

Juveniles Accessing Mental health Services

TAKE A GLANCE AT OUR FIRST EDITION HERE



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OVERNMENT COLLABORATION

As part of the JAMS project’s expansion, strategic partnerships with government authorities have been instrumental in strengthening mental health interventions in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). Through sustained engagement and collaboration, we have successfully secured institutional support in both Odisha and Tamil Nadu, ensuring structured mental health services for children in need of care and protection.

we have obtained official approval from the District Magistrate and Collector to implement mental health interventions in CCIs. This collaboration enables us to:

- Provide structured mental health services within CCIs.
- Mobilize government support for sustainable mental health initiatives.

Strengthening Mental Health Interventions in Odisha: In three districts of Odisha

- Ganjam
- Koraput
- Gajapati

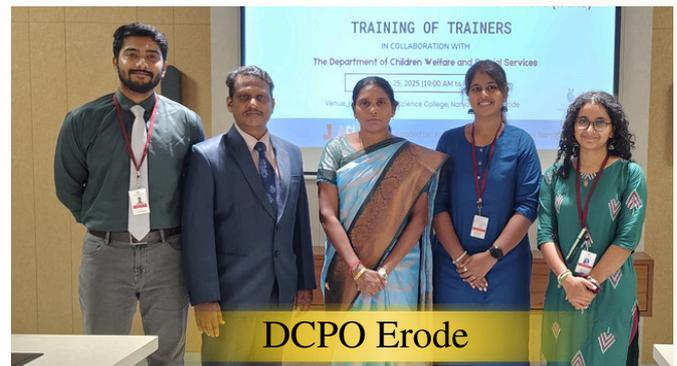


Additionally, through a formal partnership with the Department of Children Welfare and Special Services (DCWSS), we are working to integrate mental health care into child protection frameworks, ensuring long-term institutional support.

Expanding Collaboration in Tamil Nadu

With Tamil Nadu joining the initiative, we have strengthened our engagement with DCWSS through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), allowing us to:

- Align mental health initiatives with government policies.
- Engage with District Child Protection Units (DCPUs) to integrate interventions into the child welfare system.



Through this collaboration, we aim to:

- Improve mental health services in CCIs through trained professionals.
- Enhance the capacity of CCI staff to address children's mental health needs.
- Advocate for policies that integrate mental health into child protection frameworks.



PARTNER COLLABORATION

As part of our commitment to strengthening youth mental health services and expanding our outreach, we have successfully signed MoUs with nine key partners across various sectors. These partnerships are instrumental in facilitating training, resource-sharing, and implementing mental health initiatives. Our partners include:

- Nalandaway Foundation
- Kanaa Educational Trust
- Don Bosco
- NMCT (Native Medicare Charitable Trust)
- Mount Carmel College
- Erode Arts & Science College
- Kongu Arts & Science College
- Vellalar College



ACADEMIC INVOLVEMENT & TRAINING PARTNERSHIPS

Our academic collaborations extend beyond MoUs. The participation of professors from reputed colleges ensures a strong research-oriented and evidence-based training structure. This partnership fosters:



- Cross-disciplinary learning by integrating psychology, social work, and mental health education.
- Skill-based training for students and professionals, ensuring that future social workers and mental health practitioners are well-equipped.
- Knowledge exchange programs, where trainers and faculty contribute to workshops, symposiums, and mental health awareness sessions.

Achievements

On January 29, 2024, a Training of Trainers (ToT) was held in Koraput to enhance mental health support in CCIs. 24 master trainers from CCIs, Childline, and DCPU participated, gaining skills to strengthen child welfare services.

JAMS implementation began in Gajapati in February 2024 after approval in January. A training session for all CCI staff was conducted on February 20, focusing on youth mental health support and caregiver capacity building.



The YFS initiative is active in five CCIs in Ganjam and two in Koraput, encouraging participation from children and staff. These spaces help improve emotional well-being through structured activities and discussions. CCI staff engagement has been instrumental in making these activities more interactive and impactful, fostering a supportive environment for children.

The JAMS Tamil Nadu team successfully trained 51 master trainers, equipping them with essential knowledge and skills to support mental health initiatives in Child Care Institutions (CCIs). These trainers will play a crucial role in creating a sustainable mental health support system for children and staff.



JAMS has built a robust network by establishing partnerships with 9 NGOs and colleges. These collaborations enhance outreach, resource sharing, and program implementation, ensuring that mental health services reach a wider audience.





Over the next two years, the trained master trainers will extend their support to 58 CCIs, strengthening mental health awareness and intervention at the grassroots level. This long-term engagement will create a lasting impact on the well-being of children and caregivers.

The JAMS project has been effectively rolled out across four districts in Tamil Nadu and Odisha. This implementation ensures a broad geographic impact, addressing mental health challenges faced by children in institutional care settings across both states.

JAMS CONDUCTS FIRST-EVER MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING IN NILGIRIS

A recent article in Dina Thanthi highlighted the Training of Trainers (ToT) conducted in Nilgiris district, showcasing the JAMS team's mental health training for master trainers in collaboration with the District Child Protection Unit (DCPU)—the first initiative of its kind in the region.



G GRAND CHALLENGES CANADA VISIT TO ASSESS PROGRESS

SCARF recently had the privilege of hosting representatives from Grand Challenges Canada, our Canadian support partner, for an in-depth review of the Juveniles Accessing Mental Health Services (JAMS) project. The visit aimed to explore opportunities for expanding and sustaining the project while assessing its real-world impact in Child Care Institutions (CCIs) across Tamil Nadu and Odisha.



The visiting team engaged in thoughtful discussions with SCARF's project staff, master trainers, and field-level implementers. These conversations highlighted the growing need for continued investment in the mental well-being of children in institutional care. The visitors gained valuable insights into the everyday challenges faced by CCI staff and children, reaffirming the importance of capacity building, youth-friendly spaces, and resource mapping for mental health services.

A key aspect of the visit involved understanding the reality of field interventions. Feedback from master trainers—who are directly involved in facilitating mental health education and support within CCIs—offered a grounded perspective on what is working well and what areas require further refinement. The trainers shared experiences of conducting awareness sessions, offering psychosocial support, and building rapport with both staff and children. Their feedback highlighted the need for context-sensitive strategies, ongoing mentoring, and adaptable models to suit the diverse needs of different institutions.



The visit concluded with a renewed commitment from SCARF and Grand Challenges Canada to strengthen partnerships and mobilize resources, aiming to make JAMS a sustainable and scalable model for mental health care in CCIs.

JAMS PROMOTES MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS AT NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM

Vellalar College for Women hosted a one-day National Level Symposium, organized by the Department of Social Work under the guidance of Mr. Bhagavathi Raja, Head of the Department.

As part of the event, Mr. Fredrick Melwin, Project Coordinator of JAMS, led a session on two key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



Promoting physical and mental health for all.



Protecting nature and ecosystems.

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The session highlighted the need for better support systems and services, especially for vulnerable communities.

The symposium brought together students and faculty to discuss important social issues, encouraging meaningful conversations on mental health and sustainability.





Schizophrenia Research
Foundation (I)



Department of
Youth Mental Health

Reach Out to Us

Have questions? Want to collaborate or
learn more about our work?

We'd love to hear from you!



jams@scarfindia.org



scarfymh.org



#R/7A North Main Road,
Anna Nagar (West Extn.),
Chennai 600 101, India

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