



Article happened in Jagriti Yatra

When 14-year-old Naveen was thrown out of school, G Senthil, 38, a medical psychiatrist who himself had learning disability, took charge of the teenager.

Senthil opened a school at his house in 2001 and start teaching Naveen, who went on to learn drawing repairing electronics gadgets, as well as his school subjects, With emotional support of Senthil's wife Devi Priya 33, a psychologist. Now, Naveen, a diploma holder, runs his father's textile business profitably.

Senthil and Priya have been chosen by the Tamil Nadu government to provide inputs for developing manuals to teach children with learning disabilities. The two have been running their open school-Helikx-for Special childrens in Salem and Tripur and have taught more than 70 children using novel methods and gadgets.

The school maintains 1:8 teacher student ratios from class 1-10. "We have signed an MoU with IIT Delhi to use robots in classrooms to teach our children," Senthil told DC.

The couple also runs a consultancy firm in human resource and market analysis. "We earn from our company and use lion's share of profits to teach the children," They said. "We bear half the fees of every student," said Senthil.

As soon as they married in July 2001, Priya went to Chennai for a three-month course in special education. "When we proposed to build our school, we roped in my mother-in-law Indrani and father-in-law Govindharajalu. They took care of hostel and ensured that the classrooms were healthy," Priya said. Indrani cooks for students and Govindharajalu takes care of cleanliness. Kumraappan, a parent, said his son who has learning disability, is now able to read newspapers. "I was disappointed when I was told that my son has a learning disability. This school has given me hope. I can see my child scaling up for Class X exams this year," he said.