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

"THE COMMUNIQUE"

NEWS LETTER OF BHARATA MATA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

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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.

ORGANISATIONAL VISIT



On February 12, 2025, first-year Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students visited Karunalayam Old Age Home in Kakkanad, Kochi, for an insightful organizational visit. Warmly welcomed by the sisters managing the facility, the students engaged with elderly women residents, gaining firsthand experience in geriatric care. Observing the home's structured medical and emotional support, they interacted with residents who shared their life experiences, highlighting the importance of companionship and social inclusion. A recreational session featuring songs, dances, and games brought joy and strengthened connections. The visit concluded with a group photograph, leaving students with a deeper understanding of social work interventions in elderly care, emphasizing compassion, holistic support, and the role of social workers in enhancing the well-being of vulnerable populations.

MoU RENEWAL



On 07/02/2025, Bharata Mata School of Social Work renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the School of Social Work, Kadambari Memorial College of Science & Management, Kathmandu, Nepal, strengthening a partnership established in 2019. The collaboration, formalized on 27th March 2019, has fostered academic and professional exchanges, particularly through specialization-based internships for students in Nepal.



This renewal reaffirms the commitment of both institutions to promote cross-cultural learning, research, and social work practices, continuing their shared mission of empowering communities and enhancing global social work education. The enduring partnership highlights their dedication to fostering impactful collaborations in the field of social work.

SAMANWAYA - International Conference



The students from the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program, Shreya Carmel, Sarah Prince, Diya C Dinu, and Mariam Anna Sajan, attended a two-day conference named SAMANWAYA at BCM College, Kottayam, on the 3rd and 4th of February. The theme of the conference was “Rights of Children and Social Inclusion.”.

The conference provided a platform for learning, interaction, and participation in various competitions. On the 3rd of February, Mariam and Shreya represented the team in the Best Student Social Worker competition. On the 4th of February, Diya and Sarah participated in the debate competition. Both competitions consisted of two rounds, testing the participants' knowledge, skills, and ability to apply social work principles.

ZRAVAS - National Conference



BSW students Siyona Felix, Alfina Shaibu, Ashiya Nasreen, and Megha Mathew represented Bharata Mata School of Social Work at ZRAVAS: Empowering Abilities: A Path Towards an Inclusive Society, held at Christ College, Irinjalakuda, on February 14-15, 2025. The conference focused on inclusivity and advocacy for differently-abled individuals. On the first day, all four participated in the Project Proposal event, with Siyona and Alfina submitting a written proposal, while Megha and Ashiya showcasd their expertise in the Best Social Worker Competition. The second day saw Ashiya competing in the Extempore Competition, further demonstrating their commitment to social work. The conference provided them with invaluable insights into accessibility, inclusion, and advocacy, strengthening their ability to support differently-abled individuals in their future practi

COMMUNITY AWARENESS PROGRAM



On February 15, 2025, social work trainee Jomon M, as part of his internship with MIRROR, participated in a community awareness program at Thenkurussi Panchayath, Palakkad, focusing on environmental protection, waste management, and plastic reduction. The event saw active participation from community members, Panchayath officials, and Haritha Karma Sena members. Jomon led an awareness session on n plastic pollution and proper waste disposal, followed by an interactive discussion to assess participant understanding and program improvements. A significant takeaway was the interaction with Haritha Karma Sena members, who shared their daily challenges in waste management, highlighting the need for better community support. The program successfully raised awareness but also underscored the necessity of practical demonstrations and hands-on training. Jomon suggested organizing workshops on waste segregation and recycling while emphasizing the importance of collaboration between social workers, government officials, and the community for sustainable environmental protection.

SECOND SEMESTER INTERNSHIP

The second-semester MSW students commenced their semester internship on February 1, 2025, with 31 students gaining hands-on experience across 15 diverse NGOs in Kerala. The internship placements included renowned organizations such as DCPU Thiruvananthapuram, Ernakulam, and Pathanamthitta, Child Helpline (Ernakulam), Shreyas (Wayanad), Hope Community Village (Cherthala), TUDI (Wayanad), Bluepoint Org (Trivandrum), MASSS (Kannur), Quilon Social Service Society (QSSS, Kollam), Jeevika Migrant Workers Movement (JMWM, Kalady), Fishermen Community Development Programme (FCDP, Kollam), Sahrdaya Welfare Services (Ernakulam), MIRROR (Wayanad), and CHASS (Changanassery). These placements provided students with a wide range of exposure to various social work domains, including child protection, community development, migrant welfare, and fisheries community initiatives. The internship proved to be an enriching experience for the students, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world scenarios.



As part of a community program, social work trainees of BMSSW, Aswin Prasad and Sanjai Menuvin conducted a beach cleanup near Don Bosco Nagar in collaboration with Sujith Mission and Quilon Social Service Society. Around 20 college students and community members actively participated in the initiative.



Second Semester MSW students Athulya Unnikrishnan and Fathimathu Sharafiya have been doing thier internship at Fisherman community Development Programme, Kollam. They have successfully organized an eye camp in association with AHALIA foundation eye hospital and NSS Unit of SN College, Kollam on 25/02/2025.



As part of their second-semester internship, social work trainees Anandhu R and Sebin Kurian conducted a pilot survey to identify water scarcity and related issues in the region. The survey, initiated under Azim Premji Foundation's CSR funds, aims to provide data for future interventions to improve water accessibility and management.



Ms. Devika Santhosh and Ms. Anjali A.S. (Social Work Trainees, BMSSW) conducted an activity-oriented group program for 38 children, including different age groups in Karimadom, Trivandrum. The program focuses on the skill development of children.



Student Interns Fathimathu Sharafiya and Athulya Unnikrishnan have been part of a three-day workshop on umbrella making and homecare product making as part of WE LivE (women empowerment through livelihood and entrepreneurship), a project by the Fishermen community development program, Kollam.



ദേശാഭിമാനി

Sat, 01 March 2025

ശരണബാല്യം സ്പെഷ്യൽ ഡ്രൈവ് തുടങ്ങി

ആലുവ

ജില്ലാ ശിശുസംരക്ഷണ യൂണിറ്റ്, സ്പെഷ്യൽ ജുവനൈൽ പൊലീസ് യൂണിറ്റ് എറണാകുളം റൂറൽ എന്നിവ ചേർന്ന് ആലുവ ശിവരാത്രി മണപ്പുറത്ത് ശരണബാല്യം സ്പെഷ്യൽ ഡ്രൈവ് തുടങ്ങി. ബാലവേല, ബാലഭിക്ഷാടനം എന്നിവയ്ക്കെതിരെ നടത്തുന്ന സപ്തദിന സ്പെഷ്യൽ ഡ്രൈവ് റൂറൽ ക്രൈം ബ്രാഞ്ച് ഡിവൈഎസ്പി ടി എം വർഗീസ് ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്തു.

ജില്ലാ ശിശുസംരക്ഷണ യൂണിറ്റ് റെസ്പ്പു ഓഫീസർ മനീഷ് സഹദേവൻ, എസ്ജെപിയു അസിസ്റ്റന്റ് നോഡൽ ഓഫീസർ എഎസ്ഐ പ്രമീള രാജൻ, ചൈൽഡ് ഹെൽപ്പ് ലൈൻ കോ–ഓർഡിനേറ്റർ ശ്യാം ശശി എന്നിവർ സംസാരിച്ചു. മണപ്പുറത്തെ കച്ചവട സ്ഥാപനങ്ങളിൽ പരിശോധനയും ബോധവൽക്കരണവും തുടരുമെന്ന് ജില്ലാ ശിശുസംരക്ഷണ യൂണിറ്റ് അറിയിച്ചു.

ജില്ലാ ശിശുസംരക്ഷണ യൂണിറ്റ്, സ്പെഷ്യൽ ജുവനൈൽ പൊലീസ് യൂണിറ്റ് എറണാകുളം റൂറൽ എന്നിവ ചേർന്ന് ആലുവ ശിവരാത്രി മണപ്പുറത്ത് നടത്തിയ ശരണബാല്യം സ്പെഷ്യൽ ഡ്രൈവ് റൂറൽ ക്രൈംബ്രാഞ്ച് ഡിവൈഎസ്പി ടി എം വർഗീസ് ഉദ്ഘാടനം ചെയ്യുന്നു

The social work trainee Alen Shilson from BMSSW participated in the "Sharana Balyam" drive, launched by the Ernakulam Rural District Child Protection Unit and Special Juvenile Police Unit, in collaboration with the Child Helpline. The initiative, inaugurated by Rural Crime Branch DySP T.M. Varghese at Aluva Sivarathri Manappuram, aims to combat child labor and begging through inspections and awareness programs at local businesses.

FOURTH SEMESTER INTERNSHIP

The fourth-semester MSW students of the 2023-25 batch began their specialization-based internship on 1st February 2025, which will conclude on 10th March 2025. The students are specializing in family and child welfare, medical and psychiatry, and community development. A total of 30 students are gaining hands-on experience at 17 diverse NGOs and organizations across India. These include SH Hospital (Paynkulam), Snehanilayam Special School (Kochi), Aster Medcity (Cochin), Banyan (Chennai), AVM Hospital (Thodupuzha), NeST Electronic City (Kalamassery), Kerala Paper Products Limited (KPPL, Velloor), Snehagram (Tamil Nadu), Maxminds Rehabilitation Centre (Kalamassery), Renai (Palarivattom), Sustera Foundation (Trivandrum), Cochin Shipyard, DCPU (Kakkanad), AatmaSaukhya Wellness Psychiatric Clinic (Edappally), St. Jude Family Counselling Centre (Angamaly), and Lulu Group (Kochi).

The internship has provided students with invaluable exposure to their chosen specializations, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings. They have engaged in diverse activities, from Case Works, Group Works, counseling and rehabilitation to community outreach and corporate social responsibility initiatives

INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM



Three students of Bharata Mata School of Social Work, Donna Robin, Alen Shilson and Ann Chrisswie Crillin attended the International Symposium on Emotions, Beliefs, and Mental Health, held on February 1-2, 2025, at Jnana Niketan Institute of Philosophy and Religion, Little Flower Seminary, Aluva. This groundbreaking event explored the intricate connections between emotions, beliefs, and mental well-being, featuring renowned experts from around the world who shared their insights on the complex relationships between emotions, beliefs, and mental health. The symposium emphasized the vital role of emotions, beliefs, and cognition in well-being, and discussed innovative approaches to mental health, including the benefits of positive emotions, mindfulness, and meditation. The event was a resounding success, advancing our understanding of the complex relationships between emotions, beliefs, and mental health and providing valuable insights for mental health practitioners, researchers, and policymakers.

SMALL STEPS, BIG IMPACT: NURTURING MENTAL WELL-BEING FOR SOCIAL WORK STUDENTS

"You, yourself, as much as anybody in the entire universe, deserve your love and affection."

- Buddha

Social work students carry the responsibility of understanding others, empathizing with, and addressing human struggles and needs. Balancing academic pressure with fieldwork can be emotionally challenging and demanding; it often affects mental well-being. Although small, mindful changes in daily life can strengthen emotional resilience and improve overall mental health,.

Prioritizing Self-Care Without Guilt

While the social work profession focuses on helping others, self-care is essential for maintaining emotional and mental strength. Simple habits such as maintaining a balanced diet, ensuring a good sleep pattern, and engagiParticipating in physical activities contributes to mental well-being. Taking short breaks during study sessions and engaging in personal hobbies can prevent burnout.

Tip: You need to schedule "me-time" for activities that bring relaxation—reading, journaling, or a 10-minute mindfulness practice can contribute to self-care.

Building Supportive Relationships

The nature of social work can sometimes feel isolating, but strong relationships with others act as a safety circle. Surrounding oneself with peers, mentors, and family members who provide emotional support fosters resilience. Engaging in open conversations with our dear ones about stress and struggles helps alleviate anxiety.

Tip: Connect with your friends or faculty members to share experiences and seek support when needed.

Setting Realistic Boundaries

The urge to give 100% to every academic task, fieldwork assignment, and social responsibility can lead to emotional exhaustion. Learning to set limits is crucial to maintaining mental balance. Identifying when to pause and say no ensures that energy is invested in meaningful, manageable tasks.

Tip: Prioritize tasks based on emotional and mental capacity; quality over quantity always matters.

Reflecting On Emotional Experiences

Fieldwork and social engagement expose students to intense human experiences, which can sometimes feel overwhelming. Processing emotions through journaling or professional supervision helps in understanding and managing these feelings, preventing emotional overload.

Tip: Dedicate time weekly to reflect on experiences. Self-awareness enhances emotional well-being and prevents compassion fatigue.

Celebrating Small Wins

Acknowledging small achievements fosters a positive mindset. Whether it's completing an assignment, handling a challenging case study, or simply maintaining self-care habits, every step forward is progress.



Tip: Maintain a "wins journal" to track moments of growth and success; small victories lead to bigger achievements.

Nikhila K. S
First Year MSW

For social work students, mental well-being is not just a personal priority but a professional necessity. By making simple but intentional changes—practicing self-care, setting boundaries, fostering support networks, and reflecting on experiences—students can sustain their emotional strength and thrive in both academic and professional spaces. A small step toward self-care today ensures a more resilient and fulfilling journey in social work.

PSYCHOSOCIAL CHALLENGES OF MIGRANT WORKERS' CHILDREN IN KERALA: THE APPLICATION OF CHILD-CENTERED APPROACHES IN SOCIAL WORK

"Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future."

- John F. Kennedy

Kerala has become a major destination for migrant workers from different parts of India, particularly from states like West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, and Odisha, which is significantly contributing to the state's labor force. Accompanying these workers are their children, who often face unique psychosocial challenges due to frequent relocations, language barriers, and socio-economic vulnerabilities. Many migrant children experience disruptions in education due to frequent relocations, language barriers, and economic hardships (Zacharias & Vinil, 2018). Additionally, parental neglect, unsafe living conditions, and child labor risks further threaten their well-being (Bhor, 2020). While Kerala has taken initiatives like the ROSHNI program to integrate migrant children into the education system, significant gaps.

Child-centered approach in social work is essential to addressing these challenges effectively. A child-centered approach in social work is a practice framework that prioritizes the rights, needs, and best interests of the child in all decisions, interventions, and services. This approach emphasizes active participation, respect for the child's views, and a holistic consideration of their well-being, ensuring that their voice is heard and valued in matters affecting them (UNICEF, 2018). Social workers adopting this approach focus on the child's developmental, emotional, social, and physical needs while recognizing the importance of family, community, and cultural contexts in shaping their experiences and well-being (Luckock et al., 2020).

From my fieldwork experience, I have observed that when migrant children are provided with opportunities, there is a noticeable improvement in their engagement and overall well-being. For instance, during home visits to migrant families, I encountered children who were not attending school and others who lacked proper parental care. Conversely, visiting a school in Kerala with a high enrolment of migrant children revealed a more positive environment, although some students from families experiencing conflicts or parental neglect still faced significant challenges. These observations underscore the necessity of child-centered approaches that focus on creating supportive educational settings and providing tailored interventions to address the complex needs of migrant children, especially those from unstable family backgrounds.

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Aksa Antony
First Year MSW

ACHIEVEMENTS



Dr. Elsa Mary Jacob, Head of the Department at Bharata Mata School of Social Work (BMSSW), has been honored with the prestigious Cardinal Joseph Parekkatil Excellence Award 2025 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to social research and community empowerment. She received this accolade for her pivotal role in the ICSSR-funded project titled "Livelihood Empowerment of the Transgender Community in Kerala – An Intervention Research."



In the shot put event, Samson secured third place in the boys' category, while Megha put up a commendable performance, finishing fourth among the girls. The javelin throw event saw Megha excel with a gold medal in the girls' category, while Karthik claimed third place among the boys.



The College Athletic Meet 2025 witnessed outstanding performances by students from the Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) program, who showcased their athletic skills and competitive spirit in various track and field events. Their participation and achievements highlighted their dedication to both academics and sports, making the department proud.



The discus throw event brought further glory to BSW, with Samson achieving first place in the boys' category, demonstrating exceptional strength and technique. On the girls' side, Ashiya finished in a respectable fourth position, adding to the department's tally.

In the endurance-testing 1500-meter race, Devakrishna put up a strong fight, securing fifth place in the boys' category. His determination and resilience were evident as he completed the race among the top contenders.

BHARATA MATA COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS)

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