



**News from DIYA's intervention centre for children with autism,
Tirunelveli, South India**

June-August 2017

It was wonderful joining in with worship at King's Church on the Sunday that I was there and it was a privilege being able to share about our work here in India. Thank you so much for your consistent prayers and for your financial gifts to us.

Assessment camp for children with disabilities

Diya organised an assessment camp for children with disabilities at the beginning of this year. The aim was to establish what further services were required within the community in Tirunelveli itself. The camp was well attended; however, the majority of those who attended were from far flung, remote rural areas. Most of the children brought to us also had multiple and profound disabilities. Families that were more local and are able to travel have been bringing their children to us for therapy; some, we have been able to signpost to more local facilities.

Summer programmes

Our summers tend to be quieter with several families away on holidays. Recently we were donated a computer by a family. We were able to put this to good use over the summer, training a young adult with learning difficulties in basic computer skills. We also had a young person with autism who was due



to start university attend a short term training with us towards developing his social communication skills. (Pic on left: Working on social skills. Our space constraints means that children widely different in ages are seated together, as you can see)

We have also become more aware of our space constraints as we currently have children between 2 and ½ and 14, all working out of three rooms. We would ideally like some designated playing space for our young ones where they can explore safely, without having to be restrained constantly. *Please pray* that if this is within God's will, He will open up the possibilities for a new building for us. Meanwhile, we have covered the sides of our open terrace, to provide some respite to our children from the hot sun, when they go up to play.

Work with the government

Salaries for two of our teachers are paid for by the government. We thank God for this provision, especially as this year, the amount was paid into our accounts in a timely manner. We are also being considered for a government insurance scheme, which will help towards paying any specialists input that our children will receive. If selected for this, it will significantly improve our ability to employ new staff towards working with our children. *Please pray* for this selection process.

Work in Kodaikanal

Our work in Kodaikanal continues to make progress. This last month, the hospital has employed a committed young, physiotherapist. She works ably alongside Kumar and already has a sizeable caseload. We pray that she will remain committed to working in the hospital. The radiographer, key to the orthopaedic service, has moved to another job. We have also not managed to recruit a new anaesthetist. *Please pray* that these two vacancies are filled in at the earliest. Kumar's work in Madurai with children with cerebral palsy has been really blessed – we thank God for the families that trust us to help their children and for the progress that these children are making. Ramu, who has been having a long, complicated procedure to lengthen one of his limbs, is doing well, though the new bone formed is not yet strong enough to hold his weight. *Please pray* the God will continue to knit his bones together. (Left:



Ramu, with his two, nearly equal legs. His left leg is the newly lengthened leg.)

An opportunity has also opened up at the Oddanchathiram Christian Fellowship Hospital, (about 3 hours into the plains) for Kumar to operate as a spinal surgeon. *Please pray* that this partnership, which is still in its early stages, will be a fruitful one. *Please pray* also that Van Allen will be considered for the government run insurance scheme, which will drive our costs down further and will hugely benefit poor patients. We are on the waiting list and would like to have had an outcome by the end of this year at least.

Thank you for your prayers! It's wonderful to know that you stand together with us as a family.

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If you would like to donate to our work, please send a cheque to DisabledChild India or alternatively, you can donate online at www.disabledchild-india.org