

## Annual Beach Trip – Educating the Whole Child

At E.A.S.E. Foundation we take pride in educating the whole child and also including the family. Strong family bonds are essential for everyone but vital for children and adults with disabilities. We therefore include the entire family in our special events. Our recent beach trip is an example of this.

Fun is an important part of the human experience which is often left out of the lives of disabled children whose lives are often filled with challenges, therapies and life skills. Our beach trip addresses this too.

Nice weather finally arrived enabling us to go to the beach. We left early in the morning since we knew the rain would arrive by 2.30 in the afternoon. Blue skies and sunshine helped lift our mood that had been somber for so many months since the terror attacks. Within the bus our staff, parents and some of our students sang.



A wide sweep of golden sand fronted a turquoise sea. A dome of blue sky nudged the sea at the horizon. After devouring the great snacks, we had brought, we all streamed down to the beach. The parents and their kids frolicked in the water.

### First steps

Little Shanu, who has rigid limbs managed to stand supported on either side by her parents. As the frolicked

waves lapped at her feet she giggled and actually took a couple of steps. Her mother said, “If only her grandmother and aunt were here to see this their hearts would have burst with joy.” Willing to say that was the most joyous result of our trip.

## Unique experiences



Twenty-nine year old Oshi was lucky we managed to get his wheel chair right down to the edge of the water. We then had him sit in the midst of the gently lapping waves. Occasionally a bigger bolder wave would wash over him delighting him into loud laughter. That was a first experience for him.

Our staff persuaded a few students and their parents to actually lie down on the sand and let the waves wash over their entire body. This being the Indian Ocean, seven degrees above the equator, the water temperature was perfect.

Once the sun came up high around noon the sea got a little rough. Time to leave the sea said the adults, predictably no one wanted to. But we did finally get everyone out of the sea and into the outdoor showers. This was a fun experience too for our students. After changing into dry clothes everyone trooped into the dining room.

As a bountiful buffet was spread on several tables we were spoiled for choice. Most of us appreciated the variety of desserts available. Then it was back on the bus to get back home.

Since we bring the siblings of our students with us, we had a lively group. It is a chance for the entire family to leave their daily cares behind and frolic in the sun. Busy lives leave little room for such freedom. I hope the memory of this day will warm our hearts until the next trip.