started on 5 December 2020

ACTION PLAN- 2021

Goals	Strategy	Targets	Timeline
Increased engagement with the Sibling with ID in Special Olympics	HOW? The strategy includes how to achieve the goals set by you? Briefly	WHAT? Details about the strategy will be included in this column.	WHEN? The deadlines to achieve the strategies
Increase number of Sibling Pairs			
Engagement with State & Youth leaders			

[View VIDEO](#)