



Every true and deep
love is a sacrifice.

-Carl Jung

Date : August 28, 2022
Time : 10.30 am
Venue : Quality Inn Sabari,
T. Nagar, Chennai

Our 5th Annual Special Mom 2021 Awards ceremony was held on August 28, 2022 where we celebrated the lives of 15 incredible mothers of special children.

They each received a Cash Award of INR 15,000/- and a Special Lifetime Pass entitling them to free services from Sri Arunodayam.

We are very grateful to:

Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI)
Dr. Anita Suryanarayan
Mrs. Saraswathy
Mr. Jagadeesh Babu
Mr. Ravikumar
Mr. Kathiravan
Mr. Ezhil,
Mr. Vijayanand
Mr. Kannan & Family
Mr. Rajasekar
Mr. Baskar
Mrs. Radharani (Trustee)

It's not our disabilities but our abilities that count!

Parenting is never easy. Families face a range of pleasant to not-so-pleasant emotions everyday as they strive to live together. Each member is irreplaceable and fulfils a unique role. But what happens when parents realize that their children have difficulties? They now have even larger challenges to overcome. Challenges they were not prepared for.

We could never truly understand what the parents of special children go through. It's not uncommon for them to feel exhausted and stretched beyond their limits. But, as in any difficult life situation, it's not the emotions themselves but what we choose to do with them that ultimately charts the course of our lives.

That's why our Special Moms are so special!

They've learnt never to take things for granted. Nothing is ordinary or insignificant. Everything has purpose. They see things like ignorance, cruelty, and prejudice and yet rise above them. They have learned to access strength from above, allowing themselves to be transformed through their suffering. Every day, they manage situations that a regular parent would think is impossible. This makes them women of incredible strength. Women we seek to honor each year through our Special Mom Award.

Our 2021 awards function was held on **August 28, 2022** at **Quality Inn Sabari, T. Nagar, Chennai**. We are very grateful to our event sponsor, **Azim Premji Philanthropic Initiatives (APPI)**, and to our Chief Guest, **Mrs. V R Jayalakshmi, Joint Director, National Nutrition Mission from the Directorate of Integrated Child Development Services, Chennai**, and Guest of Honor, **Mrs. S Suryakala, District Child Protection Officer of the District Child Protection Unit, Chennai**, who gave away the prizes together with Sri Arunodayam's long-standing donors. We are grateful to every donor, sponsor, staff member, well-wisher and friend who made this ceremony a grand success!

At the ceremony, we welcomed these amazing women and their families into our lives: **Bakkiyalakshmi Raji**, mother of Dillibabu (17 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Bharathi**, mother of Kishore (15 yrs) and Kristi (11 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Gayathri**, mother of Gaurav (13 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Indira**, mother of



Sri Arunodayam's Special Lifetime Pass is carefully thought out to provide a lifetime of free services to each year's finalists and their children.

- **Automatic membership to Sri Arunodayam's SPECIAL MOM FORUM** – a program aimed at empowering all Special Mom finalists through regular training programs to help them advance in caregiving and personal areas of development. Such empowerment helps shape them into powerful agents of change in society.
- **Free short duration stay for their children in an emergency:** The mothers are entitled to leave their children in our care for limited periods of time when they may be required to travel and have no one to care for their children during those periods.
- **Sri Arunodayam as custodian and official guardian of their children:** Understanding their anxiety concerning the future of their children on their demise, Sri Arunodayam offers the parents an option to appoint us as custodian and official guardian of their children. Sri Arunodayam will either induct or network with peer organizations to enable a safe home for the children on their parent's demise.

Premkumar (23 yrs), Chennai, **Jayakantha**, mother of Parthipan (22 yrs), Kanchipuram Dist., **Jayasri**, mother of Priyanka (25 yrs), Kanchipuram Dist., **Malar**, mother of Vignesh (24 yrs) and Mythily (17 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Mallika Banu**, mother of Mohamed Asiff (17 yrs), Chennai, **Radha**, mother of Jesudoss (19 yrs) and Jenifer (16 yrs, deceased), Tiruvallur Dist., **Sudha**, mother of Indumathi (24 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Suganthi**, mother of Ajay Aravindh (19 yrs), Kanchipuram Dist., **Sundari**, mother of Bavani (24 yrs) and Selvi (21 yrs, visually impaired) Tiruvallur Dist., **Susila**, mother of Kamleshwari (24 yrs), Tiruvallur Dist., **Uma**, mother of Abin (20 yrs), Kanyakumari Dist., and **Usha Panneerselvam**, mother of Preethi (20 yrs) and Kishore (18 yrs), Chennai.

The awardees' stories (captured on film) were presented during the ceremony. It was a moving experience. As their many trials and challenges came to life we saw wonderful moments when their splendid characters shone through. It's these amazing experiences that we want to share with the world! The high emotion of the films was balanced with scintillating performances by our children, and the afternoon ended with a grand lunch for all.

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

The Special Mom Award is an annual event seeking applicants from across the country for the 15 most deserving finalists.

Sri Arunodayam received applications from mothers across Tamil Nadu, and a group of eminent panelists carefully screened each application to arrive at the 15 finalists for 2021.

More information on the Special Moms and their stories are available at:

<https://sriarunodayam.org/special-mom-award-2021/>

Welcoming our Guests



The Show Begins



Honouring our Special Moms



Entertainment Highlights



Sharing a Meal Together



"Raising a child with an intellectual disability is a huge responsibility but it comes with some wonderful rewards. The more I serve my child the deeper my love grows, becoming one of my greatest successes. I celebrate even the smallest of advancements. I take nothing for granted. I know how to be truly grateful which gives me the strength to carry on."

Mallika Banu, Special Mom Award 2021 Finalist

"The things I have learned most from my children and the struggles I have endured could never be taught in any school. It has made us stronger to tackle the many twists and turns of life. We try to make the most of life and still hold dreams for our children. This gives us hope, courage, and determination for what lies ahead."

Usha Paneerselvam, Special Mom Award 2021 Finalist

