

# **CHILD RIGHTS CLINIC REPORT 2023-24**

**Director: Dr. Kim Couto , Associate Director: Dr. Mrunmayi Vaidya**

The Child Rights Clinic was established with the goal of creating a society that is child-friendly in the State. Its motto, "WHERE CHILDREN ARE INSPIRED TO DEFEND THEIR RIGHTS," reflects its primary objective. The Clinic works closely with various government bodies, such as the Department of Women and Child Development, the Goa State Commission for Protection of Child Rights, and the Child Welfare Committee, SCAN, VAU among others, to strengthen the child protection system in Goa. In addition to its practical work, the Clinic collaborates with foreign universities to share best practices and experiences in the field of child protection systems. The Clinic has made significant strides in promoting Child Rights since its inception.

## **ENROLMENT**

Enrolment to the CRC was kept open for students of the TYBALLB and Fourth YEARBALLB as well as the SY and TY Degree students for the academic year 2023-24 on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2023, for which a google form for registration for CRC 2023-24 was circulated in these class groups. New members were inducted into the CRC based on their interest and a personal interview held with the CRC in charge -faculty

## **INDUCTION OF MEMBERS**

27 members were inducted into the CRC for the academic year 2023-24. Some of the members continued from the previous year.

## **GOING TO COURT PROGRAMME**

The existing members began with the visits to the Children's Court from 16<sup>th</sup> July 2023, under the 'Going to Court Programme.' A Whats App group was created with the existing and new members. The schedule for visits was prepared by Malvina Pinto and Ryan Rodrigues for each week. The schedule was informed in advance to the members ahead of their visit. The schedule for the second half of the academic year was also being prepared in rotation by Disha Naik, Gladwin DeSouza and Ryan and Malvina.

## **MEETINGS**

A meeting was held for all the members on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

Summary: Prof. Dr. Kim Couto, Director of Child Rights Clinic discussed the primary objectives and reasons for setting up the Clinic along with the role and the functioning of the clinic.

She informed the new members that they will have to follow up the functioning and matters at the children court and observe the proceedings during the court visits which is an integral activity of the Child Rights Clinic. She provided an overview of the fundamental procedures that take place in the Children's Court and provided general instructions to follow during the court visit. Followed by question answers session wherein the students got their doubts clarified from Prof. Kim Couto. In the meeting, Dr. Mrunmayi Vaidya, Associate Director outlined the list of proposed activities for the entire year. The activity list was discussed and informed to all the members of the CRC. The members were asked to acquaint themselves with the laws relating to children namely the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, the Goa Children's Act 2003 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2013.

## **ACTIVITIES**

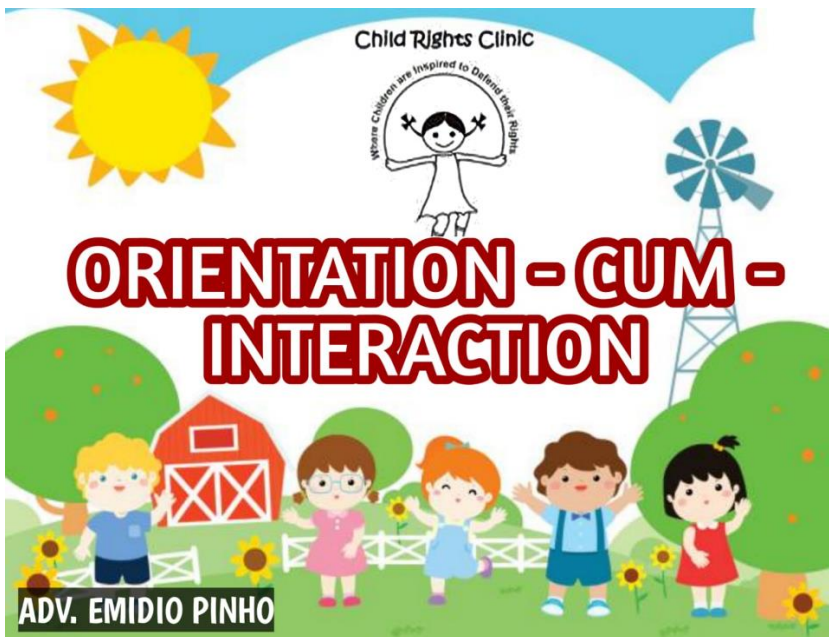
### **(i) Book Discussion**

On 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2023, the members participated in an Online Book Discussion on the topic "Juvenile, Not Delinquent" authored by Enakshi Ganguly, Kalpana Purshothaman, and Puneeta Roy. On 5<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the CRC had its second meeting in which the laws relating to children were discussed during the interaction. Questions were asked to the new members most of which were answered by the members. CRC members attended and participated in an Awareness Program on 'Sexual Offences under the POCSO Act,' on 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023 held at the Children's Court premises. The Speaker at the programme was Adv. Emidio Pinho.

### **(ii) 'ORIENTATION-CUM- INTERACTION'**

**Speaker:** Adv. Emidio Pinho **Held On:** 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2023

Adv. Emidio Pinho took an Orientation session along with his team member for the Clinic members. He explained how the NGO SCAN works, and the Victim Assistance Unit of the State. He extended to partner with the Child Rights Clinic to conduct programs at various locations including schools and higher secondaries. And then there was an allocation of duties to the members to identify the school to take proper steps to plan and execute the program in association with the SCAN NGO. CRC members conducted various awareness talks in schools and higher secondaries of their locality after securing permission from the Head of the Institution.



### (iii) **OBSERVANCE OF WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY**

The College in association with the CRC and Women Empowerment Cell of the College celebrated the World Mental Health Day on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023. The Chief Guest of the programme was Mrs. Sulaxa Gawas, Counsellor, Nirmala Institute of Education, Altinho ,Goa. In addition, the members organised a cluster of competitions to mark the occasion, including a Poster making Competition and a Poetry Competition. The members put up a beautiful skit on mental health for the programme.

Ms. Sulaxa spoke on the importance of mental health and how we should support and assist those who need help.



#### **(iv) NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY CELEBRATION**

Date: 24th January 2024 , Place: 1. Auxilium Convent High School, Caranzalem, Panaji, Goa. 2. Hamara School, St. Inez, Panaji, Goa.

The Child Rights Clinic of V. M. Salgaocar College of Law celebrated the “National Girl Child Day” on 24th January 2024. National Girl Child Day is celebrated in the country on January 24 every year with an objective to provide support and opportunities to the girls of India. It aims towards promoting awareness about the rights of the girl child and to increase awareness on the importance of girl education, their health, nutrition and also to promote the girls position in the society. With respect to the celebration CRC conducted different activities in schools such as awareness about Girl child day, skit performance and Q&A session and distribution of gifts to winners. Auxilium Convent High School, Caranzalem The first program was conducted in Auxilium Convent High School at 11:00 am, the students in the age group of 13-14 years were present. Firstly the students were made aware about the day. Then the skit was performed by the

CRC members. The topics covered in skit included curfew on girl child, bad touch, sex determination, clothing restrictions, body shaming, unequal house work and online child sexual abuse. The skit was performed in Hindi language for better understanding of students. The skit was not only entertaining but also served as a powerful medium to convey meaningful message. After the skit performances, students were engaged in interactive sessions where thought-provoking questions related to skit were asked. To encourage active participation and reward insightful responses during the Q&A sessions, gifts were distributed to the students who excelled in answering questions. The school teachers extended their support, admired the program and also requested to have more such programs.

Hamara School, St. Inez The second program was conducted in Hamara School at 4:00 pm. The students present were from age group of 6-9 years. The event commenced with a captivating skit performed by CRC members. The skit covered the topics such as difference between good touch and bad touch, bullying, studying good, and also covered topics such as not to trust strangers and not to fight with each other, help each other in studying etc. Students were shown different behaviour and asked whether the behaviour was good or bad. The session was very interactive. Then the students were asked different questions regarding behaviour and other general questions regarding skit. Prizes were distributed to children with correct answer and all the children also received gifts. The members were greatly praised by the teachers.

The National Girl Child Day program in Schools was a successful initiative to foster awareness and engagement among students regarding the challenges faced by girls. The combination of skit performances, interactive sessions, and the distribution of gifts contributed to creating a positive and impactful learning environment.





### (v) TOY COLLECTION DRIVE

Members of the Child Rights Clinic initiated a Toy Collection Drive on the occasion of the National Girl Child Day. The members placed boxes in the college for collection of toys stationery and other items for children to observe the day. An inventory was made of the various items that were received in the Collection box which were given by the college students, faculty and staff. The items were packaged for distribution to the Peace Haven institution for children with special needs at Caranzalem to be handed over later in the day.



### (vi)OBSERVANCE OF NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING AWARENESS DAY

Date - 11<sup>th</sup> January 2024, Time - 8:00am - 11:30 am , Place - Panaji

Human trafficking is a global crime, impacting millions worldwide, involving recruitment, transportation, and exploitation through force, coercion, or deception. This exploitation includes forced labor, sexual exploitation, and servitude. SCAN-Goa, in partnership with Goa Police, marked the start of “National Human Trafficking Awareness Day.” Their event aimed to spotlight the fight against human rights violations, stressing prevention, intervention, and survivor support. The awareness walk began at Azad Maidan, uniting the community against human trafficking. Participants included members from various sectors, such as NGO representatives, students from V.M Salgaocar College of Law and VVM’S Govind Ramnath Kare College of Law, and Goa Police. The walk, organized by SCAN, distributed placards and slogans, ending at the Panaji bus stand, symbolizing unity against human trafficking. The collaboration with the Goa Police added significant weight to the event, highlighting the importance of a united front against Human trafficking. Officers actively participated in the walk, showcasing collective commitment of law enforcement to conduct this grave issue. V.M Salgaocar College of Law students, as CRC members, actively engaged in the awareness walk, distributing materials and presenting a powerful skit at Immaculate Conception Church in Panaji, highlighting the distressing aspects of human trafficking and stressing prevention and intervention.

The National Human Trafficking Awareness Day event, organized by SCAN-Goa and Goa Police with CRC members and law college students, effectively educated the public on trafficking issues through various activities. This collaboration showcased the power of collective action, fostering a sense of responsibility and empowerment among participants.

The event concluded with a vote of thanks from Adv. Emidio Dsouza Pinho, acknowledging everyone’s dedication on this important day.





### **(vii) SESSION ON ‘SOCIO - LEGAL DIMENSIONS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING’**

On 25th January 2024 , A session on ‘ Socio- Legal Dimensions of Human Trafficking’ was arranged by the Child Rights Clinic of V.M Salgaocar college of law. The Session was held in the College at 11.am . The Resource Person for the said Session was Adv. Shabnam Khan, Founder of ‘Project Pearl’. She began the session with self and her Career introduction. She shared details of her NGO project pearl based in North Goa.Project Pearl is an initiative of Bethesda life centre working towards educating human trafficking.Adv. Shabnam then began with explaining the types , reasons for human trafficking.She also mentioned the three main motives/ purposes of human trafficking which are commercial, sex driven and labour . After which she started explaining the crime in detail with the aid of a powerpoint presentation.She spoke about human trafficking, its essence and how to tackle such crime and situation. She further informed that how reporting the crime and general awareness has helped at a great extent to combat human trafficking.Furthermore, she elaborated on the various authorities working towards combating human trafficking. Such as Anti Human - Trafficking Cell, Anti Human - trafficking Unit in the state of Goa and Nation.She mentioned the penal punishments for human trafficking under IPC, POCSO and ITPA. Adv. Shared her personal acquaintance with the victims and put forth her alarming experiences relating to human trafficking. The Session was concluded with Questions and answers round . Dr. Kim Couto presented a memento to the resource person and Miss Pallavi gave a vote of thanks. The session ended at 12pm.with some group pictures.





**(viii) Awareness talks conducted in association with SCAN -NGO**

An awareness Drive on Child Abuse was conducted by Child Rights Clinic members in collaboration with the NGO Stop Child Abuse Now (SCAN). The members of the Child Rights Clinic took the necessary permission from the concerned schools for conducting the awareness programme along with the convenient date and time to hold the programme. The programmes were greatly appreciated by the school teachers and school authorities.

