

THE ALCHEMY OF GROWTH

December 2024 - January 2025

Spreading Hope and Harmony in every note in this **Prayer for Peace: Chennai Children's Choir**



The **Career Guidance & Future Readiness Camp 2024** enables **167 careleavers** to pave their way in CCIs in Tamil Nadu



Finishing strong with **18,626 sign ups**, and **6,847 certifications: UNESCO 2.0**



Dear NalandaWay Community,

A new year unfolds, and with it, stories of hope and change. As promised, we're back with renewed energy and exciting updates. This is the first edition of our 2025 newsletter, offering a glimpse into the work we've been doing these past two months.

January set the pace for us — quite literally — as NalandaWay joined hands with The Freshworks Chennai Marathon as charity partners. It was heartening to see not just runners carrying our name across the finish line but also kind-hearted souls stepping up to raise funds for our cause.

A special cheer for **Lakshmi Sundar**, a dedicated lifestyle physician, and **Lakshmi Narayanan**, whose campaigns for NalandaWay during the marathon truly made a difference. Every step, every stride, every bit of support meant the world to us.

Meanwhile, our **Empowering Youth through Digital Pedagogies: UNESCO 2.0** project reached a remarkable milestone. What began with a target of 15,000 enrollments soared beyond expectations — 18,626 young minds signed up, and 6,847 earned their certifications. Numbers may tell a story, but behind each of these figures is a young learner, a dreamer who took a step towards a brighter future.

In Tamil Nadu, the **Career Guidance & Future Readiness Camp 2024**, held in partnership with the Department of Children Welfare and Special Services (DCWSS), brought together 167 care-leaving adolescents and 30 CCI staff from across the state. Over two days, young participants gained insights, skills, and confidence to embrace life beyond CCIs.

Meanwhile, our Gutar Goo team took learning home. Sitting down with mothers of little ones aged 0-3, they listened to stories of love and learning, of whispered lullabies and shared struggles. Mothers spoke of how discussions on child development, stress management, and breastfeeding had made a difference in their daily lives. Anganwadi Workers joined in, weaving stronger threads of community and care, ensuring that learning didn't just happen in centres but found its way home.

Of course, these are but a few pages from our ever-growing story. Across cities and villages, our teams are working tirelessly to make this year exceptional for the children we serve. And as we move forward, we hope you will walk this path with us — through words, through action, through a shared belief that every child deserves a chance to dream.

Warm regards,
The NalandaWay Team



Chennai Children's Choir: Spreading Harmony Through Music

From soulful performances to technical rehearsals, the Chennai Children's Choir (CCC) has had an eventful few months, preparing to bring melodies that inspire to new audiences.

- **Junior Batch Expands Their Repertoire**
The young singers have been mastering:
Sargam SGP
Hum Dekhenge
Brahmama Okkate
Bharat Humko
Vaishnav Janato
- **Choir Hits the High Notes at Chennai Marathon**
26 students performed five songs at the RK Convention Centre in Chennai as part of the Health and Fitness Expo (Freshworks Chennai Marathon), bringing energy and inspiration to the gathering.
- **Fine-Tuning for the Global Stage: Bangalore Beckons**
The choir held intensive rehearsals to prepare for their upcoming Bangalore Global Forum performances in February.
- **A Night to Remember: Soulful Melodies at Leela Palace**
A group of 11 students delivered a soulful rendition of five songs at Leela Palace during a prestigious conference and awards show, earning heartfelt appreciation.
- **Mark Your Calendar: A Trio of Must-See Performances**
The choir is gearing up for three special performances:

14 Feb The Bangalore School of Music

15 Feb Azim Premji University Global Forum

16 Feb Indian Music Experience Museum

Prayer for Peace
Hope in every note
Join us for a soulful evening of music and poetry, celebrating unity, love, and nature.

14th FEB 6 pm Scan for tickets

16th FEB 5.30 pm Scan to Register

Venue: The Bangalore School of Music and Fine Arts, RT Nagar, Bangalore

Venue: Indian Music Experience Museum, Brigade Millennium Road, Bangalore

Stay tuned for more updates as CCC continues to spread joy through music!

Kanna Mucche: Small Actions, Big Impact

We begin this edition with inspiring stories from Kanna Mucche, where small yet meaningful activities are shaping young minds and communities. These stories set the tone not just for this newsletter but for the months ahead.

▶ Little Changemakers at Kurubarapete Anganwadi

When we introduced the concept of wet and dry waste segregation, we expected curiosity — but what we witnessed was transformation. Armed with two colourful bins — red for dry waste and blue for wet waste — we engaged young learners in a hands-on sorting activity. At first, some hesitated: “Where does this banana peel go?” But with gentle guidance, they quickly grasped the concept. Within days, children started bringing waste from home, ensuring their Anganwadi remained clean.

▶ Outcomes

- Children developed an early awareness of waste management.
- They took ownership, influencing families to segregate waste at home.
- Teachers observed a cleaner, more organised learning space.

▶ Manjula’s Journey: From Hesitation to Confidence

When we first met Manjula, she barely engaged with colouring activities, her strokes hesitant and disengaged. But with encouragement, conversations about her favourite colours, and structured guidance, something shifted. Slowly, her pages filled with vibrant hues, each stroke more confident than the last.

▶ Outcomes

- Manjula gained confidence in self-expression.
- She became more interactive in class, eagerly participating in activities.
- Her story encouraged other hesitant children to explore creativity.

▶ Strengthening Learning: Workbooks & Parental Support

Over the past two months, we’ve ensured young learners and mothers have the right tools for growth.

▶ Workbook Distribution

- Term 2 workbooks reached 11 Anganwadis in Bengaluru Urban.
- Term 3 workbooks were distributed across Bengaluru Rural, continuing our commitment to early learning.

▶ Parental Guide for Mothers

A richly illustrated guide was distributed to pregnant and lactating mothers, providing essential information on maternal and child health.

▶ Mother Circle Meetings: Empowering Parents

To build awareness and support among parents, a series of Mother Circle Meetings were conducted across Anganwadis.

- Session on Mobile Addiction: Parents learned about the risks of excessive screen time and strategies to engage children in meaningful offline activities.
- Guidance for Pregnant Women: Covered essential topics like emotional well-being, nutrition, and developmental stages.
- Support for Lactating Mothers: Focused on postpartum recovery, breastfeeding techniques, and mental health.

▶ Celebrating Learning Through Events

▶ Kisan Diwas (Farmers’ Day)

Children learned about farming through storytelling and hands-on planting of ragi. Their excitement was evident as they took ownership of their pots, eager to nurture their seedlings.

▶ World Soil Day

A soil investigation activity allowed children to touch, observe, and understand different soil types. They connected these insights to the food they eat, deepening their appreciation for nature.

▶ Handwash Day

A lively Kanna Mucche song and step-by-step demonstration made learning fun. Through arts and crafts, children created posters on hygiene, reinforcing their understanding in a creative way.

▶ Indian Army Day

Children learned about the sacrifices of Indian soldiers, fostering respect and national pride.



Foundational Learning IV & V: Building Strong Futures

Our Foundational Learning Project, in partnership with the Department of Education and the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC), continues to have an impact by strengthening foundational literacy and numeracy skills among students in government and Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC) schools. Designed for Classes 4 and 5, the programme bridges learning gaps while integrating social-emotional learning to support the holistic development of children.



Empowering Teaching Assistants for Term III

To ensure a strong start to Term III, we conducted a two-day intensive training programme for our Teaching Assistants. The goal was to enhance their skills, improve lesson planning, and strengthen assessment methodologies to better support student learning.

Key outcomes from the training

Strategic Lesson Planning – Teaching Assistants developed structured plans aligned with the Ennum Ezhuthum syllabus, ensuring timely completion of lessons while incorporating social-emotional learning.

- **Refined Assessment Techniques** – They received in-depth training on end-line survey methodologies and observation rubrics to track student progress with greater accuracy.
- **Confidence & Readiness** – Equipped with new strategies and tools, Teaching Assistants now feel more prepared to guide students effectively in their learning journey.

Recognising and Celebrating Student Progress

The completion of Term II was marked with a special moment – students received their personalised report cards, celebrating their achievements and growth. These reports not only highlighted their strengths and areas for improvement but also provided motivation for the next phase of learning.

NalandaWay Art Schools (NAS): Innovation Takes Centrestage

Teachers Unlock the Power of Music in Classrooms

Music has the power to transform learning, and our latest Teachers' Music Workshop proved just that. Held on 4th and 6th December, the workshop brought together 24 teachers from three NalandaWay Art Schools (NAS), equipping them with innovative ways to integrate music into their lessons for Grades 1 to 8.

The sessions were not just about learning music but about using it as a tool to enhance classroom engagement and creativity. Teachers explored:

- **Fundamentals of Music:** Understanding rhythm, melody, and harmony.
- **Hands-on Song Creation:** Composing tunes inspired by Tamil poetry.
- **Practical Application:** Embedding music into lesson plans for different subjects.

By the end of the workshop, teachers left not just with new skills but with confidence to create more engaging and immersive learning experiences. As one participant put it, "I finally see how music can fit naturally into my lessons – it's not just an add-on but a way to make learning more meaningful."

Parents Step into the World of Art and Expression

When parents experience the impact of arts firsthand, they become active supporters of creative education. At CMS MH Road and CMS Gandhigramam, our parents' workshop gave 23 parents a hands-on introduction to the power of visual arts.

Through activities like decorative name art, rangoli drawing, and intricate rice-and-pulse designs, parents discovered the role of creativity in enhancing cognitive skills, patience, and self-expression.

The enthusiasm was unmistakable, with many parents requesting regular sessions. This engagement is a crucial step towards building a strong, arts-enriched community, where students, teachers, and families work together to make learning more joyful and holistic.



Youth Co-Production for Sustainable Engagement and Empowerment in Health (YiPEE)

Students Map Their Dreams and Emotions Through Art

In 15 schools, students stepped into a world of self-expression through "Image Theatre" and "Vision Board" sessions. These interactive activities encouraged them to explore their emotions, articulate their needs, and recognise different perspectives within their communities.

- **Image Theatre:** Helped students visually represent emotions and understand that people experience the world differently.
- **Vision Boards:** Encouraged creativity and goal-setting, allowing students to map out their aspirations and future plans.

Teachers Reflect and Reimagine Their Role in the Classroom

In-person teacher workshops held in 10 schools focused on self-reflection and future aspirations through two key sessions:

- "Your Inner Teacher" helped teachers identify their strengths and personal teaching philosophy.
- "Bright Days Ahead" encouraged them to write letters to their future selves, reinforcing optimism and continuous growth.

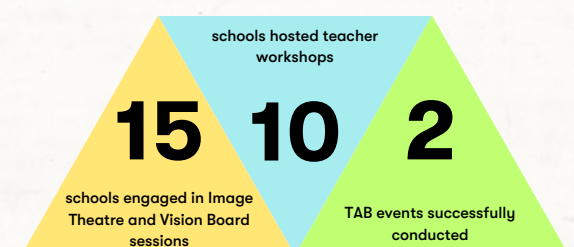
Building Teacher Connections Through Peer Support

As part of the Peer Support Group, educators engaged in relaxed conversations about their New Year resolutions and Pongal holiday plans. This casual, stress-free exchange strengthened bonds and created a sense of camaraderie within the teaching community.

Together Action Board: Strengthening School Communities

Bringing students, parents, and teachers together, the Together Action Board (TAB) events continued to foster a culture of gratitude, kindness, and shared aspirations. Following TAB orientations and meetings, schools hosted TAB events 3 and 4 in December and January, featuring:

- The Kindness Hand
- Gratitude Stars & Forest
- Hope Sharing Circle
- Smiley Faces



Welcome TO THE TEAM!

Keerthi
Rangarajan



Rohini
V



Goldi
Kumari



Aastha
Dhasmana



Radha
Singh



Early Childhood (Gutar Goo): Empowering Communities

From strengthening child protection practices to bringing learning into homes, the Gutar Goo team has been actively working to create a nurturing and engaging environment for young children and their caregivers.

Building Safer Learning Spaces: CPP & TLM Training

To ensure every child's right to safety and quality education, a training session was conducted on the Child Protection Policy (CPP). Anganwadi Workers were equipped with the knowledge and tools to safeguard children's rights and well-being in their daily interactions.

- The training emphasised integrating child protection principles into early childhood care.
- In the second half of the session, workers were introduced to Teaching-Learning Materials (TLM) aligned with Pre-Numeracy and Pre-Literacy themes.
- Hands-on activities helped them create engaging and effective learning materials to support foundational skills.

By equipping caregivers and educators with these essential skills, we are ensuring that young learners receive quality early education in safe, supportive environments.

Taking Learning Home: A New Initiative in Community Engagement

Recognising the crucial role of caregivers, the Gutar Goo team launched Home Visits to directly engage with mothers of children aged 0-3 years.

- These visits allowed the team to gather feedback on the resources shared during Mother Circle Meetings.
- Mothers shared how topics like child development, stress management, and breastfeeding have enriched their parenting experience.
- Anganwadi Workers joined these visits, strengthening community connections and reinforcing the importance of early childhood education at home.



Celebrating Unity and Learning: Republic Day Festivities

Republic Day was celebrated across multiple centres with patriotic energy and joyful activities.

- Children enthusiastically sang songs like "Nanha Munna Rahi Hoon", danced, and created colourful national flags.
- Engaging games, such as the flag-passing challenge, made learning fun and interactive, with children proudly shouting "Jai Hind!"
- A storytelling session highlighted the importance of unity and working together, drawing parallels between teamwork in daily life and harmony in the nation.

UNICEF - Teacher Well-being Course: Rendering Impactful Content

Strengthening Teacher Well-being: Tamil Course Nears Completion

Over the past month, our team has made significant progress in refining the Tamil version of the course, focusing on content accuracy, clarity, and quality audiovisual production.

Fine-Tuning Tamil Content for Maximum Impact

After Brama completed the translation, the NalandaWay team conducted a meticulous review process to ensure that the Tamil version retained the depth and precision of the original.

- An associate, with the support of an intern, reviewed the grammar, tone, writing style, and wordiness of the content.
- Given the complexity of the research, activities, and video content, the review process spanned five working days.
- The team is now assessing the translation requirements for additional article content, ensuring comprehensive alignment with the course objectives.

This careful scrutiny will ensure that teachers receive content that is both accessible and impactful, equipping them with the right tools to enhance their well-being.

Bringing the Course to Life Through Video

Recognising the power of visual storytelling, the Bytesor team has successfully completed video production for the Tamil course.

Well-being and Skilling of Children in Child Care Institutions (CCI), Punjab: Creativity, Learning, and Celebration

From hands-on art learning to festive celebrations, the Punjab CCI Project has been creating engaging and meaningful experiences for children across five homes.

Learning Through Art: The Launch of Specially Designed Workbooks

To make learning interactive and engaging, Art Workbooks were designed for children aged 6 to 12 years. These workbooks introduce essential concepts through art-based worksheets, making education an enjoyable process.

- Sense of Self: Helping children understand and express their identity.
- Feelings Card: Aiding children in recognising and articulating emotions.
- Health and Hygiene: Teaching personal cleanliness and well-being.
- Nutritional Food Habits: Highlighting the importance of a balanced diet for a healthy lifestyle.

Exploring Creativity: Art-Based Activities Across Five Homes

Art became a powerful medium of expression and learning, as children actively participated in diverse creative exercises.

- Poster Making: Encouraged visual storytelling, allowing children to express ideas while improving artistic skills and communication.
- School Curriculum Projects: Strengthened academic learning by reinforcing core subjects through hands-on projects, promoting research, teamwork, and presentation skills.
- Clay Modelling: Fostered fine motor skills and imaginative thinking, as children experimented with shapes, textures, and designs.

Through these activities, children gained confidence, developed essential life skills, and discovered the joy of self-expression.



Spreading Joy: Christmas Celebrations with Art

To wrap up the year on a heartwarming note, children celebrated Christmas through a greeting card-making activity.

- They created and exchanged cards with peers, CCI staff, and school friends, spreading festive cheer.
- The activity strengthened friendships and built a sense of community, reinforcing the spirit of togetherness.

This celebration created a warm and inclusive atmosphere, ensuring that every child felt appreciated and connected as they stepped into the new year.



Kalakriti: Art, Expression, and Learning

From guest artist exposure to the integration of arts into education, Kalakriti has been shaping young minds through creativity and cultural exploration.

Mastering Rhythm and Grace: DCC's Guest Session with Madhur Gupta

The Delhi Children's Choir (DCC) had an inspiring learning experience with Madhur Gupta, one of India's leading Odissi dance maestros.

- Children explored the basics of Odissi dance and its deep connection with Bhartiya Shastriya Sangeet.
- They learned Ek Taal rhythm, a Sanskrit shloka-based dance, and the significance of Bhumi Namaskar (salutation to the earth).
- Madhur shared valuable insights on balancing academics with art, the importance of discipline, consistency, patience, and dedication in mastering any skill.

This engaging session broadened the children's understanding of classical arts while reinforcing the values of perseverance and passion.



Bringing Art into Classrooms: The Kalakriti Schools Initiative

With new Teaching Assistants onboard and approval from the Department of Education (DOE), Kalakriti has successfully launched the Art Integrated Curriculum across 10 schools in Ambedkar Nagar, Delhi, reaching around 5,000 students.

These creative sessions aim to:

- Build creative confidence through hands-on art experiences
- Expose students to diverse local and global art forms
- Enhance artistic, social, and emotional learning skills

Exploring Diverse Art Forms

Students have been actively participating in a variety of artistic activities, including:

- Visual Arts – Inspired by Matisse's artwork, creating origami, masks, collage art, and colourful mandalas.
- Theatre Training – Learning navras (nine emotions), stage management, and scriptwriting.
- Dance Exploration – Engaging in folk dance forms like Bhangra, Nati, and Dandiya.

These interactive sessions have boosted students' confidence, creativity, and presentation skills, preparing them for performances and events. By blending art with education, Kalakriti ensures that students develop innovative thinking and self-expression skills that will stay with them for a lifetime.



10

schools implementing the Art Integrated Curriculum

5000

students engaged in Art Integrated Learning

Your strides made a difference, and we're grateful for your support! 🙌



Art Vandī: Boosting Creativity and Self-Expression

NalandaWay's Art Vandī workshop at Chetpet Community Centre empowered children to enhance their storytelling and communication skills through puppet-making. The workshop fostered creativity, boosted confidence, and allowed the children to express their stories in new and engaging ways.

Outcomes

- High participation with children eager to engage in creative activities.
- Development of storytelling skills and improved communication through puppetry.
- Increased self-expression, allowing children to transform their ideas into artwork.

535 Students Across Schools Benefit from Art Vandī Workshop

The Art Vandī workshop reached 535 students at Government Higher Secondary School, Thiruvanchery, and CSI St. Thomas Higher Secondary School, Guindy, enabling creativity and teamwork over five days.

Day 1: Building Rapport and Creating Puppets

Students connected with facilitators through interactive games, followed by puppet-making. This sparked curiosity and active participation.

Day 2: Storytelling and Scriptwriting

Students created stories in groups, learning scriptwriting and story structure. Many showed creative insights in their work.

Day 3: Bringing Stories to Life

Students coloured their storybooks and refined their scripts, further developing their artistic skills.

Days 4 & 5: Showcasing Talent

The final days saw students completing their storybooks and showcasing their work in a creative exhibition, with a theatre performance and short film.

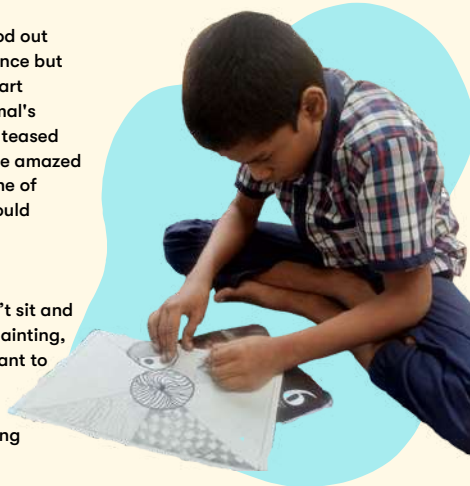


Story from the Field: A Place for Passion and Potential

Nirmal, a 6th-standard student, has always stood out among his peers, not for his academic performance but for his remarkable talent in art. During a recent art session organised at the St. Thomas school, Nirmal's hidden talent came to light. Who had previously teased him for not paying attention during lessons, were amazed to see the passion and skill he demonstrated. One of them even exclaimed, "We never knew Nirmal could create something so incredible!"

It was during this session that Nirmal shared an interesting insight about himself. He said, "I can't sit and read books for hours, but when I'm drawing or painting, time just flies. It feels like I'm doing what I'm meant to do."

Today, Nirmal's story is an example of recognising individual talents.



Apollo Schools Project: Celebrating Creativity and Patriotism

Art Activity Day & Art Kit Distribution: Creativity through Hands-On Learning

December kicked off with the eagerly awaited Art Activity Day, where art kits were distributed to all morning shift students following a successful evening shift distribution. The students were delighted to receive these kits, which have now become a key resource in their visual art sessions, sparking creativity and active participation.

During the event, students showcased their artistic growth through performances of Krishna bhajans in Raag Bhopali and vibrant folk dances from Pahadi, Rajasthani, and Haryanvi traditions. Despite limited preparation time, their confident performances demonstrated their dedication, highlighting the positive impact of arts education in nurturing creativity, teamwork, and cultural appreciation.

Festive Cheer: A Magical Christmas Celebration

The festive spirit filled both morning and evening shifts during the Christmas celebrations. In the morning shift, Kindergarten students enchanted everyone with a special dance performance, while fifth graders dressed as Santa Claus, spreading joy by distributing chocolates.

In the evening shift, Classes 2 and 3 students showcased their creativity by crafting red and white Santa hats during a visual arts activity. The event was made even more special with chocolates shared among students and teachers, creating a warm and memorable atmosphere for all.

Republic Day Celebrations: A Proud Tribute to Patriotism

The Republic Day celebrations were a heartwarming success, with the team supporting teachers in preparing students for the event. The students proudly showcased their patriotism through dance, music, and visual art performances, inspiring everyone with their creativity and spirit.



Kanna Moochi: Building Foundations for Early Childhood Education

NalandaWay Foundation's Kanna Moochi initiative continues to make a significant impact, supporting early childhood care and education (ECCE) across 20 Anganwadi centres in Chennai. By integrating storytelling and art, the programme lays a strong foundation for children aged 3-6 years, fostering creativity, communication, and social skills.

Engaging Learning Sessions Spark Joy and Creativity

Throughout January, Teaching Assistants (TAs) led vibrant sessions on Stories 4, 5, and 6. The children enjoyed a mix of creative exercises that included yoga, simple physical activities, and lessons on healthy eating habits. One of the month's highlights was the Christmas celebration, where children across all centres participated in festive games, making learning fun and memorable.



➤ **Mother Circle Meetings: Strengthening ECCE Beyond the Classroom**

The Mother Circle Meetings continued to play a pivotal role in involving parents in their children's education. Mothers participated in fun, interactive activities, including the "passing ball" lullaby game, creating stronger bonds between families and the programme. Additionally, a WhatsApp group was created, enabling mothers to carry on educational activities at home with the help of the Parent Guideline Workbook.

➤ **Anganwadi Worker Training: Empowering Educators for the Future**

On January 9th, 2025, 38 Anganwadi workers and helpers gathered for a highly successful training session at Asha Nivas, Thousand Lights. The day was packed with interactive activities, discussions on early childhood development, and practical demonstrations on child-centred vs. teacher-centred learning. The CDPO of Perambur praised the efforts of the Teaching Assistants in enhancing the quality of early education in the area.

The session concluded with a group photo, symbolising the collaborative spirit and exchange of ideas that is driving positive change in early education.



Arts in Education: Inspiring Creativity and Confidence

NalandaWay's Arts in Education initiative for students in standards 1-5 marches on, nurturing creativity and enhancing art appreciation while fostering social-emotional growth. Supported by Fidelity Investments, the programme has been providing an engaging platform for students to explore various art forms, building both their artistic and life skills.

➤ **Theatre Workshop: Empowering Teaching Artists**

In December, a three-day theatre workshop led by Mr Vinoth, a theatre consultant, took place to equip teaching artists with essential skills for school sessions. The workshop focused on storytelling, character development, and audience engagement, using creative techniques such as puppetry and mask-making to bring out the artists' potential.

➤ **Volunteer Engagement: A Creative Collaboration**

In January, 87 volunteers partnered with 391 students across CMS Pullapuram and CMS Madipakkam for a series of vibrant art activities. Volunteers co-facilitated sessions designed to spark creativity and encourage teamwork:

- MDF coaster making
- Texture art on canvases
- Alphabet painting
- Sunset painting with poster colours
- Paper plate animals

The sessions received positive feedback from school heads, students, and volunteers, marking the event as a great success and a testament to the power of collaborative learning.



87

volunteers engaged

391

students

5

students engaged in Art Integrated Learning

Teaching artists developed skills in puppetry, mask-making, and storytelling

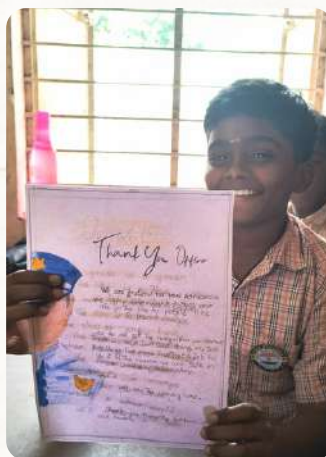
Well-being of Children Using a Whole School Approach (HCL Wellbeing): Emotional Awareness and Empathy

➤ **Wellbeing and Musical Theatre Sessions Progressing**

The HCL Wellbeing Project has successfully conducted 504 sessions across 60 classrooms in 5 government schools in Chengalpattu and Thiruvallur districts. The focus on Emotional Awareness and Healthy Social Environment has led to significant progress in helping children develop key social-emotional skills.

➤ **Outcome**

Students are increasingly able to identify and regulate their emotions and recognise the importance of positive peer influence. The project is actively fostering an anti-bullying attitude and promoting a more inclusive, supportive environment within the schools.



Voices from the Field

“When akka explained about regulating emotions and asked us to act out different scenarios, it really made me think. I realised how important it is to pause and consider what the other person might be feeling before reacting. During the role-play, I tried to put myself in their shoes, and it hit me how much my actions or words can affect someone else. At first, it wasn't easy because I don't always stop to think about what others might be going through. But this activity taught me that understanding someone else's perspective can help me respond with more kindness and empathy.”

– Shared by 8th-grade student, SM Nagar, Avadi



▶ Collaboration with Art Vandit at GHSS Thiruvanchery

In partnership with Art Vandit, the team organised a four-day storybook-making workshop at GHSS Thiruvanchery, engaging grades 6-8 in creative storytelling and illustration.

▶ Outcome

Students successfully collaborated to create their own storybooks, developing teamwork, creativity, and communication skills. The hands-on approach left children with a sense of accomplishment, and teachers noted an increase in student confidence and enthusiasm towards creative expression.

▶ Mini Zine Creation for Self-Expression at MMA GHSS Pallavaram

A Mini Zine creation session was conducted with 8th-grade students at MMA GHSS Pallavaram. The session introduced the concept of self-expression through zines, with themes focused on kindness, gratitude, hope, and resilience.

▶ Outcome

Students explored personal topics such as self-reflection and empathy, with many sharing their aspirations and how they plan to contribute to their communities. This activity enhanced their emotional awareness and demonstrated the importance of self-expression as a tool for emotional regulation.

▶ Musical Theater Workshop for Teachers at GHSS Thiruvanchery

A Musical Theatre Workshop was held for 6 teachers at GHSS Thiruvanchery, focusing on integrating music and drama to make learning more interactive and enjoyable.

▶ Outcome

Teachers reported a greater understanding of how to incorporate creative techniques in their classrooms to enhance student engagement and encourage empathy and emotional expression. The workshop proved effective in equipping teachers with tools to make their lessons more dynamic and inclusive.

▶ Volunteer Engagement Session at GGHSS Kamaraj Nagar

A Volunteer Engagement Session took place with 26 students from Class 8C at GGHSS Kamaraj Nagar, focusing on key life skills: resilience, empathy, and creative thinking.

▶ Outcome

Students participated in activities like designing fantasy creatures, creating storyboards on resilience, and building a "Tree of Empathy", which nurtured their teamwork and emotional awareness. The session left students with a deeper understanding of resilience and empathy, and they were eager to apply these lessons in their everyday lives.



Teacher Testimonial

"In this Musical Theatre workshop, the emotion expression activity was really impactful. It showed me how creative methods can help reveal children's emotions and create a more empathetic classroom. I'm thankful to Nalandaway for organising such a meaningful session. This experience has inspired me to use these techniques to make learning more enjoyable for my students."

504

sessions completed across 60 classrooms

5

Government schools impacted in Chengalpattu and Thiruvallur districts

2

main themes: Emotional Awareness and Healthy Social Environment

4

day art workshop at GHSS Thiruvanchery

26

students at GGHSS Kamaraj Nagar engaged in the Volunteer Session

Empowering Youth through Digital Pedagogies: UNESCO 2.0

The UNESCO 2.0 project has made waves in helping adolescent learners develop Social Emotional Learning (SEL) skills, gain critical insights on Climate Change, and reflect on their emotions surrounding these global challenges. By combining video games with educational materials, the project empowered students to take action and deepen their understanding of biodiversity and human well-being, equipping them with both emotional intelligence and practical knowledge for a changing world.

▶ TA Well-being Workshop: Building Skills for Emotional Support in the Classroom

Workshops Enhance Teaching Assistants' Capacity to Support Students
On 23rd December 2025, a 3-hour Well-being Workshop was held for Teaching Assistants (TAs) across UNESCO 2.0 (Chennai) and Kalakriti (Delhi). Facilitated by Shravani, Nalandaway's well-being expert, the session equipped TAs with essential skills to support students emotionally through:

- Mental Health & Well-being Concepts
- SEL Lens Observation using the KASH framework
- Psychological First Aid training
- Role-playing Activities for practical experience



➤ **Outcomes**

TAs left the workshop better prepared to observe and respond to the emotional needs of students, ensuring they can foster a supportive learning environment.

➤ **UNESCO 2.0 Project Surpasses Milestones, Concludes with Remarkable Results**

18,626 Enrolments and 6,847 Certifications Mark Project Success

The UNESCO 2.0 project wrapped up on January 31, 2025, achieving outstanding results:

18,626

enrollments – exceeding the initial target of 15,000

6,847

certifications awarded to students

This success was driven by

- Collaborative Efforts: Ongoing support from Teaching Assistants, interns, and school leaders was integral.
- Efficient Execution: Consistent follow-ups and coordination ensured seamless implementation across schools.



➤ **Well-being and Skilling of Children in Child Care Institutions (CCI), Tamil Nadu: Inspiring Care-Leaving Adolescents**

➤ **Collaborative Effort Guides 167 Care-Leavers Towards a Brighter Future**

In partnership with the Department of Children Welfare and Special Services (DCWSS), the Career Guidance & Future Readiness Camp 2024 empowered 167 care-leaving adolescents and 30 CCI staff from 28 Child Care Institutions (CCIs) across Tamil Nadu.

Held at PSG Institution, Coimbatore, the two-day camp equipped participants with career insights, resilience-building tools, and confidence to navigate life beyond CCIs.

➤ **Freedom, Responsibility & Career Roadmaps**

The camp opened with “Joy of Transitioning”, where participants reflected on their personal growth. ‘Evidence’ Kathir, a human rights advocate, shared his journey, stressing the power of education. The Freedom vs. Autonomy session helped them realise that true freedom lies in making informed choices.

➤ **Exploring Possibilities & Personal Growth**

On Day 2, career counsellor Ms Suganya introduced scholarships, career pathways, and entrepreneurship. Through the 6-Part Storyboard Exercise, adolescents visualised dreams of becoming doctors, IAS officers, and designers, discovering their inner strength.

A Personalised Career Chart helped clarify their aspirations, while the Naan Mudhalvan Book provided insights into college courses across Tamil Nadu.

The camp fostered hope, direction, and determination, ensuring these young minds step into the future with confidence.



Voices from the Camp

“I used to be a short-tempered person, but through this activity, I reflected on my behaviour and saw how much I’ve changed since coming to the CCI.”

“Kathir sir’s speech was an eye-opener for me. I never knew the full story of society’s challenges, and now I know I will never give up on education.”

Voices from the Camp

- “Before coming to the camp, I only knew about a few courses like doctor, IAS, and engineering. But now, I understand how important skill development is.”
- “During the activity, I understood my goal and my support system. It helped me prepare to handle obstacles and achieve my dreams.”
- “I used to doubt myself when speaking to new people, but after this camp, I feel confident and ready to face new environments.”

➤ **Shining Stars: Panel Discussion Inspires with Real-Life Success Stories**

Esakki Ammal, a B.Com student, spoke about overcoming the challenge of transitioning from Tamil-medium education to an English-speaking college, urging everyone to ask for help when needed:

“There are always people ready to support us; we just need to reach out.”

Mahalakshmi, a BA Creative Tamil student, shared her journey of stepping out of her comfort zone, publishing a book, and embracing new opportunities:

“Opportunities don’t wait. How we embrace them shapes who we become.”

Manoj, a BBA student, shared his dream of starting a travel company, emphasising how education has given him the tools to succeed:

“Education isn’t just knowledge; it’s the foundation for building a successful business.”

➤ **Mentoring Session: Emotional Well-Being and Self-Expression for Care-Leavers**

Ms Chaitali, a counsellor and psychologist, conducted mentoring sessions focusing on emotional well-being, friendships, and self-expression for the care-leavers. She emphasised the importance of resilience, self-confidence, and healthy relationships, providing guidance to help them navigate life’s challenges in a supportive environment.



Project Sakhi: Empowering Young Lives Across India

Chennai: A Celebration of Hope, Health, and Sports

- **Sakhi Annual Event: Building Bonds of Sisterhood**
A three-day gathering in December centred on Hope, Love, and Sisterhood empowered adolescent girls through discussions on Unity, Relationships, and Ambitions. The event concluded with a heartfelt farewell, leaving the participants inspired and connected.
- **Health Camp Spotlights Urgent Medical Needs**
In collaboration with the Madras Rotary Club and Child Trust Hospital, a health camp provided eye, dental, paediatric, and gynaecology check-ups. Many girls received crucial early diagnoses, underscoring the need for continued healthcare access.
- **Pongal Festivities Bring Joy and Creativity**
Traditional games, rangoli contests, and music marked the celebrations, fostering teamwork and cultural pride. The event wrapped up with prize distributions and book gifts, reinforcing the joy of learning.
- **Kicking Off a Passion for Football**
Sakhi girls took part in FC Madras' Football Carnival in Chengalpattu, engaging in Zumba, football drills, and yoga. The experience sparked enthusiasm for sports and active living.



Bangalore: Strengthening Skills and Self-Confidence

- **Parents Witness Transformations in Their Daughters**
A parent workshop highlighted how Sakhi girls have gained resilience, social skills, and academic progress, offering valuable parenting insights.
- **Sakhi Girls Shine at State-Level Karate Championship**
For the first time, Sakhi participants competed at the State Karate Competition, winning medals and proving their growing confidence and perseverance.
- **Financial and Digital Literacy for Future Independence**
Workshops by HDFC Bank and Indus Valley Degree College equipped girls with banking and digital safety skills, preparing them for real-world challenges.
- **Exploring the Universe: A Visit to Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium**
A trip to the planetarium sparked curiosity in space and science, expanding horizons and inspiring dreams of STEM careers.
- **Sakhi Annual Event: A Powerful Celebration of Family and Leadership**
 - Day 1: Interactive games and leadership activities reinforced teamwork and self-confidence.
 - Day 2: A cultural showcase celebrated family bonds, featuring a moving drama on early child marriage, leaving a lasting impact on parents and children alike.



Hyderabad: Letters, Learning, and Laughter

- **Dear Santa: Dreams Poured onto Paper**
A letter-writing activity encouraged children to express hopes and holiday wishes, nurturing creativity and self-reflection.
- **Christmas Celebration Spreads Cheer**
The festive event was filled with joy, laughter, and heartfelt wishes, strengthening the spirit of community and belonging.
- **Art for a Cause: Republic Day Poster-Making with Volunteers**
Sakhi girls collaborated with Global Logic volunteers to create patriotic posters, deepening their connection to national identity while fostering meaningful mentorship.



Pune: Science and Success in Focus

- **Hands-On Science at Pimpri Chinchwad Science Park**
An interactive exposure visit to the science park deepened curiosity in Space, Energy, and Climate Change, inspiring interest in STEM fields.
- **Mastering Math & Science for Exam Success**
A dedicated session boosted SSC Board students' confidence in tackling exam challenges, equipping them with problem-solving strategies.



Delhi: Learning, Leadership, and Life-Saving Skills

- **Future Scientists Explore the National Science Centre**
Kalkaji schoolgirls explored interactive exhibits on Human Biology, Technology, and Prehistoric Life, strengthening their interest in STEM careers and deepening teacher-student relationships.
- **Life-Saving Lessons: First Aid & CPR Training**
A session by Billion Hearts Beating Foundation equipped girls with CPR skills, AED machine use, and first aid techniques, empowering them with critical emergency response abilities.
- **Health Camp Provides Vital Early Interventions**
In collaboration with Billion Hearts Beating Foundation, a health camp offered individual consultations, ensuring girls receive timely medical care.
- **Taking the Stage: A Performance on Women's Empowerment**
Sakhi girls from Ambedkar Nagar took part in their School Annual Day, presenting a thought-provoking dance on gender stereotypes and freedom, reinforcing teamwork, confidence, and self-expression.



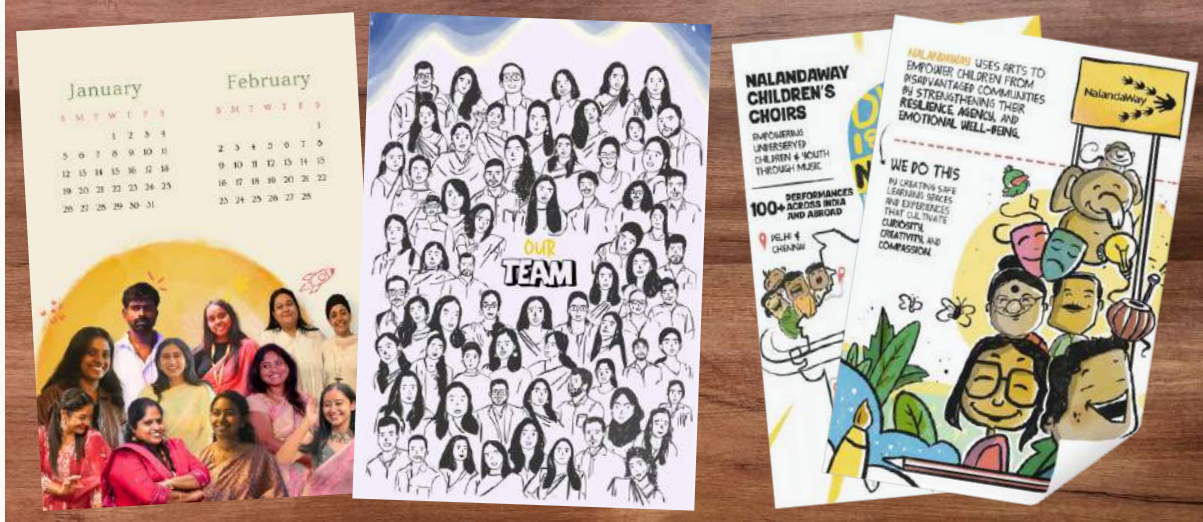
What's New

Fresh Off the Press: Our New Brochure & 2025 Calendar!

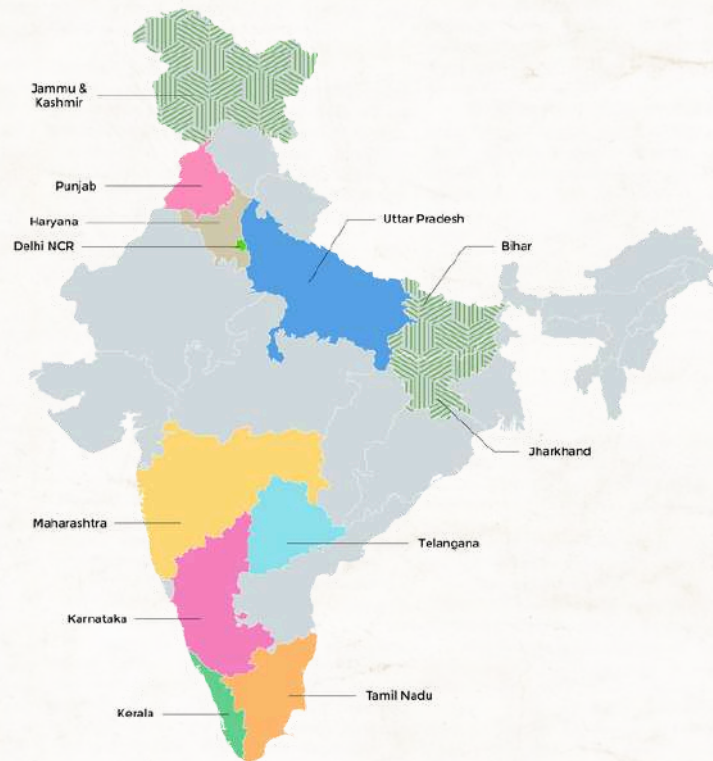
We're excited to introduce our new organisational brochure, capturing who we are, what we do, and the impact we create. Alongside it, our 2025 Calendar celebrates the people who make NalandaWay — the passionate team behind our work.



Scan the QR to explore!



OUR PRESENCE



Looking Ahead

“Another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing.”

– Arundhati Roy

The future isn't a distant dream. It's here, unfolding in small hands grasping paintbrushes, in voices learning to rise, in laughter echoing through classroom walls. We are proud of how far we've come, yet humbled by how much more there is to do. New ideas are bubbling. Possibilities stirring. The months ahead hold the promise of something waiting to bloom. And when it does, we hope you'll be there, standing with us — watching, believing, building. Because change doesn't arrive alone. It takes all of us.

OUR PARTNERS

