

Director: Dr. Kim Rocha Couto

Associate Director: Ms. Ashwini Naik

Aims



The Child Rights Clinic has been established with the primary objective of building a 'child-friendly' society in the State. The motto of the Clinic is – **“WHERE CHILDREN ARE INSPIRED TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS.”** The Clinic works in close association with the Department of Women and Child Development, Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Children’s Court Juvenile Justice Board, Child Welfare Committee, Goa State Legal Services Authority, Victim Assistance Unit of the State, and all stakeholders to strengthen the child protection system in Goa. As part of academic excellence, the Clinic also collaborates with leading foreign universities for sharing experiences and best practices on child protection systems.

The academic year began with a webinar hosted by IQAC of V.M. Salgaocar College of Law and the CRC on the topic Making Mentor-Mentee Liaison Meaningful on 11th July 2020. The idea behind the webinar was to bridge the communication gap between the Mentor and Mentee. Dr. Karl DeSouza was invited as a resource person to address the faculty of the College. Assistant Professor Ashwini Naik hosted the webinar and introduced the resource person. Dr. Kim proposed the Vote of Thanks. Due to the Pandemic and the uncertainty that was created, admission to the Clinic began a little later in the academic year of 2021. The entrance exam for the clinic was conducted on 5th November 2020 which was answered by 50 students. The exam was conducted in online mode. Out of these 50 students, 20 were admitted to the clinic. This year 6 students from the final year of BA LL.B and LL.B (Degree) were also admitted to the CRC Squad.

Meetings of CRC were held on the following days:

1. 7.23rd November 2020- Orientation for the students.
2. 10th December 2020- Review and Tasks to be performed in the forthcoming academic year.
3. 11th January 2021- Organising the National Girl Child Day Poetry and Monologue Competition.
4. 30th January 2021- Compiling and declaring the results of the competition.
5. 10th April 2021- Announcing the lecture series for CRC members.

The academic year began with a webinar hosted by IQAC of V.M. Salgaocar College of Law and the CRC on the topic Making Mentor-Mentee Liaison Meaningful on 11th July 2020. The idea behind the webinar was to bridge the communication gap between the Mentor and Mentee. Dr. Karl DeSouza was invited as a resource person to address the faculty of the College. Assistant Professor Ashwini Naik hosted the webinar and introduced the resource person. Dr. Kim proposed

the Vote of Thanks. Due to the Pandemic and the uncertainty that was created, admission to the Clinic began a little later in the academic year of 2021. The entrance exam for the clinic was conducted on 5th November 2020 which was answered by 50 students. The exam was conducted in online mode. Out of these 50 students, 20 were admitted to the clinic. This year 6 students from the final year of BA LL.B and LL.B (Degree) were also admitted to the CRC Squad.

In the month of January, on the occasion of the National Girl Child Day is celebrated on the 21st of January every year, CRC conducted an online Poetry and Monologue Competition for students of 5th to 10th standards across various schools in Goa. The theme for the poetry competition was THE GIRL CHILD and the theme for the monologue competition was CHILD LABOUR. The poster for the same was circulated through social media by the CRC members. The response for the same was tremendous. First, a place in the poetry competition was secured by Ms. Vibhuti Tejam student of St. Theresa High School Mangor Hill, Vasco Hill, and first place in the Monologue competition was secured by Ms. Shreya Mukund Prabhu, a student of Shri Nirakar Vidyalaya, Mashem Canacona Goa. The victims of sexual abuse who are called to court need care and compassion and they have to feel protected and cared for on the premises. Keeping this in mind, one of the splendid activities conducted by CRC was a toy collection drive for Children's Court. The members of CRC collected unused toys from students of the college and the same were donated to the children's court. Dr. Kim Couto and Assistant Professor Ashwini Naik visited the Children's Court on 3rd February 2021 and handed the toys to Justice Vijaya Ambre, President Children's Court. The gesture was well appreciated by the President.

A lecture series was conducted for the members of CRC by the faculty and professionals. On 15th April 2021, Prof. Dr. Kim Couto addressed the CRC members on the topic Overview of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. In this session, Dr. Kim Couto outlined the important provisions of the Act for the members' benefit. The second session was on the Topic Rehabilitation of Children in Conflict with Law: Challenges and opportunities which was conducted on 17th April 2021. The Resource person for this session was Advocate Rejitha Rajan who is a member of the Juvenile Justice Board, South Goa. The third session was on the topic **Role of the Child Welfare Committee under the JJ Act, 2015** and the resource person was Asst. Professor Ashwini Naik. This session was conducted on 21st April 2021. The final session was conducted on 24th April 2021 on the topic **Overview of the Goa Children's Act, 2003, and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012**. The resource person for the final session was Hon'ble Ms. Vandana Tendulkar, Retired District and Sessions Judge and Former President, Children's Court.

On 6th May 2021, CRC organized a webinar for the members and for the First Year and Second Year students of BALLB and LLB Degree Students on the topic Role of Victim Assistance Unit in Supporting Victims of Child Abuse. The Speaker was Advocate Emidio Pinho who is the coordinator of SCAN and Victim Assistance Unit at GMC, Bambolim Goa.

The Child Rights Clinic of V.M. Salgaocar College of Law, Goa participated in the GAJE/ACCLE/IJCLE Worldwide Online Conference 2021. This conference was hosted by Northumbria University from 16th to 18th June 2021. The theme for this year's conference was: "Turning Challenges into Opportunities: Justice Education in Times of Crises"

The conference, organized in partnership with the Global Alliance for Justice Education, the International Journal of Clinical Legal Education, and the Association for Canadian Clinical Legal Education, brought together around 450 justice educators from across the globe. The Conference focused on the challenges brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic in imparting legal education, including the functioning of law clinics in law universities.

The Child Rights Clinic participated in the session titled "Global Justice Education in Challenging Times". This interactive session presented the perspectives of faculty members and students of law colleges from three nations, namely, the USA, India, and Indonesia. The session discussed the challenges faced during the pandemic in accessing justice for vulnerable groups. It also highlighted the role of clinical legal education and the various approaches adopted by law colleges in their clinics during these challenging times.

Ms. Anusha Almeida, a final year B.A.LLB- CRC member represented the Child Rights Clinic of V.M Salgaocar College of Law as a speaker at this conference. She highlighted the role of the Child Rights Clinic and the activities conducted by it in working towards its motto of "Building a society where children are inspired to defend their rights". She further discussed the current challenges faced by our Clinic in our functioning due to the pandemic. The 'Going to Court Programme' adopted by the Clinic was affected during the pandemic due to the various restrictions and lockdowns. Additionally, the overall shift from the physical mode to the online mode brought about challenges of its own. She further dealt with the strategies that we have adopted to facilitate access to justice for children even during these challenging times.

In addition to participating in the above-mentioned conference, there were various workshops and sessions that we attended to understand the challenges faced by colleges across the globe and the inspiring ways in which they have overcome the same. The entire experience was truly enriching. The worldwide online conference provided an important platform to discuss the current challenges, the extent to which they can be turned into opportunities, and practical ways forward. It offered an important forum for connecting with and being inspired by a broad diversity of legal justice educators from all over the world.



Britane Hubbard
University of Minnesota Law School
hubbs224@umn.edu

DATE: 20 May 2021

Subject: Acceptance of Proposal for GAZE/JCLE/ACCLE Worldwide Online Conference

