



CAREGIVER

“Supporting your loved ones through their journey”

SPECIAL NEEDS™

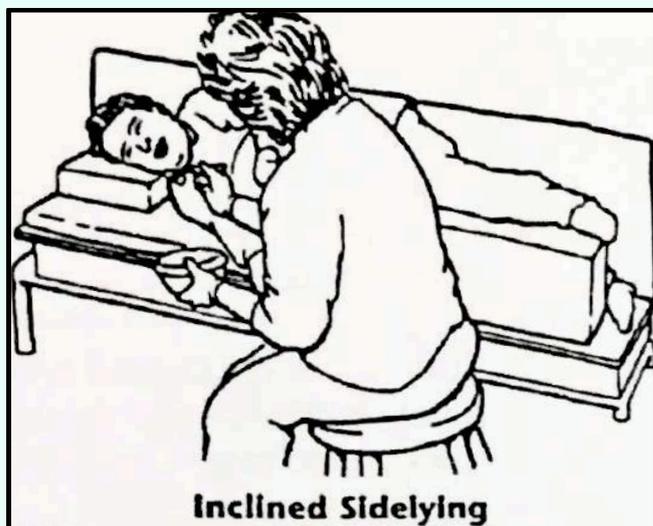


Professional Insights ★ Community Voices ★ Upcoming Events

SERIES-3

POSITIONING FOR DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES

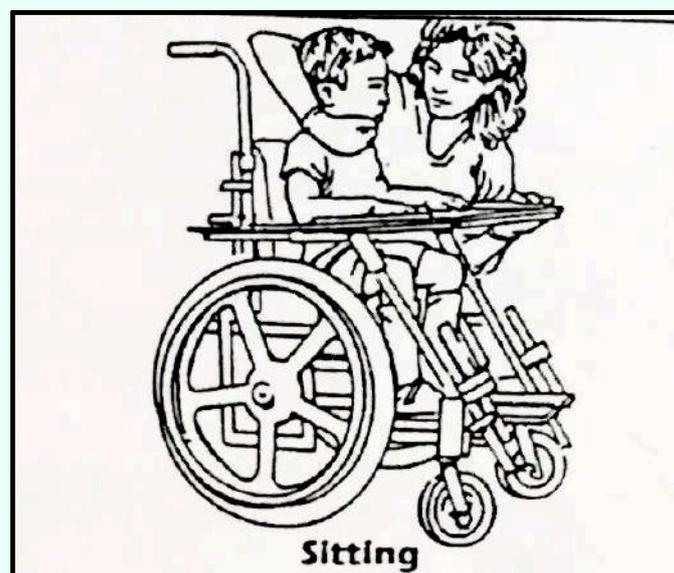
CONTRIBUTED BY DR.JANAKI BALAKRISHNAN



- This is a resting position.
- Breathing may be better in this position.
- Breathing may be impaired if there is too much pressure on the rib cage.
- Better alignment may occur with less hyperextension, extraneous movement, or other reflex patterns.
- Increased jaw, lip and tongue control may occur.
- Coughing may decrease.

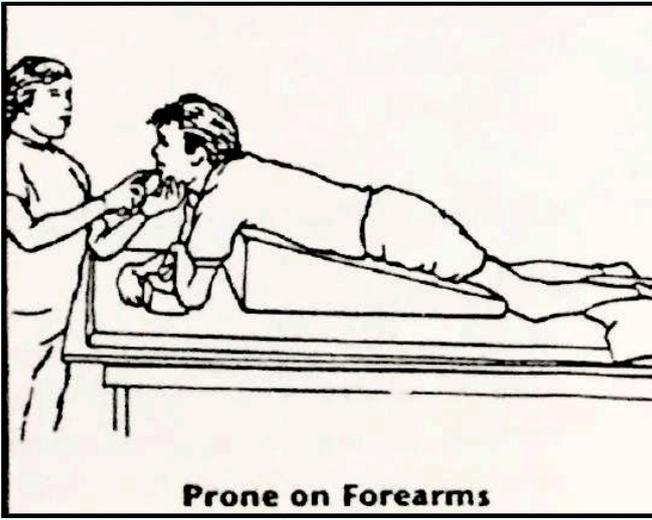
- Provides good position after eating for digestion.
- Spillage out of the lower cheek may increase.
- ▲ Assistant should be positioned at chest level and at eye level to avoid hyperextension.
- ▲ A straw works better than a cup in this position.

- Provides upright orientation.
- Breathing better in sitting than in supine.
- Head and neck hyperextension, jaw thrust, tongue thrust and tonic bite may be increased in this position.
- ▲ A if head control is poor, you must provide ongoing support of the person's head to ensure alignment.
- ▲ A Caregiver should be at or slightly below eye level of individual.
- ▲ A The angle of chair may be reclined from 90° which results in faster flow of foods and fluids into the throat.



Positioning: Implications of different positions (Key: ■ a benefit of the position; ● a potential problem with the position; ▲ = things to consider while assisting.) (Adapted from Beckmar & Roberts (1992).)

*Extract from A Life-Span Approach to Nursing Care for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities
By Shirley P. Roth & Joyce S. Morse(1994)*

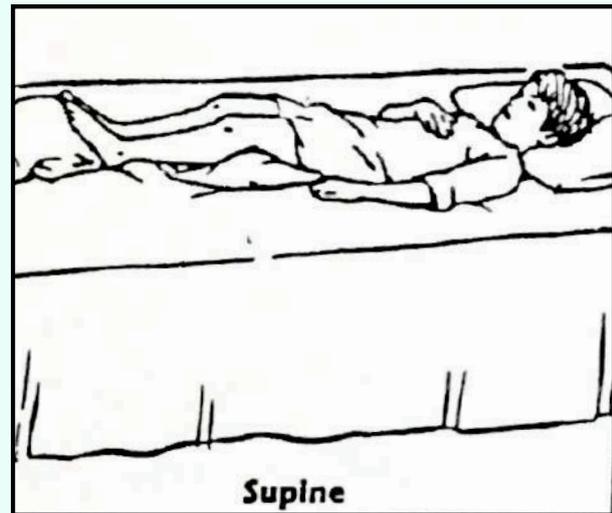


Prone on Forearms

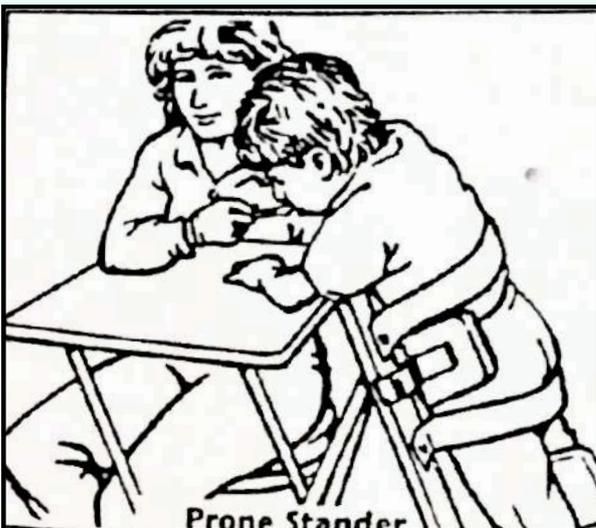
- This is a working position.
- Enhances movement of lips and cheeks toward midline.
- May reduce jaw thrust or jaw retraction. Good for weightbearing.
- Straw drinking with head in slight flexion is possible in this position.
- Hyperextension of the head and neck may occur with cup drinking and as the spoon is removed when eating.

- Breathing may be impaired if there's too much pressure on the ribcage.
- ▲ A Caregiver should be at or slightly below eye level of individual.
- ▲ A If poor lip control is present, spillage may increase.

- A resting position.
- Not a desirable position for oral or non-oral intake.
- In this position, facial structures move away from midline. Jaw and tongue move into retraction and may force some one to be unable to breathe through the mouth. This is especially critical if the person has nasal congestion.
- Fluids pool on the back wall of the stomach.
- Food and fluids move swiftly into the throat.
- Breathing may be more shallow in this position.
- Secretions may pool in the back of the throat.



Supine



Prone Stander

- This is a working position.
- Allows free head movement.
- Enhances movement of facial structures toward midline (lips, cheeks.)
- May reduce jaw thrust.
- Good weightbearing position.
- Provides upright orientation.
- Straw drinking with head in slight flexion is possible in their position.
- Hyperextension of the head and neck may

occur with c drinking and as the spoon is removed when eating. Breathing may be impaired if too much pressure is exert on the rib cage.

- This might be a very difficult eating position for people who can't easily bear weight on their feet.
- ▲ A Caregiver should be positioned at chest level and at eye level to avoid hyperextension

HANDLING AND MOBILITY OF CHILDREN WITH MOBILITY ISSUES

DR. KARTHIKEYAN – HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION, SRM
MS. UMA SRIDHAR – CAREGIVER REPRESENTING PARENTS OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
DR. JANAKI BALAKRISHNAN – COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST



The present article is a summary of the panel discussion of Caregiver Advocacy Group's fifth session. Moderated by Ms. Maleeka Riyaz, Counselling Psychologist, the session focused on the challenges faced by children with mobility issues and their caregivers, offering insights into practical solutions and techniques. Based on predetermined questions, the discussion was directed to the panel members, and their responses are summarized below.

What are the challenges faced by children with mobility issues?

Ms. Uma Sridhar began by outlining the daily challenges that children with mobility issues face. She noted that

these challenges extend beyond mere physical limitations. Many children struggle with basic daily activities such as sitting, standing, and walking. Oral hygiene is often difficult to maintain due to limited dexterity, leading to sensitive teeth and dental problems. Dressing poses a significant challenge as tight-fitting clothes exacerbate discomfort, and caregivers often need to assist with every step of the process. Grooming, especially hair care, is a particular issue for girls with long hair.

In addition to these physical difficulties, children with mobility issues face significant emotional and social challenges. They often feel isolated because of their

inability to participate in social activities, and this sense of exclusion manifests as frustration or sadness. Ms. Uma emphasized that these challenges highlight the need for expertise and patience in caregiving.

What are the challenges faced by caregivers?

Ms. Uma also elaborated on the struggles caregivers face while managing children with mobility issues. She explained that as children grow, handling them becomes increasingly difficult due to their weight. This often leads to physical strain, with caregivers developing health issues such as neck, back, and joint pain. Additionally, the time required to manage the child's needs leaves caregivers struggling to balance their responsibilities with other daily tasks. Emotional stress is another significant factor, particularly when caregivers must navigate healthcare systems and communication barriers in medical settings.

How can a person be shifted from the bed or wheelchair when there is scissoring of the legs?

Dr. Karthikeyan explained that scissoring, commonly seen in children with cerebral palsy,

poses unique challenges. He suggested practical techniques for handling this issue. Placing a pillow between the child's legs can gently separate them, and regular stretching exercises can help reduce tightness. When lifting a child with scissoring, caregivers should avoid pulling on the arms or shoulders. Instead, they should support the rib cage and knees to distribute weight evenly, ensuring the child's comfort and safety.

How can caregivers mobilize a child without much strain on themselves?

Dr. Karthikeyan emphasized the importance of using assistive tools to minimize strain on caregivers. For example, placing a towel under the child's chest can make turning easier. Additionally, caregivers can use techniques like stabilizing the child's knees with their own to provide support during transfers. He also highlighted the value of light exercises for both children and caregivers, which can improve physical fitness and endurance. Professional guidance from physiotherapists can further ensure that caregivers use the most effective and safe techniques.

Are public places accessible to children with mobility issues?

Ms. Uma highlighted the practical challenges of

shifting wheelchairs, emphasizing that while accessibility regulations mandate the provision of ramps in public spaces, their design often renders them ineffective. She pointed out that many ramps in places like parks and temples are either too steep or have narrow entrances, making it difficult for caregivers to maneuver wheelchairs. These design flaws significantly limit the usability of such spaces for children with mobility issues and their caregivers. Ms. Uma stressed the urgent need for better implementation and adherence to accessibility standards to ensure public spaces are genuinely inclusive and functional for all users.

How can caregivers handle neck, shoulder, back, and knee pain?

Dr. Karthikeyan addressed the common issue of musculoskeletal pain among caregivers. He emphasized the importance of preventive measures, such as taking adequate rest and using hot or cold packs to relieve muscle strain. Gentle stretching exercises can also help alleviate discomfort. For persistent pain, he recommended seeking physiotherapy. Dr. Karthikeyan urged caregivers to prioritize their physical fitness through regular exercise and a nutritious diet, as maintaining their health is essential for their ability to provide care. He also stressed the importance of addressing minor discomforts early to prevent

them from developing into chronic issues.

Dr. Janaki, Counseling Psychologist, concluded the program by summarizing the discussions on handling and mobility challenges faced by caregivers. She highlighted issues in daily living activities such as brushing, grooming, toileting, eating, and drinking, which pose significant social, emotional, and physical difficulties. Uma Sridhar shared her experiences with parents, emphasizing the struggles and the need for practical solutions. Dr. Karthikeyan provided valuable inputs, including transfer techniques and the importance of good nutrition, exercise, hydration, and rest for both caregivers and children. He also addressed the physical strain on caregivers and suggested modifications like lifting children from a bed instead of the floor to reduce difficulty. Economic and communication challenges in medical care were discussed, along with recommendations for policy changes. Janaki stressed the importance of caregiver self-care and the role of the Caregiver Advocacy Group in finding solutions. She announced that the next session would focus on hygiene and include a discussion on transfer techniques. Participants were thanked for their active involvement and encouraged to apply the insights shared.

Question and Answer:

1. A concerned brother asked about his sibling, who has

autism and visual impairment, and exhibits aggressive behaviors like biting and scratching during episodes of distress. He sought clarity on the possible causes, asking if it was solely due to the visual impairment or if other factors were involved.

Dr. Karthikeyan emphasized the need for a thorough evaluation by a developmental pediatrician and a multidisciplinary team, including a clinical psychologist and occupational therapist. He advised observing and documenting the child's triggers, such as physical discomfort, environmental factors (e.g., loud noises or hunger), or communication difficulties, to identify patterns and precipitators of the behavior. Proper analysis and behavior modification training were suggested as

effective approaches.

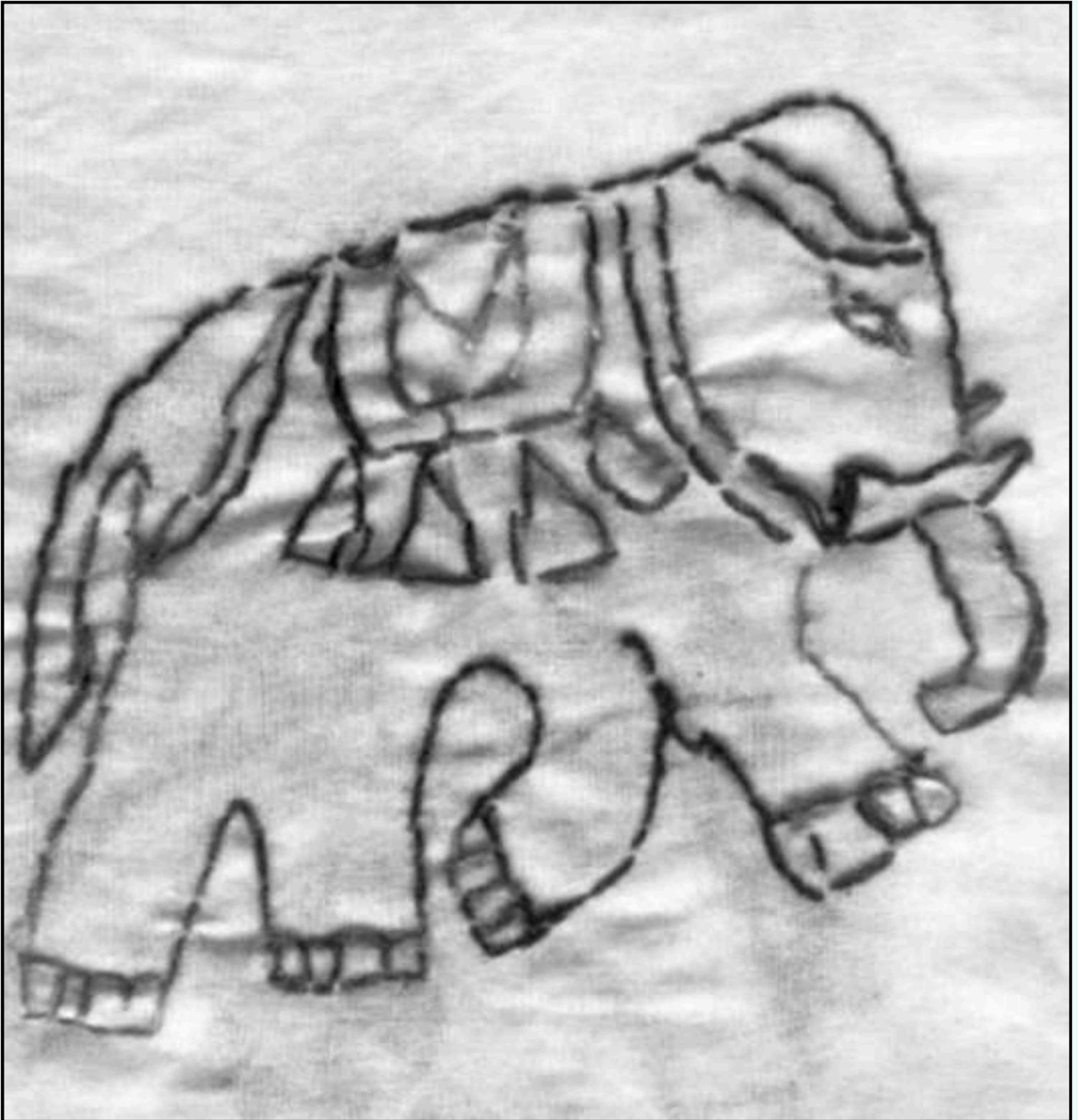
Dr. Janaki added that aggressive behaviors in autistic children, especially those with visual impairments, often indicate unmet needs or physical discomfort. She emphasized the importance of close observation to identify triggers, such as being left alone, unmet requests, or time delays, and suggested seeking guidance from behavior modification specialists like those at Maitri. Both experts acknowledged the broader challenges caregivers face, including physical strain, and reiterated the importance of self-care and rest for caregivers to manage these situations effectively.

2. Dr. Janaki inquired about the physical risks caregivers face while lifting children with mobility challenges, such as hernias, cardiovascular

cardiovascular issues, and overall strain, and sought advice on sensitizing parents to safe lifting practices.

Dr. Karthikeyan emphasized the importance of minimizing the child's weight through proper nutrition and exercise to reduce strain on caregivers. He noted that while lifting techniques can help, the physical effort required cannot be entirely avoided. Key tips included avoiding improper pulling, locking the child's position using knees or feet for support, and ensuring caregivers prioritize their own health. He advised caregivers to seek assistance when needed, emphasizing that their wellness is critical for the child's care. Regular health check-ups every 5-6 months for blood pressure, sugar levels, and cardiovascular health were recommended. He not hesitate to seek support when necessary.

CREATIVE ARTS, CARING VOICES



Drawing by

Aishwarya Sriram



Drawing by

Yogesh, Nava Jyothi Trust

எவரும் கேளாத சத்தம்

ஓடுகின்றேன் தினம் - உன்னை தேடி அல்ல இறைவா!
 கூவம் நதி கரையோரம் - பஞ்சவடி நோக்கி
 பரிகாரம் தேடி ஓடுகின்றேன்
 நித்தம் பாதி ஊமையாய்
 பெற்ற மனம் வெறுமையாய்
 விடை ஏதும் தெரியாமல்
 தன் நிலை ஏதும் புரியாமல்
 சுட்டெரிக்கும் வெயிலோ
 கொட்டுகின்ற மழையதோ
 கற்சிலை ஒத்த மனதுடன் - ஓடுகின்றேன் தினம்
 ஆவணி அவிட்டந் தன்னில் பிறந்திட்ட என் அழகு சிட்டு
 தினந்தோறும், பலப்பல விழிகளின் கேள்விக் கணைபட்டு,
 அனுதாபம் புண்பட்டு, அந்த சின்னப்பட்டு சேருமிடம் சேத்துப்பட்டு.
 என்றும் ஒன்பதெழுத்து மந்திரம் - எந்தன் நெஞ்சதனில் நின்றிடும்.
 தினம் ஒன்பதாம் எண் பேருந்துடன் என் உடல் மட்டும் உலா வரும்.
 அன்று, வெள்ளையனுக்கு காட்சி தந்த கலியுக தெய்வம் - என்
 பிள்ளை மனம் கனிய பேச்சுக்கள் தர வேண்டும்.
 அன்று குருபரனுக்கு அருள் செய்த கோதை மீனாள் - என்
 குழந்தை மனம் குதூகலிக்க வரும் நாள் எந்நாள்?
 குறையாவும் மறைவாகி - நிறைவான வாழ்வு தர
 கடை விழி ஓரம் வழி நீரில் விழி மூடும் பேதை நான்.
 காசு, பணம், சொகுசு, சுகம், ஆசை ஏதும் எனக்கில்லை.
 பாசமுள்ள செல்ல மலர் மாசில்லாது கண் மலர்ந்து ஒளிர வேண்டி,
 பேசுகின்ற தெய்வமே! உன்னை பிச்சை கேட்டு நிற்கிறேன்!

கிரிஜா ஸ்ரீராம்

1986

--UPCOMING EVENTS--

Obesity, weight management and Nutritious food

ZOOM MEETING

Meeting ID: 858 5714 1348

Passcode: 387170

FEBRUARY

25

2025

YOUTUBE LIVE

[www.youtube.com/@
CaregiverAdvocacyGroup](http://www.youtube.com/@CaregiverAdvocacyGroup)

TIME: 7.00PM - 8.00PM

Tobacco and Cancer Treatment : What Every Patient & Caregiver Needs to know

ZOOM MEETING

Meeting ID: 874 5762 0345

Passcode: 495923

MARCH

4

2025

YOUTUBE LIVE

[www.youtube.com/@
CaregiverAdvocacyGroup](http://www.youtube.com/@CaregiverAdvocacyGroup)

TIME: 6.00PM - 7.00PM

--COLLABORATORS--



--ACKNOWLEDGEMENT--

We extend our deepest gratitude to Dr. Karthikeyan, Ms. uma sridhar, Ms.Kausalya Murali, a caregiver, for sharing her empowering journey as a guest speaker in our webinar. Her courage, resilience, and dedication have touched the hearts of many, offering hope and strength to those facing similar challenges. We are truly honored to have had her as part of our event and are thankful for her invaluable contribution.

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--Core Members--



DR. K. NIRAIMATHI,
PROJECT DIRECTOR & FOUNDER MEMBER,
CONTENT CREATOR,
CAREGIVER ADVOCACY GROUP,
DIRECTOR, EVIDENTIA RESEARCH SOLUTIONS



MS. A.PRAJNA,
FOUNDER MEMBER & EDITOR
DIGITAL ART & CREATIVE DESIGNER
CAREGIVER ADVOCACY GROUP,
STUDENT, EINSTEIN PUBLIC SCHOOL



DR. JANAKI BALAKRISHNAN,
EXECUTIVE MEMBER & CONTENT CREATOR,
CAREGIVER ADVOCACY GROUP,
COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGIST

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DR. E. VIDHUBALA,
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UVAKAI RESEARCH FOUNDATION

--Project Team--



MS. M.SOUNDARYA,
PROGRAM CO-ORDINATOR,
CAREGIVER (CANCER) WEBINAR
CO-ORDINATOR PSYCHOLOGIST



MRS. MALEEKA RIYAZ
PROGRAM COORDINATOR
(CAG-AUTISM)



DR. S. KERENHAPPUCH SUSAN
PROGRAMME MANAGER



MR. R.AKASH,
DIGITAL ART AND CREATIVE DESIGNER
& TECHNICAL SUPPORT

ANY SUGGESTIONS ARE WELCOME

Email : caregiveradvocacygroup@gmail.com