Organization**: Ramana Sunritya Aalaya– RASA**

**I . An outline of the Programme**

**Life Skills Training and Holistic Empowerment, Confidence building, Problem Solving, Social interaction, Physical Training and the like**

**Method:** Empowerment of all without disparity through Inclusive Cultural Education via Theatre Arts Training

**Client Groups:** People with physical and /or mental challenges and People with normal needs. 5,000 children/individuals with special challenges and normal needs (in schools for the under privileged as well ) per year

**Modality :** Workshops and Training Programmes (short term and long term) Periodic presentation of work/ interactions, Awareness programmes

Analysis, reviews &reports ,and , documentation

**Facilitators:** Dr. Ambika Kameshwar PhD &PDF, A Team of Educators, Child Development Specialists, Psychologists, Counsellors, Visual and Performing Arts Specialists

Currently RASA has a full time dedicated team of 25 staff members, including all of the above mentioned experts. Although each of them is an expert in their respective fields , all of them have undergone intensive training in RASA’s area of work – namely Life Skills Training and Holistic Empowerment through The Theatre Arts – as RASA provides a one year University Recognised Training Course for its Trainers. RASA also has 8 to 10 volunteers helping on a regular basis

**Success Stories**: The Holistic Empowerment of several thousands of people with and without special needs. So far RASA has transformed the lives of over 10,000 children and adults with special needs and over 10,000 children and people with normal needs as well

II . **Current reach and Outcome**

TYPES OF SERVICES /ACTIVITY PERFORMED

1. **Providing Indian Theatre Arts without disparity to one and all**
2. **Out Reach Performance training** : Every year training in performance happens for at least 2 months. The students of this group are trained in a Theatre production.
3. **T.A.L.C. Performance training** : People with special needs are on a regular basis trained in dance and drama to perform on stage. More specifically a group of talented youngsters are clubbed into a group called the Four eeees and are given intense training in drama. People with normal needs are also given stage experience regularly.
4. **Performances** : People with special needs perform during Project day and Annual day. Roles are given according to their ability and understanding. The four eeees group perform on various stages - on invitation. The students with normal needs perform in dance programmes or are a part of bigger dance drama productions. The students of the outreach schools too and are presented on stage once a year.

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| **Activities** | **Special Needs** | | | **Normal Needs** | | |
|  | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
| T.A.L.C performance training | 55 | 57 | 58 | 80 | 90 | 90 |
| Outreach performance Training | 275 | 250 | 250 | 60 | 60 | - |
| Performances | 330 | 310 | 308 | 480 | 450 | 430 |

1. **Enabling individuals to realize their potential through Theatre Arts**
2. **TALC:** As a centre of theatre arts for holistic development for all, RASA has touched the lives of thousands of children and adults through a very structured application of the different aspects of theatre arts like dance, drama, music, arts and crafts, rhymes, storytelling, mime and yoga under Theatre for Holistic Development (THD), a rehabilitation methodology pioneered by Ambika Kameshwar.

RASA believes that - *Theatre is all-inclusive; it explores every individual’s capacity without discrimination… without prejudices.*

Activities that have evolved after intensive research help in developing communication and social skills, independent-living skills, vocational skills and also enhance academic skills. Activities are developed according to the individual’s functional levels. Unlike conventional methods, children find arts non-threatening and enjoyable which in turn enhances expression of emotions, social behavior, mental alertness, group cohesiveness, giving shape to latent creative potential and developing greater awareness of their bodies.

1. **The outreach programme** of RASA is an intrinsic part of the organisation. Creating an extensive awareness about THD amongst the special schools, parents and public has always been a task that RASA has recognized and addressed almost since inception. RASA reaches out to seven  special schools in Chennai using theatre arts as a holistic tool of development. Keeping in mind the specific needs of the children in each of these schools, the THD sessions are designed using all aspects of theatre.

The outreach programme was started with the following objectives:

 To reach out to as many special individuals as possible with the wonder of Theatre Arts for Holistic Development.

* To provide them an atmosphere, where learning can be fun.
* To help them explore their talent in expressive & performing Arts.
* To provide opportunities for them to share that experience.

The facilitators of RASA work with the children of other special schools like Matru Mandir, SKLC, Swabodhini, Ashraya, Andhra Mahila Sabha, Bala mandir, Madhuram Narayan centre, and Pathway once a week.The THD activities for the special children in these schools either reinforce the goals that the school is already working upon, or address independent goals like improving attention span, group cohesiveness, expression of emotions, social behaviour etc.

1. **In the Livelihood Division** Adults with special needs who have reached the age of

18 years and have been going to other special schools are suddenly finding themselves out of school and with no particular training place to go to. In Rasa’s special Livelihood Training Division unit up to up to people with disabilities can come in for a specialized skills training programme.

In accordance with Rasa’s work the focus of this specailized unit will be on

developing materials, which can be used in theatre for special productions and Accessories and Gift Articles for daily life.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Activities** | **Special Needs** | | | **Normal Needs** | | |
|  | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
| T.A.L.C | 70 | 65 | 80 | 60 | 55 | 50 |
| Livelihood Division | 20 | 18 | 16 | - | - | - |
| Outreach | 300 | 275 | 250 | 60 | 60 | - |

1. **Creating T.A.H.D Professionals**

**a.Diploma in Theatre Arts for Holistic Development** : Rasa- conducts a Diploma course for Teachers in affiliation to RAMAKRISHNA MISSION VIVEKANANDA UNIVERSITY, Coimbatore in the use of Theatre Arts for Holistic Development (THD)- the methodology that is the backbone of Rasa’s work the past 26 years.

THD, the brain child of Dr.Ambika Kameshwar, Founder - Director of Rasa, has, after intense research and extensive study (theoretical as well as experiential) codified this methodology.

THD is unique innovative, non-invasive, non-threatening, and a child friendly methodology. The methodology is universal in its nature such that it can address any goal of the child.

This course offers a comprehensive curriculum, which provides an in-depth study of the methodology and an extensive practical application of it .This is a Long distance Training programme with contact classes and is a Self learning system.

**b. Certificate Programme** : From the coming year certificate programme will be offered which will teach the methodology in a capsulated format.

**c. Workshops:** Regular in - house workshops for all the facilitators of Rasa are conducted by Dr. Ambika Kameshwar every year. Specialists from different fields are also invited for inputs.

Workshops are also conducted for various population like students, corporate, women’s groups, teachers on invitation.

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| **Programme** |  | | |
|  | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
| Diploma | 6 | 8 | 9 |
| Certificate | - | - | - |
| Workshops | 30 | 25 | 20 |

1. **Facilitating the Development of the methodology**

RASA - has been focusing on Dance, Music, Drama, Storytelling, and Arts and Crafts - aspects of Indian Theatre, as tools for the empowerment of all. Each of these visual/ performing/ & Creative Arts need to be documented as Expressive Evidence of Activities conducted to foster deeper understanding of the Arts & to help future generations get deeper knowledge. T he activities are, therefore, recorded both in written and video format and classified and maintained

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|  | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 |
| Research | 12 | 10 | 10 |
| Documentation | 36 | 28 | 34 |

**All of RASA’s services are honorary. We do not charge a fee to empower an individual or groups of individuals**.

Empowerment of people with intellectual challenges is a societal responsibility, unfortunately however they often suffer from inattention and sometimes human rights violation as well. While fully deserving equal opportunity, they are often denied the same. And lack the self esteem essential for life.

RASA’s commitment to their empowerment is a key to solving this problem.

RASA identifies, assesses, evaluates needs and provides training in life skills through Theatre Arts for the differently abled, thus increasing their self esteem and empowering them in independent living. This improves their quality of life and gives them dignity and equality. RASA being holistic in approach also fosters special vocational skills and provides for financial independence. It prepares them to face life on par with individuals with normal needs.

RASA provides a platform for showcasing talents and provides empowerment in a manner in which they will become examples, change outdated beliefs in society and make it a united world where each individual is respected.

Through its varied programmes, Rasa is able to empower many . Having empowered over 20,000 people – with and without special challenges over the past 27 years , in our plan for the next 5 years, we hope to reach several thousands more through our Projects.

**III .Evaluation criteria:**

Evaluation of the students is through periodic review, yearly assessments , projects and public performances.

**IV. Organization Information**

**RASA Ramana Sunritya Aalaya**

**LOCATION:**

77/94, Greenways Road extn,

R.A. Puram, Chennai – 600 028, India   
**WEBSITE:**

[**http:/​/​www.rasaindia.org**](http:/​/​www.rasaindia.org)

**PROJECT LEADER: Dr. Ambika Kameshwar**