THE CHANGING WILLOW
AN EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY RESEARCH PROJECT
IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Abstract
This expressive art therapy research project in education was undertaken at ‘The Gateway School of Mumbai’, a school for children with special needs. Six children with different special needs (Autism, ADHD and Cerebral Palsy) were chosen for this project. The children were part of one classroom of the school. Using a variety of visual art, music, drama and movement based tools along with the theme of ‘transience and change’, the project used a story of the ‘Gentle Willow’-a tree in the process of passing away due to a fatal disease. The project was designed to meet the group's needs of enhancing physical alertness, social bonding and spatial awareness. A marked improvement was found in all three areas of need in almost all children of the group.

Keywords: Visual Art, Therapy, Special Education, Music, Drama, Innovation