

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Third issue of CRC- Kidvocates! (We're excited to bring you this edition, which explores broader themes affecting children today. This issue focuses on the environments- both physical and emotionalthat shape a child's future. Inspired by Articles 48A and 51A(g) of the Indian Constitution, we delve into the physical world's impact on children as well as the importance of community and shared responsibility in raising them, reflected in the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child."

We hope you enjoy reading this issue as much as we enjoyed creating it. Stay tuned for more!

> EDITOR-IN-CHIEF, Eugenia Melo e Granjo

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GROWING UP IN A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Saanvi Vazarkar **1st Year BA LLB**

Imagine a world where every child wakes up in a safe home, breathes clean air, studies in well-equipped schools, and dreams of a future without fear or limitations. This vision is not just an ideal but it's a fundamental right. A healthy environment is critical to a child's development, yet millions worldwide struggle with poverty, pollution, and unsafe living conditions. As global citizens, it's our collective responsibility to create environments that nurture children's potential and secure their futures.

What is a healthy environment? A healthy environment is one that is safe, supportive of healthy lifestyles, and free from hazards. It includes clean air, safe drinking water, nutritious food, and access to healthcare. Most importantly, it's an environment where children feel loved and secure. Routine plays an essential role in this nurturing atmosphere. It helps children know what to expect, feel stable, and reduce anxiety. When children are raised in such supportive environments, they thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.

Unfortunately, not every child is fortunate enough to grow up in such an environment. Challenges like financial troubles, parental unemployment, addiction in the family, divorce, neglect, and abuse are common. These create environments filled with uncertainty and emotional strain. Studies have shown that children in single parent households or those exposed to family conflict, like divorce, often face greater mental health challenges than those in stable homes. Most importantly, Children in homes with substance abuse often face and lasting behavioural problems. neglect

Research conducted on children from Romanian orphanages revealed that deprivation of love and nurturing led to stunted physical growth, lower IQs, and behavioral problems. However, when these children were placed in loving foster homes, their



development significantly improved, showing the transformative power of a supportive, nurturing environment.

Laws and policies play a crucial role in ensuring children grow up in safe and healthy conditions. Governments and organisations must enforce laws to protect children from neglect and abuse, provide access to quality education, and ensure clean air and water. These laws should be accompanied by strong support systems for families, including financial assistance and mental health resources.

Andrew Bridge's story is a powerful testament to resilience and transformation. Despite enduring years in a challenging foster care institution, he rose above his difficult beginnings to become a New York Times Bestselling author, a lawyer, and the Executive Director of the Alliance for Children's Rights. His journey highlights how adversity can be a foundation for change, offering hope and inspiration to foster children worldwide.

In the end, I would like to conclude that every child deserves to grow up in a healthy environment loved. where they are safe. and encouraged to reach their full potential. It's not enough to hope for change, we must actively work together to create environments where children can thrive. Let's stand together to make the world a better place for our future generations. After all, every child deserves to grow up in a healthy environment. It's not just a right, it's their future! Let's make it happen.



AN INTERVIEW WITH PROF. PETER BORGES FORMER CHAIRPERSON OF GOA SCPCR By Chelsea P. Travasso



QI. COULD YOU TELL US ABOUT THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE GOA STATE commission for the protection of child rights?

The Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (GSCPCR) plays a critical role in safeguarding children's rights. Its primary responsibilities include monitoring the implementation of laws related to child protection, such as the Juvenile Justice Act and the POCSO Act, addressing cases of child rights violations, and making recommendations to improve the legal and policy framework. The Commission also collaborates with various stakeholders-government bodies, civil society, and private entities-to create a safe and supportive environment for children.

Q2. WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON ISSUES FACED BY CHILDREN IN GOA TODAY?

Children in Goa face a variety of challenges, with online safety emerging as one of the biggest concerns. The rise of cyberbullying, online child sexual exploitation, and gaming addiction has significantly impacted children's mental health and well-being. Additionally, issues like substance abuse in schools, child labor, and lack of access to quality education and healthcare, especially for marginalized communities, remain pressing concerns.

Q3. CAN YOU SHARE SOME SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES TAKEN BY THE COMMISSION TO Protect Child Rights in the state?

During my tenure, the Commission implemented several impactful initiatives, such as the School Child Protection Policy and establishing Prahari (anti-drugs) clubs in schools to combat substance abuse. Another key initiative was the guidelines for conducting Bal Gram Sabhas, which provided a platform for children to voice their concerns and participate in decision-making processes. These efforts have created safer spaces for children and empowered them to be active participants in their communities.

A Commission is a special group set up by the government to look into specific issues and make sure things are done fairly and correctly. The Goa State Commission for the Protection of Child Rights handles issues related to implementation of child rights and laws for the children in Goa.



Q4. HOW DOES THE COMMISSION ENSURE THAT THE VOICES OF CHILDREN ARE HEARD AND Considered in Decision-Making Processes?

One of the Commission's key priorities is to ensure that children have a say in matters that affect them. The Bal Gram Sabhas, where children engage in governance discussions, have been instrumental in amplifying their voices. The Commission also holds regular consultations with stakeholders, including schools and community organizations, to make sure that children's opinions and experiences are taken into account in shaping policies.

Q5. WHAT MESSAGE WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE TO CHILDREN WHO WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES?

To all children who want to make a difference, I encourage you to be brave, stay informed, and speak out. Whether it's raising awareness about online safety or

standing up for the rights of your peers, every action counts. Join local initiatives, participate in school activities, and don't hesitate to engage with community leaders. Your voices are powerful, and you have the ability to bring about positive change.

Q6.WHAT ARE THE FUTURE PLANS OF THE COMMISSION TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN CHILD Rights and Protection in GOA?

Although I am no longer Chairperson, I believe the future of child protection in Goa must focus on strengthening digital safety measures to address online threats like cyberbullying and child sexual exploitation. The Commission needs to enhance community-based child protection initiatives, build stronger support systems for vulnerable children, and improve access to mental health resources. These steps will ensure that Goa continues to provide a safe and nurturing environment for its children.

Q7. IF YOU COULD HAVE A DAY WHERE CHILDREN TOOK OVER THE COMMISSION, WHAT DO You think they would change or improve?

If children were in charge of the Commission for a day, I think they would focus on creating more inclusive and safer environments, especially in schools and online spaces. They would likely prioritize stronger measures to prevent bullying and cyberbullying, advocate for mental health support, and push for greater involvement in decision-making processes that directly affect them. Their fresh perspectives could bring valuable changes to the child protection

system.

BAL GRAM SABHAS IN GOA ARE CHILD-CENTRIC ASSEMBLIES PROMOTING PARTICIPATION, EMPOWERMENT, AND DECISION-MAKING AMONG CHILDREN AGED 10-18, ADDRESSING ISSUES LIKE EDUCATION, HEALTH, AND SAFETY.





FROM LONELINESS TO LOVE

BY JINU PONNACHAN, 5th Year BA LLB Member, Centre for Rights of Older Persons

Ryan watches the old uncle walking up the stairs with great difficulty every day. Holding on to the railings, he raises his foot to go upstairs but drops it back down, realizing he does not have the strength, and then he takes a deep breath and continues the process. This has been going on for two years now.





Datta uncle seems lonely. He has two sons, but they never visited him. However, on Monday afternoon, they arrived. There were a lot of arguments in their house. They were talking about taking Uncle somewhere.

It's been a few days since Ryan saw Datta Uncle. He hears the neighborhood ladies talk about him and hides behind the door to hear them.

"Did you hear? Datta uncle's sons have dropped him off at an old age home. He cried and begged for them to let him be. But they ignored him."



Ryan had tears in his eyes. He missed Datta uncle and thought how terrible of his sons to abandon him like that. Dismayed, he raises the issue with his parents.



After some days, Ryan was sitting on the balcony looking outside when he saw his parents' car arrive. Upon a closer inspection, he saw Datta uncle step out of the car.



Ryan's parents were advocates by profession. Seeing how depressed he had become; they decided to go and meet Mr. Datta. Upon understanding the matter, they informed Mr. Datta that he has the right to choose how he can be taken care of and also has the right to reside at his home. They agreed to help Mr. Datta.



His happiness knew no bounds as he rushed towards Datta uncle and hugged him. He looked at Datta uncle and promised him that he would never let anyone treat senior citizens this way and that he would take care of his parents in their old age. Datta uncle was very proud of Ryan. Together, they had agreed to create a peaceful and safe living condition.

In this world where senior citizens are neglected and young parents live in constant fear of being abandoned later in time, we need youngsters who understand the value of older persons, respect them and most importantly treat them as human beings.

Let us promise to treat all elderly with dignity!

Movie Recs

Carl Fredricksen, an elderly man decides to fulfill his lifelong dream of traveling to South America by tying thousands of balloons to his house. Along the way, he unintentionally takes young Wilderness Explorer Russell with him. Together, they encounter a rare bird, a talking dog, and an eccentric explorer in their journey through the exotic Paradise Falls.



CHILDREN WHO INSPIRED CHANGE

Children hold the potential to transform societies, challenge injustices, and lead movements. History and the present are full of young voices that have risen to make significant changes. Here's a look at some extraordinary children whose courage and vision inspire us to believe that age is never a barrier to change:



RIDHIMA PANDEY

Ridhima Pandey, is an Indian climate activist who, at the age of 9, gained global attention by filing a petition against the Indian government (Ridhima Pandey v. Union of India) through the National Green Tribunal, a special court that deals specifically with environmental issues, for not taking actions against climate change, as it had promised under the Paris Agreement. She was one of 16 youth petitioners to file a landmark complaint with the United Nations in 2019, accusing world leaders of inaction on the climate crisis.

GRETA THUNBERG

Greta Thunberg is a Swedish environmental activist who, at age 15, started the **Fridays for Future** movement by protesting alone outside the Swedish Parliament in 2018. Her activism gained global recognition, inspiring millions of young people to demand stronger climate action. At age 16, she delivered her famous "How **Dare You?" speech** at the United Nations Climate Summit, challenging world leaders to act decisively against the climate crisis. Greta continues to be a prominent voice for climate justice, mobilizing youth worldwide.





LICYPRIYA KANGUJAM

Licypriya Kangujam is one of India's youngest climate activist from Manipur. At just 6 years old, she began advocating for climate action, founding the "Child Movement" to urge leaders to combat the climate crisis. She has spoken at global events like COP25 and campaigns for installing climate clocks worldwide to highlight the urgency of reducing carbon emissions.

IQBAL MASIH

Iqbal Masih was a child rights activist from Pakistan who, at the age of 10, escaped from bonded labor in the carpet industry. He had been sold into servitude at just 4 years old to pay off a family debt. Once free, Iqbal became a passionate **advocate against child labor**, traveling internationally to share his story and raise awareness. He inspired global action and helped expose the **harsh realities of child exploitation**. Tragically, Iqbal was assassinated in 1995 at the age of 12, but his legacy continues to inspire movements for child rights and justice worldwide.





GITANJALI RAO

Gitanjali Rao, inventor, scientist and author, was named **TIME's Kid** of the Year in 2020 at age 15 for her groundbreaking innovations. She focuses on global challenges like water contamination, cyberbullying, and opioid addiction, inventing tools such as **Tethys**, a device that uses nanotechnology to detect lead in water and Kindly, an app to curb cyberbullying.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI

Malala Yousafzai, is an activist for girls' education and the youngest-ever **Nobel Peace Prize laureate**, receiving the award at age 17. In 2012, at the age of 15, she survived a targeted attack by the Taliban in response to her **advocacy for girls' education** in her hometown, Swat Valley. Following her recovery, Malala co-founded the **Malala Fund**, focusing on ensuring 12 years of free, safe, and quality education for girls globally. Her memoir, I Am Malala, became a bestseller.





AMARIYANNA COPENY

Amariyanna Copeny, also known as Little Miss Flint, is a young activist from Flint, Michigan, who began her advocacy at the age of 8. She became widely recognized after writing a letter to then-President Barack Obama in 2016, urging him to address the Flint water crisis, which exposed her community to lead-contaminated water. Her efforts brought national attention to the crisis, leading Obama to visit Flint and allocate millions of dollars for relief efforts.

HAAZIQ KAZI

At the age of 10, Kazi designed **"ERVIS**," a ship prototype that can remove plastic waste from the oceans by sucking it in and segregating it for recycling. Haaziq has spoken at international platforms like **TED**x and the **World Economic Forum** to raise awareness about marine conservation. He also launched initiatives like the **'Swachh Oceans'** program, encouraging children to reduce single-use plastics and protect marine life.



To every child reading this, remember: you are never "just a child." Your ideas, passion, and courage can shape the world into a better place. Even if it's something small like standing up for a classmate, your voice matters and it would definitely make a difference!



HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT FOR A HEALTHY FUTURE WHEN WE HEAL THE EARTH, WE HEAL OURSELVES

Children are the future of the world. They are the future leaders and their growth and development is crucial to enable the world to lead a brighter future. A healthy environment plays a very important role in the physical, social, cognitive and emotional development of a child. All of us have a right to live in a healthy environment free from pollution.

A healthy environment helps in the physical development of a child. Children need to have access to clean air, safe environment, clean drinking water, nutritious food, etc. which is necessary for their growth and development. A safe and healthy environment provides a child an opportunity to grow physically and encourages him or her to engage in physical activities such as playing outdoor games like basketball, badminton, etc. This will eventually help them to build stronger bones and muscles. Furthermore, a healthy environment also facilities good health and helps in reducing diseases like asthma, obesity, etc. which are quite common today. A healthy and safe environment also provides children an opportunity to grow not only physically but also mentally and emotionally strong. It provides children a safer platform for social interaction, and development of communication skill. This helps the child to cooperate and interact with different people. Moreover, a healthy environment also reduces depression, anxiety etc. which are quite common amongst adolescents. It is truly said that "With a healthy environment all our lives are enriched but without it our lives are diminished"

Ashitaka, a young cursed warrior embarks on a journey to seek a cure. He gets caught in a conflict between humans, ក្ led by the ambitious Lady Eboshi, and the forest spirits and animals fighting to protect their home. Ashitaka then meets San, the titular Princess Mononoke, a fierce human raised by wolves, who seeks to defend the forest at all costs.

MOVIE RECS PRINCESS MONONOKE JAPANESE. ENG DUB

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Today's environment and climate change are significantly impacting the youth in various ways. The climate crisis is not only affecting their physical health but also their mental well-being. Climate changes are leading to increased air pollution, global warming and the spread of disease, all of which affect young people. The climate crisis is also taking a toll on mental health of the children. In order to improve climate change and to create a healthier environment for children we need to take certain steps, such as: Encouraging the individuals to reduce their energy consumption, reuse materials, and recycle waste, promote the use of public transport, walking, or cycling to reduce air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, encourage individuals to conserve water and energy by turning off lights and taps when not in use, encourage individuals and communities to invest in renewable energy sources, such as solar or wind power. Trees help to absorb carbon dioxide therefore we need to plant and preserve trees. We can use social media platforms to raise awareness, share information, and promote environmental initiatives. By taking these steps, we can work towards creating a healthier environment for children.

A healthy environment is very essential for children's growth and development. It provides opportunities for physical activity, social interaction, and cognitive development. It also provides opportunities for children to develop important life skills, such as responsibility and self-discipline. Therefore a healthy environment is needed to maintain a healthy lifestyle and brighter future.

GRISHA D'SOUZA 3RD YEAR BA.LLB



AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. SWAPNESH SHERLEKAR Environmentalist, social Activist & Vlogger

BY CHELSEA P. TRAVASSO

Q1: WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WORK ON PROTECTING GOA'S ENVIRONMENT?

Protecting Goa's environment isn't an option; it's an obligation. We, as Goans, owe it to our land, heritage, and future generations. This isn't something you can do as a hobby or when you have some free time, it's a full-time responsibility. We need to stop thinking of environmental protection as someone else's job. It's everyone's

duty!

Q2: HOW DO ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS PROTECT GOA'S BEACHES, FORESTS, AND RIVERS?

Goa is fortunate to have several good environmental protection laws, such as the CRZ (Coastal Regulation Zone) Act, 1991, and the Goa Ground Water Regulation Act, 2002. However, the real challenge lies in the enforcement of these laws. There's a lack of effective implementation, and many loopholes remain, due to which the environment continues to be threatened.

Q3: IF YOU COULD MAKE A NEW LAW FOR GOA'S ENVIRONMENT, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Honestly, I believe that the laws we have in Goa are adequate. What is needed is proper enforcement. Any loopholes in these laws should be addressed, not by creating new laws, but by ensuring the ones in place are followed to the letter.

Goa's mangroves, found in estuaries and along rivers, are protected under the Coastal Regulation Zone (CRZ) rules. They provide shelter to crocodiles, otters, and migratory birds. Mangroves act as "blue carbon" ecosystems, absorbing up to four times more carbon dioxide than terrestrial forests, helping fight climate change. Q4: HAVE YOU EVER HELPED SAVE A PART OF GOA'S ENVIRONMENT? CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT IT? My work is focused on raising awareness and conducting research. We work to inform and educate the public about the laws that protect the environment and advocate for better implementation. Our campaigns are a direct response to environmental threats, but at the heart of it all is the need for consistent research and collective action to safeguard Goa's unique ecosystems.

Q5: HOW CAN CHILDREN IN GOA HELP PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT IN THEIR VILLAGES AND TOWNS? The younger generation in Goa can learn a lot from our ancestors. Our elders lived in harmony with nature; they respected it, worshipped it, and saw themselves as protectors of the land. Children today can make a significant difference by understanding the same respect for nature. If they can live in alignment with the environment like our ancestors, it will go a long way in preserving what we have left.

Q6: DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR CHILDREN IN GOA WHO WANT TO HELP SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT? Start with "Gaining Knowledge." Try to understand the environment around you and the challenges it faces. Research the laws, find out what's happening in your community, and get

involved. You need to acquire proper skills to protect the environment.

CRC BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDATIONS THE LORAX

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The book is about a small orange creature named the Lorax who speaks for the trees against a greedy businessman who destroys a forest of Truffula trees.



DID YOU KNOW YOUR ANIMAL COMPANIONS HAVE RIGHTS?

Animals are an important part of our world. They bring joy, help us in many ways, and make life better. But just like humans, animals need care, love, and protection. Whether it's pets at home or animals in the wild, it's our responsibility to ensure they live happily and safely.

Cruelty to animals means treating them in ways that hurt them or cause them unnecessary suffering. It is a punishable offence under SEC. 11 OF PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS ACT, 1960. Cruelty according to Sec 11 includes:

- Hurting Animals by beating, kicking, or torturing any animal.
- Forcing animals to work even if they're old, sick, or weak.
- Giving animals dangerous drugs or chemicals.
- Carrying animals in cramped or uncomfortable ways.
- Locking animals in cages that are too small to let them move freely.
- Tying animals with heavy chains for too long.

- Not giving your pet enough food, water, or shelter.
- Leaving animals alone in a way that might cause them to starve or suffer.
- Letting sick or injured animals roam the streets or die without care.
- Forcing animals to fight, tying them as prey for other animals, or shooting animals for sport.







CRC BOOK CLUB RECOMMENDATIONS CHARLOTTE'S WEB

Charlotte's Web tells the story of a pig named Wilbur and his friendship with a spider, Charlotte, who writes words in her web to save him from slaughter.



Animal Lawyers: Switzerland appoints animal lawyers to represent animals in cases of abuse or neglect. In 2008, a lawyer represented a pike (fish) that was overfished for sport!

THE BELL



The cow rang the bell, with eyes full of grief, at the king's grand palace, seeking relief. "Raja," she said, "My calf's been taken, By your son, the prince, and my heart is shaken." The king, with wisdom, heard her plight, And promised justice, to make it right. He called for the prince, to stand and see, That even a cow deserves dignity. In the land of justice, all are equal, Whether king, prince, or humble animal.



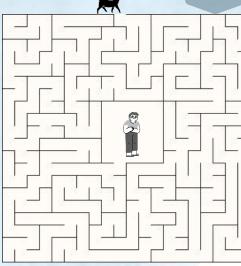
Poem inspired by the Tale of the Cholan Bell at the court of Raja Manunidhi Cholan who ruled over the Chola kingdom.

India became the first country to ban dolphinariums in 2013, recognizing dolphins as "non-human persons" with specific rights.

HELP KIT, THE CAT FIN HER HUMA COMPANIO

DO ANIMALS HAVE JOBS?

Service animals are specifically trained to help individuals with disabilities by performing tasks like guiding blind persons or alerting to medical emergencies. They are protected under laws like the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 (RPwD), which allows them access to public places.





One famous military cat, named "Simon," was awarded the "Dickin Medal" for his service aboard a British Royal Navy ship during World War II. He helped keep the ship free of rats and comforted the crew





"BEST FRIENDS" Sakshi Volvoikar, **5th Year BALLB**

> Goa's beaches are a key nesting site for the Olive Ridley turtles, protected under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. Every year, from November to April, these turtles come ashore to lay their eggs. However, in recent years they've been under threat due to habitat destruction, pollution, entanglement, and egg poaching.



during difficult times.





TURTLE (sketch pen art) Sifa Beig, **Sth Year BALLB**

Can you fine how many Animals are there throughout this Issue?



It's the story of a robot named Roz and her struggle to survive on a remote, wild island. As it turns out, Roz doesn't just survive, she adapts, and learns to communicate with the wildlife, and then she develops animal friends and even a family.



The Child Rights Clinic is proud to be at the forefront of an initiative dedicated to raising awareness about child rights, safety, and self-defense. In partnership with SCAN (Stop Child Abuse Now) NGO, our efforts focus on empowering children with essential legal knowledge and practical tools to protect themselves in today's world.

OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY HIGH SCHOOL DONA PAULA 24TH OF SEPTEMBER, 2024 MARY IMMACULATE GIRL'S HIGH SCHOOL, PANJIM 25TH SEPTEMBER 2024

THE PROGRESS HIGH SCHOOL, SANQUELIM, 27TH SEPTEMBER 2024

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Check out our YouTube channel, which which is dedicated to making complex legal topics about children, their rights, and their protection easy to understand! Each week, we break down important topics with clear explanations, real-life case studies, and expert interviews, helping you navigate the world of child law with confidence.

Hit that bell icon for weekly updates and don't forget to like, share, and comment with your questions!

Chek out our latest videos! 🕻



CORPORAL PUNISHMENT



CRIMES AGAINST CHILDREN UNDER BHARATYA NYAYA SANHITA 2023



THE GOA CHILDREN'S ACT 2003

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