

WINDS OF WELL-BEING

October & November at NalandaWay

Performing on the world stage: The Chennai Children's Choir creating choral harmony with 20 countries



Chennai is running for change: Discover the inspiring individuals running in the Chennai Marathon to create an impact for NalandaWay!



Unseen to Unstoppable: Witness the strength and resilience of our Sakhi girls in our first Photography Exhibition!



Dear NalandaWay Community,

When we pause to think about our healthy, happy selves, what comes to mind? For one child in our Well-being of Children Using a Whole School Approach project, this is how they reflected:

"When Akka asked us to think about our healthy, happy selves, I thought about what makes me happiest and who I enjoy being with. I feel happiest when I'm with my friends, so I drew a picture of us together!"

How wonderful is that? This simple reflection captures how our well-being sessions are helping children connect with their feelings of safety, happiness, and health.

Every day, more children are discovering the importance of these moments through our projects.

We are excited to share this bi-monthly edition of our newsletter, combining highlights from October and November. As we transition to this new format, we look forward to bringing you closer to the impactful work happening across all our initiatives.

As many of you may know, we are proud to be one of the charity partners for the Freshworks Chennai Marathon in January 2025. We invite you to ring in the new year by running for us and joining our team in the spirit of giving, all in support of the incredible children of NalandaWay.

We can't wait to bring you more stories and updates in February 2025. Until then, we wish you all a very merry holiday season and a fantastic start to the new year.

Warm and joyful wishes,
The NalandaWay Team



Gutar Goo 5.0: Bonds, Joy, and Growth in Action

➤ Father Circle Meeting - Strengthening Family Bonds

The Gutar Goo team hosted Father Circle Meetings at Anganwadi Centers, where fathers bonded with their children through childhood games and group discussions, offering valuable parenting insights and fostering stronger family connections.



➤ Dussehra & Diwali Celebrations - Festive Fun at Anganwadi Centers

The Gutar Goo team celebrated Dussehra and Diwali at Anganwadi Centers with colourful activities. Children enjoyed colouring paper effigies of Ravana, creating rangoli patterns, and making diyas, infusing the celebrations with creativity, joy, and festive spirit.



➤ Art & Theatre Workshop - Talented Performances and Learning

The Gutar Goo team recently joined the "Chhupe Rustam" workshop at HCL Office, organised in collaboration with Chetna Foundation and NalandaWay Foundation. The event saw 60 children from Chetna Foundation's Nanhe Parinde Project showcasing their talent through songs and performances. The Gutar Goo team led to fun, interactive activities like Walking, Mirror, and Silent Theatre, fostering creativity and learning. The children's bright smiles and joyful energy highlighted the success of the event.



➤ Mega Training - Empowering Anganwadi Workers

The Mann ke Manjeere-2 workshop in Noida helped Anganwadi workers, helpers, and supervisors develop their skills in supporting children's sensory, physical, and emotional well-being through fun and hands-on activities.



NalandaWay Arts School (NAS): Months of Art and Kindness

➤ Baseline Research on English Proficiency

A baseline assessment was conducted across three NAS schools to evaluate students' confidence in spoken English. Using a rating scale, the team assessed 60 students, equally representing boys and girls. The project team, in collaboration with the R&I team, facilitated the assessment and collected the data effectively.



➤ Art Corner at CMS Pullapuram

The NAS team hosted an interactive art session for parents at CMS Pullapuram's vibrant Art Corner, marking their first engagement in this creative space.

The session saw the active participation of 15 parents. It began with an inspiring message from the school HM, who highlighted the personal benefits of art and encouraged regular use of the space.

The session focused on World Kindness Day, with parents engaging in a hands-on puppet-making activity. The event sparked joy and nostalgia.



Kanna Moochi: Enriching Early Education

Kanna Moochi, an initiative of the NalandaWay Foundation designed for Early Childhood Care and Education, operates in 20 Anganwadis in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Its purpose is to strengthen the foundation of education of children aged 3-6 years through storytelling and art.

➤ Kanna Moochi Training Programme Prepares Teaching Assistants for Impact

From October 1-4, 2024, the Kanna Moochi project conducted a comprehensive Training Programme for newly recruited Teaching Assistants (TAs) at Asha Nivas. The programme focused on early childhood development, integrating storytelling and art into lessons, and equipping TAs with practical skills for working with Anganwadi children.

➤ Monitoring Visits Show Positive Engagement in Anganwadis

Following ICDS approval, the Kanna Moochi project was successfully implemented in Anganwadis. During monitoring visits in October, TAs were observed conducting engaging sessions using storytelling, workbook activities, and interactive exercises, encouraging strong connections with children and community members.

➤ Monthly Mother Circle Meetings Strengthen Parent-Child Bonds

Mother Circle Meetings are held monthly across 20 centres, where mothers engage in warm-up activities, discussions, and workshops aimed at improving maternal well-being and child development. Parent Guideline Books were distributed to help mothers nurture positive relationships with their children.



Foundational Learning IV & V: Classrooms Inspired, Trainers Empowered

The Foundational Learning project, supported by Mouri Tech, is a collaboration between NalandaWay Foundation, the Department of Education, and the Greater Chennai Corporation (GCC). The programme focuses on enhancing literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional skills for Classes 4 and 5 students in government and GCC schools, bridging learning gaps and fostering holistic development.

➤ Teaching Assistants Trained to Inspire Joyful Classrooms

Newly recruited teaching assistants underwent a two-day training programme covering classroom management, NalandaWay's policies, social-emotional learning (SEL), and foundational curriculum techniques. Activities included mock lesson plans, skill development, and discussions on effective teaching strategies to enable joyful learning for Grades IV and V.

➤ Art Materials Distributed to Support SEL Activities

Art materials like origami sheets, crayons, and coloured clay were packed and distributed to CPS Okkiyam Thoraipakkam School. These resources will enhance SEL and health sessions, promoting creativity and emotional development among students.

➤ Baseline Survey Assesses Learning Levels

A baseline survey, using the ASER tool, assessed the learning levels of 218 students in Grades IV and V. The survey evaluated English and Maths skills, including reading fluency and numerical operations, to identify and address learning gaps effectively.

218

students assessed using ASER tools

Art materials packed for

2

grades to support SEL sessions

Human Resources:

A Season of Connection

➤ Workshop on Stress & Anxiety Offers Practical Coping Strategies

On October 10th, we marked Mental Health Day with an online workshop led by Akanksha Thakore, Practice Lead - Mental Well-being and SEL. The session focused on managing stress and maintaining balance, reinforcing the importance of mental well-being in our work lives.

➤ Team Celebrates Diwali by Dressing Up as Cinema Stars

Our Diwali celebration on October 30th was a festive hit! Team members dressed up as their favourite Indian cinema stars, bringing iconic Bollywood and Kollywood characters to life with vibrant energy and creativity. Remote teammates joined the fun by sharing their fabulous outfits online, creating a dazzling celebration filled with lights, laughter, and memorable performances.

➤ Team Bonds Over Childhood Photos in a Special Brews & Banter Call

On November 14th, for Children's Day, team members shared childhood photos during Brews and Banter, guessing who's who and reminiscing about fond memories, bringing lots of laughter and warmth.

Arts in Education: Leading Teachers and Trainers for Effective Learning

The Arts in Education (AIE) programme for students in standards 1-5, supported by Fidelity Investments, focuses on fostering joyful, age-appropriate art learning, enhancing art skills, and improving art appreciation. Through creative activities, the programme also aims to develop social-emotional competencies in young learners.

➤ Phase II Teacher Training – Enhancing Teaching Skills through Co-Facilitation

152 teachers participated in Phase II Teacher Training, where they gained new curriculum strategies focused on visual and theatre arts. The training emphasised co-facilitation, enabling teachers to promote an engaging learning environment and supporting the program's sustainability.

➤ Training for Trainers – Building Strong Classroom Management

The Training for Trainers programme equipped trainers with essential classroom management techniques. Key strategies covered included promoting positive behaviour, establishing clear expectations, and creating inclusive, engaging learning environments to enhance student participation.

New faces, same awesome team
spirit
- Welcome aboard!



Meharunisha S.
Associate - Projects



Swathi S.
Associate - Projects

Art Vandī: Creativity and Teamwork Take Centre Stage

Collaborative Art and Music Workshop – Empowering Creativity Through Art

Art Vandī in collaboration with the Well-being and Skilling of Children in Child Care Institutions project, visited the Children’s Home for girls in Dharmapuri, engaging 52 children. Over two days, the children participated in a Family Tree Activity, painting self-portraits and adding them to a mural, which sparked creativity and pride. On Day 2, they crafted musical instruments and composed a song about Art Vandī, culminating in a lively performance.



Storytelling and Art at the Boys Home

At the Boys Home, children participated in a storytelling workshop, creating their own storybooks and characters. The second day focused on completing their artwork, enabling teamwork and creative expression.

Several children shared their experiences:

“ I painted my self-portrait, which I thought I couldn’t do. We worked together, shared colours, and finished without fighting. ”
- one student

Children shared how the activities empowered them, with one participant, usually passive, discovering a passion for painting. The Family Tree Activity also gave them a sense of belonging and pride.

Achievements and Future Opportunities

The workshop successfully promoted creativity, teamwork, and self-expression. Positive feedback from participants suggests the need for more workshops in the future to continue encouraging creativity.

52
children participated

2
days of activities for boys/girls



Research & Impact: Capacity Building for MEL Practices

Launching the Second Batch of Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning E-Learning Course – Empowering Early-Career Professionals

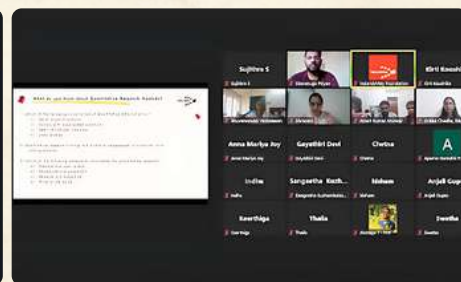
The Research and Impact (R&I) team successfully launched the second batch of the e-learning course on ‘Fundamentals of Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL)’ aimed at enhancing capacity-building in MEL practices. With 34 participants, including 27 NalandaWay team members and 8 external attendees, the course covers essential topics such as research basics, ethical considerations, literature review, and data collection techniques.

Interactive Sessions and Practical Learning

Spanning eight sessions, the course includes group activities and expert-led discussions on data analysis, narrative writing, and more. The course will conclude with a webinar, ‘Practitioners’ Perspectives: MEL in the Development Sector’, offering insights from industry experts. This initiative is designed to foster collaboration, empower participants, and improve the assessment and impact of development projects.

Achieving Professional Growth and Impact

Through this initiative, NalandaWay Foundation contributes to the professional development of emerging practitioners, strengthening evidence-based approaches for greater impact in the development sector.



34
participants
27 NalandaWay + 8 external

8
interactive sessions

Expert webinar on MEL in the Development Sector in December 2024

Mannotsava: National Mental Health Festival – A Reflection on Well-Being and Resilience

The team had the privilege of attending Mannotsava: National Mental Health Festival, held at the NIMHANS Convention Centre in Bangalore on the 26th and 27th of October. Organised by Rohini Nilekani Philanthropy and the National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS), the two-day event provided a rich and insightful journey into diverse mental health topics through workshops, panel discussions, and interactive sessions.

Keynote Speakers and Thought Leadership

The festival featured keynote addresses from influential speakers, including Rohini Nilekani and Rahul Dravid, who shared their reflections on themes such as empathy, resilience, and well-being. A key takeaway from their talks was the importance of disconnecting one’s identity from professional roles to achieve a more balanced and fulfilling life.

Dr Shyam Bhat, Psychiatrist and Chairperson of the Live Love Laugh Foundation, offered a refreshing perspective with his Integral Self approach to psychotherapy, blending Eastern wisdom with Western scientific practices.

Exploring Mental Health Across Life Stages

The event was designed to be comprehensive, offering breakout sessions tailored to different developmental stages and age groups. Focused discussions on issues such as addiction, ADHD, and strategies for engaging with Gen-Z added depth to the conversations. Experiential workshops explored the use of various art forms, including theatre, clay, visual art, and poetry, as tools for promoting mental well-being.



➤ **Mental Health Beyond the Health Sector**

A parallel, invite-only track for development-sector professionals brought together NGO leaders, funders, policy-makers, and experts. This track highlighted the need to integrate mental health considerations across all sectors, rather than restricting them solely to health-focused programming and funding.

➤ **Workshops for Personal and Professional Resilience**

Workshops such as Founder’s Burnout and Laugh, Heal, Repeat: The Art of Medical Clowning offered practical strategies for managing mental health challenges and promoting resilience. Participants also had the opportunity to engage with mindfulness practices, including the meditative art of creating Enzo’s, and explored the therapeutic potential of ecopsychology through sessions reconnecting individuals with nature.

➤ **Addressing Women’s and Adolescent Mental Health**

Panels focused on women’s mental health and adolescent well-being shed light on systemic approaches to creating supportive, stigma-free environments. These discussions highlighted the importance of a holistic, community-driven approach to mental health that empowers individuals across all life stages.

➤ **A Celebration of Creativity and Community**

The festival also featured stalls from the Positive Psychology Centre at NIMHANS, along with other partners working in the mental health space. These stalls offered unique resources and engagement opportunities, further emphasising the role of creativity and community in supporting mental well-being.

➤ **A Journey of Growth**

Mannotsava served as a powerful reminder that mental health is not merely an individual journey but a collective endeavour, one that involves growth, understanding, and mutual support. The team left the festival feeling inspired by the innovative, sensitive, and practical approaches to mental health, reaffirming our commitment to integrating these insights into our work for a more resilient and supportive future.



Youth Co-Production for Sustainable Engagement and Empowerment in Health (YiPEE): A Haven for Well-being

➤ **Parents, Teachers, and Students Unite at Together Action Board (TAB) Events**

TAB Events 2 and 3 in October and November brought parents, teachers, and students together for activities like the Hope Tree, Gratitude Crown, and Gratitude Kindness Hope (GKH) role-playing. These events strengthened collaboration and showcased creative solutions for mental health and kindness.

➤ **Teachers Reflect and Recharge**

Workshops on November 8th and 18th helped 36 teachers explore personal strengths and envision growth. Activities like writing letters to their future selves reinforced the importance of self-care.

➤ **Students Embrace Mindfulness**

Classroom sessions in 15 schools empowered students with techniques like visual storytelling and meditation, helping them manage emotions and reframe challenges with kindness and hope. The sessions featured activities like 'Visual Storytelling and Starfish,' where students creatively interpreted images, exploring different perspectives and possibilities. This helped them develop a practical technique to manage anxiety, anger, and other challenging emotions.

2

TAB events with wide stakeholder participation



36

teachers engaged in reflective workshops



15

schools benefited from classroom sessions

The 'Power to Transform' activity enabled students to reframe difficult situations, recognising and leveraging kindness, gratitude, and hope to overcome obstacles.

Additionally, the 'Storm Meditation' activity increased students' capacity to let go of past difficulties and future anxieties, promoting a more mindful approach to challenges.

Project Punjab CCI: Giving Wings Through Art and Therapy



➤ **Children’s Day Celebration – ‘Khushiyon ki Fuar’ (Fountain of Happiness)**

On November 14th, 2024, the Gandhi Vanita Ashram, Jalandhar, hosted its first-ever Art Exhibition cum Children’s Day Celebration. The event, titled ‘Khushiyon ki Fuar,’ featured more than 80 girls showcasing their creativity through artworks like thread paintings, mosaic art, and vibrant decorations. With 16 group and solo performances, the event empowered the children, building confidence, pride, and a sense of unity through art and performance.

➤ **‘Patakha Guddi’ Art & Theatre Camp – Nurturing Emotional Well-being**

The Patakha Guddi Art & Theatre Camp held at the Girls in Transition Home, engaged 32 girls, including young mothers, in a unique blend of art-based therapy and self-discovery. Mask-making, skits, and dance allowed the girls to express themselves while reflecting on themes of transformation.

The camp sparked change: a 14-year-old girl, initially feeling trapped by her circumstances, returned home to continue her studies. Another girl, who had never painted, decorated her bedside with watercolours, creating a sense of belonging. These workshops empowered the girls to prioritise their futures, build confidence, and embrace self-discovery, using art and theatre as tools for personal growth.

➤ **Staff Training – Addressing Psychosocial Needs of Children and Adolescents**

NalandaWay Foundation conducted a training session for staff from Child Care Institutions (CCIs) in Jalandhar and Ludhiana, focusing on addressing the psychosocial needs of children and adolescents. Led by Dr Bindiya Narang, the training emphasised trauma-informed care and empathy-based strategies. Participants engaged in role-play and discussions around handling trauma, anxiety, and behavioural issues to provide better emotional support for children facing difficult circumstances.

Project Sakhi: A New Dawn through Creativity & Awareness

▶ 'She Rises: Unseen to Unstoppable' Exhibition Celebrates Sakhi Girls' Journeys

In November, the Perambur Sr. cohort's journey was showcased through the powerful photo exhibition, 'She Rises: Unseen to Unstoppable', featuring visuals of resilience and growth. With over 100 visitors, the event highlighted the Sakhi project's impact, celebrating the courage, transformation, and invincible spirit of adolescent girls as they rise above challenges and claim their place in the world. Inspiring stories of the Sakhi girls and their families were shared, showcasing the strength and progress of these young individuals.



▶ Diwali Celebrations make way for Creativity and Joy

To celebrate Diwali, we distributed dry fruit kits and hosted art activities like diya painting and lantern making. The children's creations added to the festive spirit, creating lasting memories.

▶ Dreaming for the Stars: Exposure Visit to Birla Science Museum

The Hyderabad cohort explored centuries-old artefacts, paintings, and sculptures at the Birla Science Museum. The visit included practical demonstrations of scientific concepts, sparking curiosity and hands-on learning.

▶ World Mental Health Day: Raising Awareness with Art and Activity

In Bangalore, our Sakhi children celebrated Mental Health Day with energising exercises, a session on mental well-being, and discussions on stress management. The day concluded with an art-based activity, where children creatively illustrated their emotions and shared their artwork.



▶ Menstrual Hygiene Literacy Camp Empowers 86 Children

In partnership with the PINKISHE Foundation, we hosted a Menstrual Hygiene Literacy Camp for 86 children, debunking myths and challenging taboos. Menstrual kits were distributed, empowering girls with the knowledge and resources to manage their health confidently.

▶ Mime Performance Raises Awareness of POCSO

A powerful mime performance by Perambur Jr. students raised awareness about the POCSO Act, creatively addressing the impact of abuse and the importance of safety through storytelling and shadow play.

▶ Mental Health Day Workshops for Perambur Jr. and Choolai

Mental Health Day was marked with workshops led by experts from the Ookam Foundation. Children engaged in activities like Pop the Weasel and Magic Doll to express their emotions. Art therapy sessions provided opportunities for creative expression and emotional healing.



▶ Sakhi Choolai: Diwali Art Session Celebrates Creativity

During Diwali, children at Sakhi Choolai crafted beautiful wall-hanging diya holders using wood, mirrors, and paints. The activity was filled with excitement, and each child created a unique piece of festive decor.

▶ Teacher Workshop Deepens Understanding of Adolescent Needs

A teacher workshop in Perambur Jr. focused on building rapport with educators and deepening their understanding of adolescent challenges. Interactive activities and discussions provided strategies to support youth through this critical life stage.

▶ Health Camp in Pune Prioritises Sakhi Wellbeing

In collaboration with Surya Sahyadri Hospital, a health camp in Doctor Vasantdada Patil Madhyamik Vidyaniketan School, Shukravar Peth, Pune offered free check-ups (BP, sugar, height, weight, ECG) and provided advice on nutrition and wellness. Menstrual kits were also distributed to Sakhi participants.

86

children participated in
Menstrual Hygiene
Literacy Camp

100+

attendees at the Sakhi
Photo Exhibition

Kalakriti: Art Exhibitions and Events Celebrating Creativity

▶ Tigri Ki Kalakriti and EX Squared Art Exhibitions Attract 200+ Participants

In October, Kalakriti hosted Tigri Ki Kalakriti, a celebration of art and community, featuring 3D crafts, a Kindness Garden of painted stones, and interactive spaces like clay modelling and diya painting. Over 200 attendees, including families, participated enthusiastically, guided by the talented children from Kalakriti's Visual Arts sessions.

At EX Squared India Pvt. Ltd., the second exhibition immersed visitors in the festive spirit of Diwali, offering hands-on art activities that encouraged creativity and connection, further highlighting the children's dedication and talent.



▶ 'Speak Up Showcase' Empowers Children with Confidence in Public Speaking

The Speak Up Showcase at Kalakriti provided children from the Spoken English classes a platform to shine. Through poems, role-plays, and object descriptions, the children impressed their parents, who proudly witnessed their growth. Interactive activities like storytelling and Pictionary brought families together, leaving everyone inspired by the children's confidence and skills.

▶ Delhi Children's Choir PTM Creates Strong Parent-Teacher Collaboration and Recognition

The Parents-Teacher Meeting (PTM) for Delhi Children's Choir (DCC) was held at the Kiran Nadar Museum of Art (KNMA), Saket. The event saw 110+ parents attending, where DCC children showcased their musical talent through impressive performances. The event also featured a special performance by guitar class students, alongside engaging discussions and games. Parents had the opportunity to engage in one-on-one discussions with teachers, celebrating their children's progress. The day ended with the children receiving certificates acknowledging their accomplishments.



Empowering Social Emotional Learning through Digital Pedagogies: UNESCO 2.0

UNESCO 2.0 helps adolescents develop SEL skills, understand climate change, and manage their emotions around it. Combining video games with educational content, the programme empowers them to take action and deepens their knowledge of biodiversity and human well-being.

Phase II Achieves Record Enrolments and Certifications

Phase II exceeded expectations with 15,001 enrolments and 2,480 certifications, surpassing the target of 7,500 enrolments and 1,500 certifications. The programme reached over 1,300 students across 13 Greater Chennai Corporation schools, despite challenges posed by academic schedules. Plans are underway to extend the rollout to the remaining five schools post-quarterly exams.

Workshops Impact SOS Children's Homes

Workshops conducted during Puja holidays reached 92 children across Nagapattinam, Pondicherry, and Tambaram. The initiative, praised by SOS Children's Home, was well-received and proved to be a meaningful experience for both the children and teacher assistants.

Reaffirming Child Protection Policies (CPP)

NalandaWay is deeply committed to child protection and safety. Recently, the organisation strengthened this commitment by reviewing its policies with all teams and reaffirming its dedication to the Child Protection Policy (CPP). The teams also took the CPP oath, pledging to uphold its principles.

15,001

enrolments

2480

certificates generated as of
November 2024

92

children benefited from workshops in
SOS homes across three locations

13

schools onboarded in phase II



Chennai Children's Choir: Voices Find a 'Global' Venue

Workshop for Students – Enhancing Vocal Skills and Building Teamwork

From October 1-6, 2024, the Chennai Children's Choir (CCC) hosted a six-day workshop designed to enhance the students' vocal techniques, deepen their understanding of music theory, and foster group dynamics. Professional facilitators guided the students in practising new compositions and refining their existing pieces, preparing them for future performances. The workshop also included the Parents Term 1 meeting, where parents were engaged in the progress of their children's musical journey.

Recording for Global Choir Video – Showcasing Talent on the World Stage

On October 10, 2024, CCC students participated in an audio recording session for a global choir video project, harmonising their voices with dedication. Later, on October 24, 2024, the students recorded the video performance, showcasing their passion and energy as they sang in unison. This performance will be part of a global choir video, highlighting their hard work and commitment on an international stage.

Looking Ahead – Future Performances and Growth

As the second term progresses, the CCC team continues to prepare for upcoming performances, including the Prayer for Peace programmes in schools and public venues. The students are also refining their skills in preparation for the exciting performances ahead.



UNICEF - Adolescent Well-being and Life Skills Programme

Secretary Approves Shift to Teacher-Led, Offline Model for Emotional Well-being Programme

The Secretary convened a meeting with content partners of the Emotional Well-being Programme to discuss course revisions and content dissemination. NalandaWay presented summaries of Tamil-translated videos to provide insights into the content's origin. Following an in-depth discussion, the decision was made to revise Phase 2 and implement a teacher-led, offline model due to the lack of high-tech labs. Sessions will now focus on teacher-driven activities rather than an online portal.

TNSCERT and NalandaWay Team Collaborate to Revise Content

After the meeting, the TNSCERT team, supported by NalandaWay, began adapting content for the new model. NalandaWay associates brainstormed additional activities to integrate into the revised programme. The Secretary proposed adding a Thirukural (Tamil moral scripture) to the teacher's notes, to be sent as a PDF with video links. The content will be reviewed collectively by DIET faculty to ensure consistency.

New Presentation Format for Teacher Engagement

Mr Swaminathan, JD, suggested developing a presentation format for teachers, making the content more accessible and engaging for students. DIET faculty are currently working on making these presentations user-friendly.

UNICEF Education Chief Visits Lady Willingdon School to Observe Programme

Ms Akila Radhakrishnan, Social Policy Specialist at UNICEF, requested a visit for Ms Sadhana Pandey, UNICEF Education Chief, to observe the Emotional Well-being Programme in action at Lady Willingdon School in Chennai. In preparation, NalandaWay refreshed the Adolescent Well-being course and introduced the 'Ready Joot' card game, which was implemented in urban communities in 2022.

Successful School Visit and Programme Presentation

The visit was executed smoothly, with interactions between UNICEF representatives, DIET faculty, teachers, students, and NalandaWay team members. Sriram V, CEO of NalandaWay Foundation, presented the programme to the Education Chief and attendees, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of its impact.



Well-being of Children Using a Whole School Approach (HCL Wellbeing): Emotional Growth Through Art and Storytelling

Wellbeing Sessions Launched for 3,000 Children

NalandaWay is excited to launch well-being sessions for 3,000 children aged 11–15 across five government schools in Chengalpattu and Tiruvallur districts, and Chennai. Through a creative blend of art, storytelling, and musical theatre, the initiative aims to instill hope, gratitude, and kindness, while developing essential life skills and social-emotional competencies.

NalandaWay Combines Art, Storytelling, and Musical Theater for Student Wellbeing

The well-being sessions centred on creating a safe and self-aware environment, and focus on themes that encourage self-reflection and personal growth. Activities like drawing and journaling help children recognise their sources of joy, building a sense of security and self-awareness.

253 Wellbeing Sessions Completed Across 58 Classrooms

As of November, 253 wellbeing sessions have been conducted across 58 classrooms, helping children develop a deeper understanding of themselves. An 8th-grade student shared, “I realised I feel happy when I am with my friends, so I drew a picture of myself surrounded by them.”

Teachers Trained and Engaged in Innovative Wellbeing Program at Project Orientation

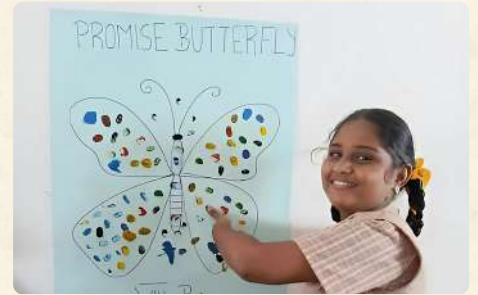
A comprehensive orientation session was held for 16 teachers, 3 headmasters, and 5 assistant headmasters to outline the project’s objectives and teaching strategies. Teachers were pleasantly surprised by the children’s creativity and the positive impact of warm-up activities on classroom focus.

Hope Advisory Board Established to Ensure Long-Term Success of Wellbeing Initiative

To support the programme’s sustained impact, NalandaWay has set up the Hope Advisory Board, which will hold bimonthly meetings to address emerging concerns and ensure smooth implementation and collaboration.

Art Vandis Brings Creativity On the Move with Storybook-Making Workshop at Pallavaram School

In collaboration with NalandaWay’s Art Vandis project, a four-day storybook-making workshop was conducted at MMA Government Higher Secondary School, Pallavaram. Grades 6-8 students collaborated to create, illustrate, and design their own stories, promoting creativity, teamwork, and communication. The children’s inspiring storybooks left a lasting impression on both the participants and staff.



3000

children engaged

253

wellbeing sessions in

58

classrooms

16

teachers

3

headmasters

5

assistant headmasters

trained

4

day storybook workshop in

1

school

Wellbeing and Skilling of Children in Child Care Institutions: Promoting Physical and Emotional Health

Physical Health Workshops Encourage Healthy Habits

Interactive workshops raised awareness about healthy lifestyle choices, including exercise, sleep, and nutrition. Children actively participated in morning exercises, realising the importance of regular physical activity for their overall well-being.

“ I usually feel too lazy to participate in morning exercises because I need to wake up early. But now I realise the importance of exercise and its benefits for my overall well-being. I truly cherish this opportunity to exercise in the morning, and from now on, I will make sure not to skip it. ”
- one student

Functional English Sessions Ignite Learning Interest

Through creative activities like planning imaginary trips and roleplays, children learned travel-related vocabulary and practised real-life English scenarios. The sessions created excitement among children, with several expressing increased interest in learning English and improving their skills.

“ After the children were introduced to the Functional English sessions, I observed a visible change among a few children which really made me happy. Students started showing a lot more interest in learning English. As I visit them during free hours, they come to me with the excitement and spirit of learning new words and understanding their meaning. They carefully pen down and practice it on their own. It’s amazing to see how motivated they are! ”
- A Teaching Assistant

Meeting the Care Leavers: Guidance for a Confident Future

Personalised Sessions Empower Care Leavers

We visited 85 young people, offering personalised guidance and educational support through in-depth conversations and providing educational materials like books and stationery. The one-on-one interactions addressed emotional needs and practical challenges in their learning journeys.

Language Sessions Build Confidence for College Success

Language sessions focused on improving English skills for care leavers, helping them overcome barriers and gain confidence in both academic and social settings.

“ I didn’t know how to read or write in English before. These online English classes have taught me the basics, and it’s already helping me in my college studies. I’m feeling more confident and look forward to learning more in the coming weeks. ”
- A careleaver

➤ **Mentoring Sessions Guide Care Leavers Toward Career Goals**

A mentoring session led by Ms Chaitali, counsellor-psychologist, focused on career guidance and emotional support for 7 care leavers. The session aimed to align their interests with career paths, helping them navigate their challenges and aspirations, with plans to expand the program in the future.



85

care leavers engaged

32 & 22

girls & boys
in Dharmapuri art workshop

7

care leavers attended mentoring sessions

Kanna Mucche: Nurturing Growth in Early Childhood

➤ **AWW Training Empowers Anganwadi Teachers & Helpers**

On November 20-21, 2024, the Kanna Mucche project hosted a workshop titled “Together, Let’s Nurture the Future” for Anganwadi teachers and helpers at Hoskote and K R Puram, Bangalore. With 23 teachers and 24 helpers participating,, the workshop focused on child development, effective teaching strategies, health & nutrition, and parental involvement. The feedback highlighted a sense of empowerment and recognition, especially for long-serving helpers who were attending training for the first time.



I felt that we are valued because we attended the training for the first time in our 30 years of experience in Anganwadi. I am very, very happy about that.

- Anganwadi Helper



Story From the field

Arya’s Journey to Connection

Arya, (name changed) a lively five-year-old from Jyothi Nagar Anganwadi was trapped in a world dominated by his mobile phone. His addiction was profound; he would lash out at anyone who tried to engage him, whether it was his parents, teachers, or classmates. This behaviour posed significant challenges for his parents and the staff at the Anganwadi. Arya’s isolation was not just affecting him; it was impacting his peers and creating a tense atmosphere in the classroom.

Arya was sceptical. The dependency on his mobile phone was strong, and he resisted any attempts to engage him in the activities. However, Kanna Mucche when audio stories began to unfold – filled with enchanting tales of adventure and friendship – something changed. Arya’s curiosity was piqued. He started to listen, and slowly, he began to participate.

One day, during a colouring session, Arya picked up a crayon and started to colour a picture in the Kanna Mucche Workbook. His teacher, noticing this breakthrough, encouraged him with gentle praise. Arya’s eyes lit up as he discovered the joy of expressing himself through art.

The once-isolated boy began to show interest in group activities, laughing and sharing his creations with classmates. The transformation was palpable; he was the angry child who pushed others away but a budding artist eager to connect.

His mother, witnessing this change at home, was overwhelmed with emotion. One afternoon, she visited the Anganwadi and saw Arya happily colouring alongside his friends. Tears filled her eyes as she expressed her gratitude to the teacher, who had shown kindness and patience to her son. “Thank you for believing in him,” she said, her voice trembling with relief. “I never thought I would see him this happy again.”

As Arya continued to engage with his peers and explore his creativity, the Anganwadi became a place of healing and growth for him. The project “Kanna Mucche” is not only helping Arya manage his behaviour but also rekindled his relationships with his classmates and family. Through storytelling and art, Arya found a way to connect with the world around him, transforming his life one colour at a time.



World Kindness Day & Other Celebrations Promote Community Spirit

In November, World Kindness Day, Children’s Day, and Toilet Day were celebrated with a range of interactive activities like storytelling, games, and drawing competitions. These events aimed to instil kindness, boost confidence, and promote hygiene among the children. A Milk Day celebration focused on nutrition, featuring a “Milk Party” with flavoured milk varieties and engaging storytelling on health benefits.

International Day of Girl Child & Mental Health Awareness

On October 11th, children celebrated the International Day of the Girl Child with an oath-taking ceremony and rally promoting gender equality. On World Mental Health Day (Oct 10), sessions on yoga and meditation built mindfulness, with children displaying notable progress in focus and relaxation.



Run for Dreams, Empower Young Voices!

CHOOSE YOUR RUNNER!

Lakshmi



**Divya
Bharthi**



**Lakshmi
Sundar**



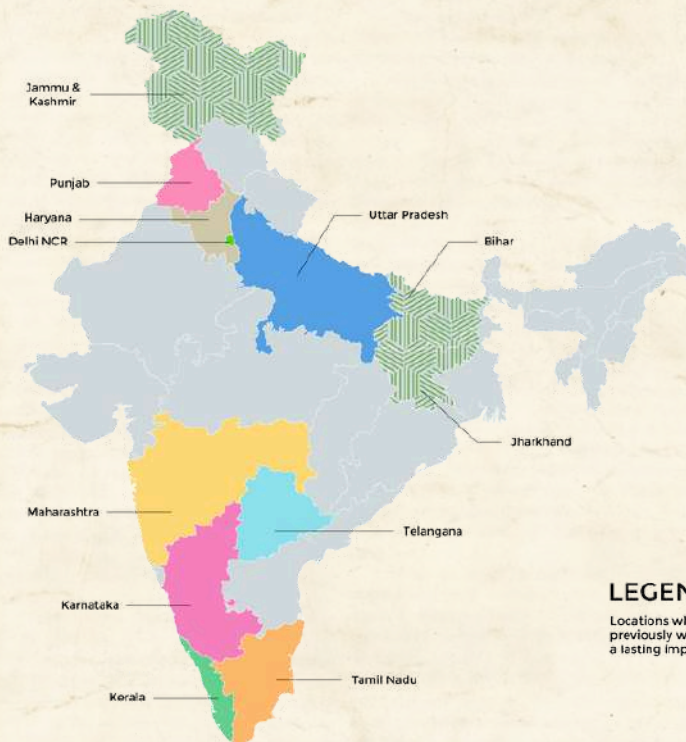
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OUR PRESENCE



LEGEND
Locations where we have previously worked and left a lasting impact.

OUR PARTNERS



Looking forward

The season of cheer reminds us of the endless possibilities that lie ahead. At NalandaWay, we dream of a future where every child walks into tomorrow with hope in their heart and confidence in their step. It's not just the joy of today we work for, but the promise of brighter days — every day, every year, throughout their lives.

“The future is always beginning now”, and with your support, we'll continue to nurture dreams, one child at a time. Thank you for being part of this journey toward a kinder, more hopeful world.

