

Patience, Perseverance and Positivity Equals Success

At age 5, Apeksha, a bright young girl, started schooling at a prominent primary school in central Chennai. A few years in, her parents realised that Apeksha wasn't very comfortable in the school environment. She struggled with learning to read and write that were part of the curriculum. She was helped through this tough phase by her mother.

Having seen their daughter struggle, Mr Vijay Kumar and Mrs Mahalakshmi pulled Apeksha out of that school and enrolled her into a CBSE institution. Apeksha fared much better with the teachers here. They recognised early on that Apeksha was having trouble copying what was written on the blackboard into her notebook, and asked Apeksha's parents to get her eyes tested. She was taken to an ophthalmologist and also had her brain scanned. The ophthalmologist reported that indeed she did have a problem with her vision, but the brain scan was normal. Nevertheless, Apeksha's teacher felt that Apeksha did have a problem comprehending what was being taught in class and suggested that she may have learning difficulties. She suggested that we contact a neuro psychiatrist who confirmed that Apeksha had dyslexia. Apeksha's teacher then suggested that Apeksha can go to Sankalp, a school for children with learning difficulties, for remedial classes.

Apeksha was then enrolled into Sankalp Remedial Centre. A lot of effort was put in by Mrs Lakshmi Krishnakumar and the other members of Sankalp Remedial Centre to ensure that Apeksha continued to learn in a mainstream school. With her parents being her pillars of support, Sankalp's expertise in special education and remedial schooling helped Apeksha blossom despite the fact that the system is not conducive to learners with challenges. As her school felt that Apeksha may not be able to cope, she was shifted to another school which had fewer children in the class so that the teachers could give her their personal attention.

A brief stint at a school specifically for children with learning difficulties affected Apeksha adversely. She was then shifted to another school which had the National Institute of Open Schooling (NIOS) curriculum and a special section only for NIOS students. She wrote her 10th in the [NIOS](#) Board and cleared her exams. She then did her 12th from [NIOS](#). Apeksha performed well in her 10th and 12th NIOS exams. She then went on to do her Bachelor's at MOP Vaishnav College in Sociology, where she received tremendous support from both the Sociology Department and her friends. Apeksha successfully graduated, boosting her confidence by leaps & bounds.

Apeksha then interned at an organisation called v-shesh run by Mr Shashank Awasthy and Mr. P. Rajasekharan for 9 months. Under their guidance, Apeksha trained in office administration. Apeksha, after her training at v-shesh, interned for one month at a five-star hotel in their guest relations department and then at a hospital in their human resources department. Apeksha then worked in a well-known travel agency for over two years which gave her a very good insight into the travel industry. As Apeksha loves travelling, it helped her to understand the travel industry and at the same time, enjoy what she was doing. Due to certain issues, Apeksha then moved on to work at a café as a guest relations officer, a role which she enjoyed until the pandemic struck. But the pandemic was not a lost opportunity. Apeksha decided to learn cooking and also did online courses on communications and PowerPoint presentations. She enjoyed the courses thoroughly and learnt many new skills which also boosted her confidence.

Another important part of Apeksha is her perseverance to pursue her passion, which can be seen in her dedication to the musical instrument, Mridangam, which she loves. She started playing the Mridangam at age 6 and continues playing and practicing it. Playing a musical instrument or listening to music can be very soothing, relaxing and refreshing for children like Apeksha. This can-do attitude and hard work will help her to achieve her life goals.

Apeksha's parents, especially her mother Mrs Mahalakshmi, have been instrumental in their daughter's growth and development. She insists that the family plays a very crucial role for the child's progress and enrichment, apart from the school or institution. She stresses that parents of special children must never hide their disability from anybody. They must never give up on their child and keep fighting for their inclusion in the society. There are some very important things that parents must keep in mind when they raise their children. Firstly, it is important to understand that almost all human beings have some medical issue or other and that a special child, is exactly that - very special. Secondly, only if the parents create an enabling environment will the child also develop. Treat your special child like you would any other, give them the confidence and engage them in every kind of activity. This simply means: Patience, Perseverance and Positivity will ultimately result in your child's success.