

Child Right Clinics for the Year 2019 – 2020



The Child Rights Clinic of V.M. Salgaocar College of Law is the first clinic of its kind in the State of Goa which brings the law students and the children of the community closer together. Established with the objective of building a 'child-friendly' society in the State, the Clinic steers and inspires children to defend their rights. The Clinic works in close association with the Victim Assistance Unit of the State, the Children's Court, Juvenile Justice Board, Child Welfare Committee, the Commission for Protection of Child Rights, Goa State Legal Services Authority, and other child-justice delivery agencies in the State of Goa.

The academic year 2019 – 2020 was an eventful year for the Child Rights Clinic, for the fifth consecutive year, from the time of its inception in 2015. This year a new strategy was put into place. Four of the senior members were made the squad members who would handle all the responsibilities of the Clinic. These were Vasantha Kotagiri, Shweta Parulekar, Rajlaxmi Bhatkar and Raj Ramani. These squad members have performed their duties to the optimum. At the beginning of the academic year, a notice was sent to the Second and Third Year Degree students and Third and Fourth-year B.A.LL.B. students for enrollment in the CRC. Seats were limited to 20. The Clinic received an overwhelming response as 56 students sent in their applications and answered the enrolment test on the 19th of July 2019.

The '**Going to Court Programme**' was successfully continued in this academic year. The squad members took the initiative of scheduling the visits wherein a new Member was paired along with a student who was familiar with the courts. They undertook visits to the Children's Court and the Juvenile Justice Board. They observed the proceedings before the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and the Children's Court. They also undertook research and assisted the Public Prosecutors to find authorities on different points of law besides drafting documents on behalf of the child victims/ children in conflict with the law.

On 14th August 2019, the squad members delivered a talk in all 13 classes of the college on the Topic 'Sexual Harassment of Women and Students at the Workplace.' A presentation on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment was made in all the classrooms. On 29th August 2019, the CRC won the coveted and prestigious Herbert Smith Freehills Community Award. Pursuant to this, the College felicitated the Director, Dr. Kim Couto, and Associate Director, Asst. Prof. Ashwini Naik with an appreciation award on 4th October 2019, in the presence of Hon'ble Minister for Law and Judiciary, Power and Environment, Shri Nilesh Cabral, President of Devi Sharvani Education Society, Shri Dattaraj Salgaocar, and Dr. M.R.K. Prasad, Principal of the College.

Another proud moment for CRC was in August 2019: an MOU was signed with the University of New South Wales (UNSW), Australia. This MOU ensured the building of strong ties and collaborations between the two institutions.

Pursuant to this MOU with UNSW, six students of CRC namely, Vasantha Kotagiri, Shwetha Parulekar, Om D'Costa, Anusha Almeida, Sitaram Joshi, and Joslyn D'Souza, visited and resided in the Australian University for 10 days as a part of a student exchange programme from 10th November 2019 to 22nd November 2019. They learnt their laws and participated in discussions and deliberations with research scholars and faculty. Principal Dr. MRK Prasad also accompanied them.

On 6th December 2019, Adv. Emidio Pinho interacted with the members of the CRC. He spoke on procedures of the Children's Court and the JJB and chalked out future activities. As a secondary part of the collaboration and student exchange program, 10 students from UNSW, Australia along with a faculty, Ms. Anita Will visited VMSCSL from 20th January to 30th January 2020. They interacted and had fruitful discussions with VMSCSL faculty, Judges, Public Prosecutors, Lawyers, and Police Personnel.

