

PROJECT: Ittehad

REPORT

**Sensitization Event on account of
World Sight Day, and White Cane
Safety Day**

14th October, 2021

ABSTRACT: This event was conducted by Para Legal Volunteer, Legal Aid Centre, and S.L.S. Noida.

The event was focused on sensitizing the learners towards disabled persons and bridging the communication gap between sign language users and non-users. The learners were made aware of the aspects of RPWD Act, MDVI, ASL, and ISL.

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Report: Disability Sensitization event in collaboration with Perkins India, by LegalAid Center, Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA

"Project: ITTEHAD"

The Legal Aid Centre at Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA conducts various awareness programs to sensitize the society towards a plethora of legal and social issues. As an extension of such initiatives I, student of the college and a Para Legal Volunteer at Legal Aid Centre conducted a disability sensitisation event on **World Sight Day, and White Cane Safety Day** in collaboration with the reputed NGO, Perkins India on October 14, 2021.

Over the last few decades, disability awareness has gained prominence, making it easier for persons with disabilities and society to develop empathy for one another. Disability awareness aids in the reduction of society's stereotyped thinking, thus providing numerous chances for everyone to participate in the creation of a positive, inclusive society for everyone.

The term "disability awareness" refers to educating society about disabilities and how we, as individuals, may make the required changes. Learning acceptance is the foundation of developing an understanding approach to disability awareness, which can occur anywhere, including at home, school, job, health facilities, and so on. However, we frequently observe prejudice against people with impairments, which can have negative consequences for entire communities.

As a result, for a better future, we must work to reduce discriminatory culture and promote disability awareness through platforms for all individuals, so that the roots of empathy emerge and aid in the breaking down of societal barriers.

❖ **ABOUT THR COLLABORATORS: PERKINS INDIA**

Perkins India continues to change the lives of children across India every day. Since the 1990s, they have provided technical expertise at a grassroots level to support teachers, schools, and NGOs to address the needs of children with multiple disabilities. They remain the primary resource for the education of children with multiple disabilities and vision impairment in India today.

Perkins India is backed by almost two centuries of global leadership and expertise in the field of blindness education from Perkins School for the Blind — a global trailblazer, convener, learning lab and champion for children with visual impairment and multiple disabilities, and the first school for the blind in the United States.

❖ **OBJECTIVE**

The main objective of the Legal Aid Centre of SLS-N was to create awareness and educate people, especially the learners of this young generation about importance of inclusivity and sensitivity towards disabled persons.

The primary objective of this event was to bridge the communication gap between sign language users and non-users. Being able to communicate and express oneself is a basic human right that is hindered when it comes to disabled persons using sign language, because it is not very commonly used. This event aimed at sensitizing the participants towards this issue and the basic learning of the sign language helped prepare them to understand or even communicate with a sign language user in the future. Therefore, the head objectives included:

1. Making learners aware of the rights of disabled persons.
2. Making them learn the importance of Early Identification and Intervention for Multiple Disability and Visual Impairment (MDVI).
3. Making them understand the importance of sign language and teaching them the basics of sign language.

❖ CONDUCTING THE EVENT

Due to the ongoing pandemic, the event was conducted virtually, but it was not restricted to just the members of LAC but for all interested learners of SLS-N. I had approached the organization with a basic idea of the event and with their help we formed the entire structure, deciding on what all is to be discussed. The members of Perkins India felt extremely elated to see that the younger generation is so interested towards learning about disability, its identification and how to interact with sign language users.

First, **Ms. Samara Shevde** introduced the learners to Perkins India and their work, she further discussed that the core aspect of their work in India was education of children suffering from Multiple Disability and Visual Impairment (MDVI).

Then, **Mr. Deepak**, while addressing the learners explained RPWD Act, 2006. Discussed about shortcomings of the act before the Sudha Kaul Committee report and the developments made afterwards, and various other important aspects of the Act.

After this, **Ms. Anuradha** explained the importance of early identification and ways the screening camps work, this was then continued by Ms. Sampada in further detail.

The learners were then taught about the importance of learning the sign language even if you are not a disabled person by Ms. Anuradha and were taught basics of Sign Language (ASL & ISL) by Mr. Deepak.

Towards the end of the session, Ms. Sampada discussed the inspiring success stories of Perkins India, followed by question and answer.

❖ **RESPONSE OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE**

The target audience for this event was the learners, who are also aspiring lawyers, who look forward to interacting with all sorts of people in the future. Not only the members of the LAC but also the learners responded really well to the event and were quite excited even after the event. I was told by them that they were not aware of so many things discussed in the event and it was truly a fruitful session for them. One of the best things according to the attendees were first, being able to recognize various disabilities and learning the basic sign language that will help them understand and communicate with a sign language user.

❖ **KEY PERSONAL TAKEAWAY**

For me, it was truly an amazing experience. Being a naturally curious person, I had taught myself alphabets of ASL when I was very young and I kept practicing it till date. But somewhere I felt the need to make my fellow learners aware of the disabilities. The event was an eye opener for me as well, since I was also unaware of so many things discussed and also heart touching seeing the students at Perkins learning their way towards a fruitful life even with disabilities. I felt great that I could bring the audience to Perkins India and help them spread awareness of what they do, why they do it, and why is it so important.

❖ **FUTURE PLAN OF ACTION**

Considering the gravity of the issue and the dire need of sensitization, one session will not magically make a change in the society as a whole. Therefore, I plan to conduct such sessions offline, when the college permits and then with the help of my fellow members, spread awareness outside the ambit of our college so that sensitivity and inclusivity is achieved at a greater scale.

❖ **SUGGESTION/FEEDBACK**

Follow up action should be encouraged and more and more such topics to be taken up not just with learners of SLS-N, but with other people from all age groups and various walks of life so that there is more and more awareness about this.

The learners who were a part of the event should share what they learnt with peers and family and keep practicing the signs they learnt in the event as well.

❖ **CONCLUSION/REMARKS**

This was a great learning experience. I got the opportunity to take a progressive stand on an important issue and also got the chance to educate people on it. Not only as a normal citizen, but also as a law student and a future legal professional, it was of tremendous help as I understood some pointers to keep in mind and the basic signs to be used while interacting with people with disability and sign language users.

❖ ANNEXURE – PHOTOGRAPHS



SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, NOIDA

Perkins India Linkages to various services

WORLD SIGHT DAY & WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY | CELEBRATIONS & SENSITISATION

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SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, NOIDA

Perkins India Terms to understand

"care-giver" means any person including parents and other family Members who with or without payment provides care, support or assistance to a person with disability;

"high support" means an intensive support, physical, psychological and otherwise, which may be required by a person with benchmark disability for daily activities, to take independent and informed decision to access facilities and participating in all areas of life including education, employment, family and community life and treatment and therapy;

"inclusive education" means a system of education wherein students with and without disability learn together and the system of teaching and learning is suitably adapted to meet the learning needs of

WORLD SIGHT DAY & WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY | CELEBRATIONS & SENSITISATION

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Attendees (10)

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SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, NOIDA

Perkins India Educational Intervention

WORLD SIGHT DAY & WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY | CELEBRATIONS & SENSITISATION

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