



**SRI ARUNODAYAM**  
Home for Mentally Challenged Destitute



## Sumangali's Story

When two people come together and make the conscious decision to create a life, they have an obligation to protect and love that child to the end. And yet, the sad reality is that parents continue to abandon their vulnerable children, especially those with special needs, in our country today.

Sumangali was just a little over two years old when she came to our home in March 2010 through an order of the Child Welfare Committee. She was abandoned on a deserted road near a hospital. Sumangali was diagnosed with spastic cerebral palsy and her severely impaired condition made survival a grim possibility.

Some of the first and most important issues we addressed on her long journey towards rehabilitation were medical care and a healthy diet. She began showing remarkable improvement within a couple of months and we then started her off on physiotherapy, individualized special education (IEP) and speech therapy. Through the consistent efforts of our Sri Arunodayam team, Sumangali has become fairly independent today and is even able to assist our smaller children. She is learning simple mathematics and can identify colours, shapes and the names of fruits and vegetables. She can even read time, which is quite a feat given her poor early prognosis. A combination of a nutritious diet, timely medical care, physiotherapy and special education (introduced early on) has given her a fighting chance to lead a near normal life.

It's for children like Sumangali that we are building a new home because we cannot stand by while the insidious epidemic of abandonment continues. While we cannot rescue every abandoned child across our country, we can make a huge difference in the lives of those in our care. Despite the prevailing economic condition and the many hardships we are facing in these times of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will stay true to our vision and persevere because we know that somewhere out there, there are many more children destined to become a part of our family. And we want to welcome them home.