BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK
BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), THRIKKAKARA

"THE COMMUNIQUE"

NEWS LETTER OF BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

APRIL 2025 | VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 4

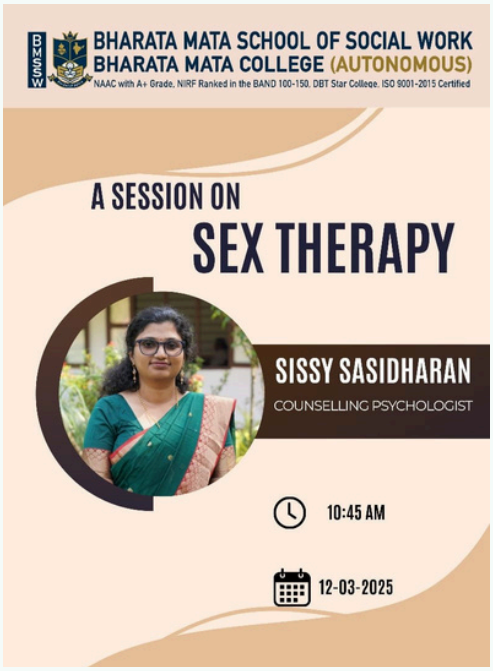
The Communiqué is the monthly newsletter of Bharata Mata School of Social Work, created by MSW students as a student-led initiative. It highlights the extension and outreach activities of the institution, the achievements of the department and students, and reflections from students. The newsletter also provides a summary of important day observances, seminars, webinars, and faculty development programs (FDPs) conducted in the previous month. Through this initiative, we aim to share updates, celebrate accomplishments, and keep everyone informed about the dynamic activities of our school.

CBT WORKSHOP



The Bharata Mata School of Social Work organized a two-day Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) workshop on March 17th and 18th, 2025, at the Seminar Hall, BMSSW. The workshop was facilitated by Fr. Dr. Biju Sebastian, a renowned counselor, psychologist, hypnosis specialist and Asst. Professor at Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, and was attended by MSW students. The sessions aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of CBT principles, therapeutic techniques, and practical applications in mental health practice. Key topics covered included the 5 P's of CBT, cognitive restructuring, core beliefs, automatic thoughts, and therapy increments. The first day focused on theoretical concepts, while the second day emphasized practical applications, including client problem exploration, strengths assessment, and therapeutic relationship-building. Discussions also included adverse childhood experiences, the 4Ds in psychiatry (distress, dysfunction, deviance, and danger), psychodynamic psychotherapy, and goal-setting in therapy. The workshop was interactive, with case studies and discussions bridging the gap between theory and practice. Students gained valuable insights into CBT interventions for anxiety, depression, and OCD while understanding the ethical responsibilities of therapists. The session concluded with an evaluation and certificate distribution. The engaging delivery, expert guidance, and structured approach made it a transformative learning experience, equipping students with essential skills for their future mental health practice.

SESSION ON SEX THERAPY



On March 12, 2025, the second-year MSW students of Bharata Mata School of Social Work, Thrikkakara, attended an insightful session on sex therapy conducted by counseling psychologist Sissy Sasidharan. The session, which began at 10:50 AM and extended until 2:30 PM due to active student participation, covered key topics such as types of therapy, the purpose and methods of sex therapy, the role of social workers in the field, and the importance of sex education in society.

The interactive session included a dedicated Q&A segment, allowing students to clarify doubts and engage in open discussions on sexual health and relationships. The session effectively highlighted the need for qualified professionals in sex therapy and emphasized the role of social workers in promoting awareness and education. The students expressed their gratitude to Sissy Sasidharan for her engaging and informative presentation, which enriched their understanding of this crucial aspect of mental health and well-being.

THEATRE WORKSHOP



The Play Patio's Social Canvas theatre workshop was successfully conducted on March 13, 14, and 15, 2025, at Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW). The sessions were led by esteemed workshop guides Praveen Narayan and Anirudh Raveendran. Play Patio, a theatre organization founded in 2019 by passionate theatre enthusiasts, has consistently focused on delivering impactful experiences through creative theatre frameworks. The workshop aimed to enhance participants' personal and social skills through innovative theater exercises, improvisational activities, and interactive games. Under the guidance of seasoned instructors, students engaged in experiential learning within a theatrical setting, fostering imagination, concentration, performance opportunities, and heightened sensory awareness.

The program also nurtured essential life skills that contribute to personal growth and social development. Through a structured yet dynamic approach, participants explored various theatre techniques, gaining confidence and self-expression while collaborating with peers. The engaging sessions were met with enthusiasm, and students thoroughly enjoyed the workshop, finding it a valuable and transformative experience. The event successfully fulfilled its objective of using theatre as a medium for skill-building and self-improvement, leaving a lasting impact on all attendees.

MoU SIGNING



Bharata Mata School of Social Work and Mehac Foundation have officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 12/03/2025, marking the beginning of a new partnership for collaborative social work initiatives. This milestone was achieved with the signing by Dr. Chitra Venkateswaran, Managing Trustee of Mehac Foundation.



Present at the signing were Rev. Fr. Dr. Abraham Oliapurath, Manager of Bharata Mata College; Dr. Elsa Mary Jacob, Head of the social work department; Meiya Varghese, professional social worker; Simmy Xavier, assistant professor, who played an instrumental part in its actualization and the Social Work Department faculty members, and operations lead of Mehac, Ms. Roshni Robins. This partnership underscores their dedication to impactful collaborations, ensuring continued contributions to mental health and community development through shared expertise and initiatives.

SOCIAL WORK DAY 2025



Bharata Mata School of Social Work commemorated World Social Work Day on March 18, 2025, under the theme "Strengthening Intergenerational Solidarity for Enduring Wellbeing." The event emphasized the importance of fostering connections across generations through care and respect.

As part of the celebration, social work students took the Social Work Day pledge in the presence of faculty and peers. The observance extends over a week, featuring community outreach activities such as awareness programs and street plays. These initiatives aim to engage the public in discussions on intergenerational support and social responsibility. Through these efforts, the institution reinforces its commitment to social work principles and community engagement

ANTI – DRUG AWARENESS CAMPAIGN



The Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW) hosted a powerful Anti-Drug Awareness Campaign as part of World Social Work Day celebrations, bringing together law enforcement officers, social workers, faculty, students, and community leaders. The event was inaugurated by ACP Jayakumar C, 40th Division Councilor Ms. Mini, HOD Dr. Elsa Mary Jacob, and Program Coordinator Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip. A thought-provoking mime by students highlighted the dangers of drug addiction, followed by impactful speeches from ACP Jayakumar C, MSW student Edwin, and Fathimathu Sharafiya on the rising drug crisis in Kerala. A candlelight ceremony saw participants take an oath to stay drug-free, and Dr. MP Antony, Working President of KAPS, delivered a felicitation speech. The campaign received wide media coverage from Flowers 24 News, Mathrubhumi, and Manorama News, reinforcing BMSSW's commitment to promoting community-based solutions against substance abuse.



BOARD OF STUDIES MEETING

The Board of Studies meeting of Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW) was held on March 8, 2025. the meeting was chaired by Dr. Elsa Mary Jacob, HOD, BMSSW. The meeting was attended by BOS members, including Prof. Jose Antony, Professor, SSUS, Kalady; Adv. Ullas Madhu, JJB Member, Ernakulam; Dr. Jasmine Sarah Alexander, Assistant Professor, Loyola College, Trivandrum; Dr. Francina P X, Subject Expert; and Baby Prabhakaran, Industrial Expert, CEO, BluePoint Org, Kochi. Faculty members Dr. Sheena Rajan Philip, Dr. Arya L Chandran, Sooraj M V, Simmy Xavier, Shema Elsa Daniel, and Praisewin J Kallingal were also present. The meeting focused on academic improvements, curriculum updates, and strategies to enhance the learning experience. Discussions aimed at strengthening the academic framework and aligning it with industry and social work sector needs.

ARTICLE

Substance Abuse Rehabilitation: A Critical Need in India

Substance abuse is a growing concern in India, affecting millions of people across all age groups and socio-economic backgrounds. The alarming rise in addiction cases demands immediate attention and collective action. According to the National Survey on Extent and Pattern of Substance Use in India (2019), over 57 million people in India suffer from alcohol dependence, while drug addiction cases are rapidly increasing, particularly among the youth. The rural and urban poor, women, and children are disproportionately affected, with limited access to healthcare and rehabilitation services. It is essential to recognize that addiction is a disease, not a moral failing, and that rehabilitation is a critical component of treatment. By acknowledging the complexity of the issue and the need for a comprehensive approach, we can begin to address the growing problem of substance abuse in India.

Understanding Rehabilitation:

Substance abuse rehabilitation is a multi-faceted process that involves more than just detoxification. It requires a comprehensive approach that addresses the physical, emotional, and psychological aspects of addiction. The rehabilitation process typically begins with detoxification, followed by counseling and therapy to address underlying emotional and mental health issues. Behavioral interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy, are essential in developing coping mechanisms to prevent relapse. Social reintegration is critical, providing individuals with vocational training, life skills programs, and community support to help them rebuild their lives. Effective rehabilitation requires a team effort, involving medical professionals, counselors, therapists, and social workers. By recognizing the complexity of addiction and the need for comprehensive rehabilitation, we can improve treatment outcomes and help individuals achieve lasting recovery.

The Role of Social Workers:

Social workers play a vital role in substance abuse rehabilitation, providing essential support and services to individuals and their families. They work closely with medical professionals, counselors, and therapists to ensure a comprehensive approach to treatment. Social workers provide emotional support, facilitate treatment access, and advocate for awareness and education. They also ensure post-rehabilitation support, connecting individuals with employment opportunities, housing, and continued counseling to prevent relapse. The role of social workers in rehabilitation is often overlooked, but their contributions are invaluable. By recognizing the importance of social workers in rehabilitation, we can better support their efforts and improve treatment outcomes for individuals struggling with addiction.

Challenges and Solutions:

Despite the importance of rehabilitation, several challenges hinder the provision of effective services. Limited accessibility, financial constraints, social stigma, high relapse rates, and a shortage of skilled professionals are just a few of the obstacles that must be addressed. To overcome these challenges, we must adopt a multi-faceted approach. This involves expanding rehabilitation services, making treatment affordable and inclusive, strengthening community-based interventions, promoting workplace and educational institution initiatives, and integrating mental health services. By working together, we can create a comprehensive system of care that addresses the complex needs of individuals struggling with addiction.



NANDANA K. S
FIRST YEAR MSW

The Vital Role of Emotional Support in Enhancing Psychological Well-Being for Children in Family-Based Group Foster Care

"Is Every Group Foster Care Truly Prioritizing Emotional Support to Nurture the Future of Young Lives in Need?"

Children in need of care and protection often endure traumatic experiences that impact them psychologically and emotionally. Group foster care offers a protective environment for children confronting diverse challenges ranging from poverty and parental separation to maltreatment and loss of parent. Developing psychological well-being for foster children by prioritizing their emotional needs, improving positive relationships, and creating a sense of purpose and personal growth can result in a supportive and nurturing environment. Children who receive constant emotional support are more resilient and can cope with challenges and setbacks better. This article explores the significance of emotional support in family-based foster care in improving the psychological well-being of children.

Understanding Family-Based Group Foster Care

"Family-based group foster care is a form of foster care where children are placed in a family-like setting with trained caregivers who provide support and care. This approach aims to create a stable and nurturing environment for children who cannot live with their biological families" (Eastman, K.1979).

Family-based group foster care provides a supportive, home-like setting in which family members can feel a sense of belonging. This environment ensures that each child receives individualized guidance and care from foster mothers, as well as emotional and psychological assistance for special needs. Family-based group foster care promotes emotional connections over institutional care, which isolates and neglects children.

The Importance of Emotional Support in Foster Care

Children in care may have suffered abuse, neglect, or loss. Without emotional support, they may experience trust issues, emotional instability, low self-esteem, and other difficulties. Emotional support in family-based group foster care can be helpful in the following ways:

#Healing from Trauma: Many foster children develop post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, or depression as a result of their past experiences. Emotional support from caregivers allows individuals to express their emotions and develop coping strategies.

#Developing Trust and Attachment: Children who have experienced disrupted familial bonds may struggle to trust others. A foster mother's continuous emotional support might help rebuild a sense of security and trust. Secure attachments in childhood lead to better relationships in adulthood.

#Enhancing Self-Esteem: Many children in foster care experience feelings of rejection and low self-esteem. Encouragement, positive reinforcement, acceptance, and other forms of support can all contribute to increased self-esteem and confidence. Peer connections also help to strengthen one's own identity.

#Improving Skills: Emotional support aids children in developing effective communication and conflict resolution skills. It promotes emotional regulation, isolation, frustration, and self-harming behaviours. Peer engagement in a family-like setting promotes cooperation, teamwork, and empathy.

Strategies to Enhance Emotional Support in Family-Based Group Foster Care

#Training and support for caregivers: Caregivers should receive specialized training on trauma-informed care and emotional support techniques. Continuous mental health support for caregivers ensures that they remain emotionally available for children.

#Creating a safe and nurturing environment: A frie-

ndly, family-like setting provides a safe and secure environment for children in need of care and protection. Nurturing guidance and open communication promote stability.

#Access to professional mental health services: Regular counselling sessions help children manage their emotions and build strategies for coping.

#Building positive relationships and social connections: Encouraging active engagement in a variety of activities, as well as peer bonding, improves social relationships and mental well-being.

Emotional support is essential for the psychological well-being of children in family-based group foster care. It assists individuals in healing from prior trauma, enhancing self-esteem, and developing trust in relationships.

A supportive environment with resources and trained caregivers ensures that children develop into emotionally healthy, independent individuals.



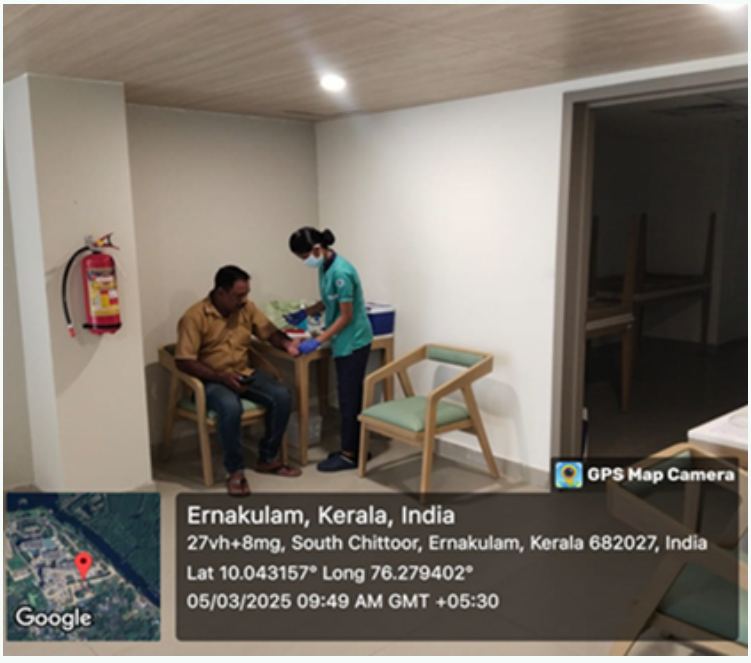
MUNEERA ASHARAF
FIRST YEAR MSW

By focusing emotional support in foster care settings, we may build a future in which every child, regardless of background, receives the love, care, and psychological well-being they deserve.

A loving and supportive atmosphere creates the groundwork for children's development, allowing them to realize their full potential and effectively contribute to society.

FOURTH SEMESTER INTERNSHSIP

A**lvin Varghese**, **Ann Tishna**, and **Thomas Joy** (MSW 2023-25 batch), as part of their internship at Aster Medcity, Cheranelloor, participated in an in-house medical camp organized by the Nephrology Department. The camp provided free health check-ups for 100 autorickshaw drivers, focusing on kidney health and early disease detection. The interns assisted with registration, patient coordination, and interaction, ensuring a smooth process. The camp, led by doctors and nurses, included basic screenings, blood tests, and consultations. Through this experience, the interns gained valuable skills in healthcare service delivery and public health awareness, contributing to a successful community initiative.





As part of the fourth-semester internship at the CSR department of Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL), second-year MSW trainees **Lakshmi Shaji** and **Ashique Sunil** conducted an impact assessment of the Resource Recovery Facility (RRF) at Ravipuram, a Kochi Corporation initiative in collaboration with Green Worms. The study evaluated waste management efficiency, worker conditions, and community impact through interviews, field observations, and data analysis. Findings highlighted improved waste segregation and recycling but identified challenges such as irregular disposal patterns and logistical constraints. The assessment report, submitted to CSL, will help guide future waste management strategies and community development initiatives for sustainable urban environmental practices



Vishal Prasad and **Alan P. Titus**, in collaboration with Lulu Mall Kochi, conducted a comprehensive medical camp for workers belonging to the hot food section. This initiative aimed to ensure food safety and promote the well-being of food handlers. The medical camp provided thorough health check-ups, screenings, and awareness sessions on personal hygiene practices, disease prevention, and nutrition. Benefits of this initiative included improved food safety standards, reduced risk of foodborne illnesses, enhanced worker health and productivity, and compliance with regulatory requirements. By prioritizing the health and well-being of food handlers, Lulu Mall Kochi demonstrated its commitment to providing a safe and healthy environment for its customers and employees.

As part of their 4th-semester fieldwork internship at Sacred Heart Hospital, Paynkulam, MSW trainees **Arkka P Reghu**, **Jesna Jose**, **Nayana Joy**, and **Teena Thomas** organized an International Women's Day program on March 8th at St. Mary's Ward for female patients. The event included an informative session on the significance of Women's Day, gender equality, and the year's theme. This was followed by interactive activities, encouraging participation and fostering a sense of community. The program aimed to empower and uplift the patients, providing both education and recreation. The patients actively engaged and appreciated the initiative, making it a memorable and impactful experience for both the participants and the trainees.



As part of their 4th-semester fieldwork, **Edwin Jose** and **Anjana Joy** organized a self-care session at SITE College, with Ms. Shanthi as the resource person. The session focused on physical, emotional, and mental well-being, emphasizing the importance of self-care. Ms. Shanthi delivered an engaging presentation, incorporating mindfulness exercises, group discussions, and self-assessment tasks to help students reflect on their self-care routines. She also provided practical strategies for stress management, work-life balance, and mental health. The session concluded with an interactive discussion, allowing students to ask questions and share insights. Overall, the session was highly beneficial, equipping students with the knowledge and motivation to prioritize their well-being.



As part of the 4th semester MSW fieldwork, **Sooraj Jayan** coordinated a Fire and Safety Session at The Renai Cochin, Palarivattom. The session aimed to enhance fire safety awareness among the staff, focusing on practical skills for fire suppression and emergency response. Anil, the Security Head and former fire station officer, led the session with expert insights. Key activities included fire extinguisher training, CPR and first aid practice, a simulated evacuation drill, fire hazard identification, and interactive quizzes. The session covered fire safety principles, emergency procedures, and safe operation of pressure cookers. The training engaged staff from various departments, and post-session feedback was collected to improve future sessions. The session successfully fostered a culture of safety within the hotel.



As part of his internship at NeST Electronics City, Kalamassery, **Mr. Riham Haider Ali**, an HR intern, conducted an HR induction session to familiarize employees with company policies, work ethics, and professional expectations. The session covered workplace behavior guidelines, anti-harassment policies, and attendance management procedures, including leave applications and shift schedules. Mr. Riham also explained performance evaluations, career development opportunities, and grievance handling procedures to ensure a supportive work environment. Emphasis was placed on the company's anti-discrimination and equal opportunity policies. Employees were introduced to key HR personnel for ongoing support, strengthening communication within the workforce. The session successfully enhanced employee awareness and integration into the organization.

Final Year MSW student Yadhukrishnan U completed his 4th-semester internship at Metro Minds, Kalamassery. During the internship, he engaged in therapeutic activities such as Art Therapy, group discussions, and Emotional Intelligence Tests to support patients. He also participated in case history documentation, clinical rounds, and counseling sessions.

FA special highlight was organizing a Valentine's Day celebration on February 14, 2025, which fostered a sense of community feeling among inmates. Through this experience, he gained skills in patient care, assessment, and creative therapies, making a positive impact in mental health support.

ACHIEVEMENTS



The BMC Music Band secured 2nd prize in MEDHYA at Mar Baselios College of Technology, Kothamangalam, showcasing their musical talent. Notably, Yadhukrishnan U, a second-year MSW student, was a part of the band, contributing to their success.



Students from Bharata Mata College showcased their exceptional talent at the MG University Kalolsavam, securing an A grade in Nadanpattu. Among the talented performers, Ms. Malavika S from BSW was a proud member of the Nadanpattu team, contributing to this remarkable achievement.



BMC's folk dance team earned a well-deserved second position at the MG University Kalolsavam, with MSW second-year student Devika Gopakumar contributing significantly to their vibrant performance.



Bharata Mata College's Kolkkalai team, featuring MSW student Yadhu Krishnan U, secured a commendable second position at the MG University Kalolsavam. Their rhythmic performance brought pride to the college, showcasing the students' artistic talent.



BMC's Duffmutu team, including MSW student Yadhu Krishnan U (2023-2025 batch), achieved an A grade at the MG University Kalolsavam, demonstrating their skill and dedication.

BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

NAAC WITH A+ GRADE, NIRF RANKED IN THE BAND 100-150, DBT STAR COLLEGE, ISO 9001-2015 CERTIFIED

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