

# ANNUAL REPORT

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2023-2024

[fostercaresociety.org](http://fostercaresociety.org)

**FOSTER CARE SOCIETY**

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# Note from President

I am so pleased to share the Annual Report for 2023–23. It was a fantastic year for us, full of growth, learning, recognition, and also taking up new initiatives. As Foster Care Society's name gains recognition at local, state, and national levels, we are becoming strongly associated with quality and strategic approaches to foster care development. The doors began to open for discussion with government and civil society partners.

This year, the Foster Care Society provided technical support in the placement of one foster child. As a process, Foster Care Society finds, fully trains, and supports foster care families to provide safe, stable, nurturing homes for these children who have been abused and neglected. We then support them with quality resources, expertise, and encouragement.

After the success of the first caregiver training in the last financial year, Foster Care Society organized the second caregiver training successfully this year. The primary focus of the training was to understand the effect of caregiving on caregivers and to help them minimize the trauma of placement.

Foster Care Society believes that in order to implement effective program, the work must empower existing systems and be based on the local pulse and situation on the ground. With this objective, Foster Care Society attended and gave an effective presentation at an onsite capacity-building program organized by CRC in collaboration with the Department of Child Rights Rajasthan for the CCIs. And I also attended a state-level consultation on strengthening non-institutional alternative care for children in Rajasthan.

As a resource person, Foster Care Society's President attended the National Consultation on Foster Care organized by BOSCO, an NGO in Bangalore, and shared Udaipur, Rajasthan's experience with foster care. Parallel to our Foster Care program, Foster Care Society is equally committed to the development of the community members in our work area, especially women and children. For the social empowerment of our community women, Foster Care Society organized capacity-building workshops for these women. And to polish the skills of these women, free stitching training was organized with the polytechnic colleges.

As a major breakthrough in the economic empowerment of our community women, this year Foster Care Society formed a self-help group in the name of Bandhan, and the handmade cotton and jute products made by these women were displayed for sale at Amrita Haat Bazar, Udaipur Farmers Market, exhibitions, and school fetes. The above-mentioned platforms helped these women earn a generous amount from the sale of beautiful handmade products.

Foster Care Society also started an initiative in the name of Saksham this year, which helped in the sale of these products on various platforms. Through various community engagement programs like workshops on child safety, health camps, summer camps, SUPW school activities, etc., Foster Care Society strengthened its bond with the community.

The support and faith of donors, sponsors, and well-wishers in Foster Care Society is infectious and gives hope to all of us in carrying forward this good cause for the benefit of society. My profound thanks to colleagues in Foster Care Society for their hard work and leadership and for their diligence and decency. Once again, a huge thanks to all our board members, advisors, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and well-wishers for being co-travelers on this journey.

**Dr. Shilpa Mehta**  
President Foster Care Society

"As one person I cannot change the world, but I can change the world of that person"

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# Introduction

Foster Care Society, established in January 2017 in Udaipur, Rajasthan, is a dedicated non-governmental organization (NGO) built upon the foundational work of Foster Care India. Our primary objective is to transition children from institutional settings, such as orphanages, to loving individual families.

We firmly believe that every child deserves the care and support of a nuclear family. Over time, our efforts have led to the successful placement of 13 families in Udaipur and nearby districts. Since our inception, we have been committed to empowering various segments of society, including urban youth, adolescent boys and girls, children, women, elected female representatives, and marginalized individuals in urban slum communities. Through informed participation and democratic processes, we run diverse programs addressing crucial issues such as health, education, employment, skill development, and maternal and reproductive health.



## Mission

1. **Ground-Level Engagement:** Collaborate with families and communities to address social development challenges related to education, health, and family preservation.
2. **Government Partnership:** Work alongside the government to enhance the implementation of rules, acts, and schemes related to child welfare.
3. **Foster Care Advocacy:** Promote the effective implementation of foster care experiences through research and best practices.
4. **Institutional Care as Last Resort:** Advocate for a shift in Indian society from non-institutional care as the first choice to institutional care as the last solution.
5. **Family Preservation:** Create an environment supporting family preservation, adoption, sponsorship, and aftercare based on government schemes.
6. **Social Issue Eradication:** Foster societal change by addressing various social issues, providing development support, and contributing to national and global sustainable goals.

Through our multifaceted approach, we aim to create a nurturing and supportive environment for children, families, and communities, fostering sustainable development and positive change.

## Vision

To inspire society to achieve optimal developmental standards, ensuring the best interests of children without compromising the well-being of families and their communities.

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# Foster Care Society Activities

## Workshop with RSCPCR

On August 18, 2023, the Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (RSCPCR) organized a consultation workshop on strengthening the foster care program in Rajasthan. The event took place at the Jhalana Officers Institute, with the aim of gathering insights and perspectives from key stakeholders in the field of foster care. The workshop's primary objectives were to inform attendees about the legalities and structural roles and responsibilities of various departments, and to explore how these entities can

collaborate to establish and enhance the foster care program in Rajasthan.

The Foster Care Society was invited by RSCPCR to provide technical support and address the concerns of stakeholders about foster care. This involvement underscored the Society's role as a crucial consultant in facilitating the effective implementation of the foster care program.



The workshop saw the participation of a diverse group of attendees, including government officials, child welfare organizations, social workers, experts, and concerned citizens. Together, they discussed the current state of foster care in Rajasthan and proposed recommendations for its improvement.

The event was graced by several honorable chief guests, including Mrs. Sangeeta Beniwal (Chairperson, RSCPCR), Mr. Rajiv Meghwal (Member, RSCPCR), Mrs. Sabo Meena (Member,



RSCPCR), and Mrs. Sangeeta Garg (Member, RSCPCR). Their presence highlighted the importance of the workshop and reinforced the commitment of the RSCPCR to strengthening the foster care system in Rajasthan.

The consultation workshop on the Foster Care Program in Rajasthan provided a platform for stakeholders to share their insights and work collaboratively towards strengthening the foster care system. The recommendations generated during the workshop will serve as a valuable resource for policymakers, child welfare organizations, and government agencies in Rajasthan as they work towards improving the lives of children without parental care.

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## Training on ICP

As part of a joint initiative by the Foster Care Society and UNICEF, a capacity-building program was organized for stakeholders of child care institutions in the district. The program aimed to strengthen child protection schemes by emphasizing the importance of Individual Care Plans (ICPs) within the context of family-based care. The objectives of the program included building an understanding of the significance of ICPs, developing knowledge on when and how to use these plans for the holistic development of children, fostering an understanding of linking children to family-based care plans through ICPs, and addressing current challenges to find effective solutions.



Dr. Shilpa Mehta, Chairperson of the Foster Care Society, welcomed the participants and elucidated the purpose of the capacity-building program. She highlighted that linking children to family-based care is facilitated through the implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act and associated activities in child care institutions. The outcomes of the program included developing participants' skills on the effective use of ICPs, enhancing the



understanding of their utility in child care institutions, ensuring the best interest of children by connecting them to family-based care, and addressing the challenges faced in the practical implementation of ICPs.

## Workshop on Managing Behavioural Issues in Foster Children

The Foster Care Society, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized a one-day workshop for foster parents to



address and manage behavioural issues in foster children. The workshop aimed to equip foster parents with the knowledge and strategies necessary to empathize with their children and implement positive parenting techniques. Dr. Shalini Purohit, a chartered psychologist, led the workshop and provided valuable insights into the root causes of behavioural issues, emphasizing the impact of past trauma on a child's behaviour. Dr. Purohit explained how trauma affects a child's sense of security,

safety, and self-perception, which can result in extreme stress reactions when entering a new home. She introduced the parents to various attachment styles and their effects on a child's emotional and psychological development, using real-life examples to illustrate how early experiences with primary caregivers influence a child's capacity to form relationships later in life. This foundational understanding helped parents recognize the importance of building secure and trusting relationships with their foster children.

Dr. Purohit's session also focused on practical behaviour management strategies tailored to the unique needs of foster children. She encouraged parents to reflect on their current parenting styles and consider adjustments to foster a more positive and supportive home environment. The introduction of a three-step, attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention highlighted the significance of connection in improving child-parent relationships. Throughout the workshop, foster parents actively participated by sharing their



experiences and discussing the challenges they faced. They learned techniques for setting clear expectations and reinforcing positive behaviour through praise and consistency. The session concluded with a discussion and Q&A round, where parents shared the strategies, they have been using and those they plan to introduce. The interactive format and practical advice provided foster parents with the tools and confidence to better manage their children's behaviour, ultimately contributing to more stable and nurturing foster homes.

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## Workshop on Self-Regulation and Anger Management

Foster Care Society, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized "Pravaah," a one-day recreational activity workshop designed for children benefiting from the Vatsalya (Foster Care) and Goradhaya (Group Foster



Care) schemes of the Government of Rajasthan. A total of 12 children, both male and female, participated in this engaging workshop. Resource person Mr. Aashish Doot, a certified therapist, began the session by emphasizing the importance of creating a positive and inclusive atmosphere to build rapport with the children. He introduced the "Emotion Charades" activity, where children acted out various emotions while

others guessed them, providing a foundational understanding of self-regulation and its benefits. Following this, Mr. Doot introduced the "Feelings Jar" activity, which allowed children to identify and express their emotions related to different situations, and the "Anger Check-In," where they discussed common triggers for anger.



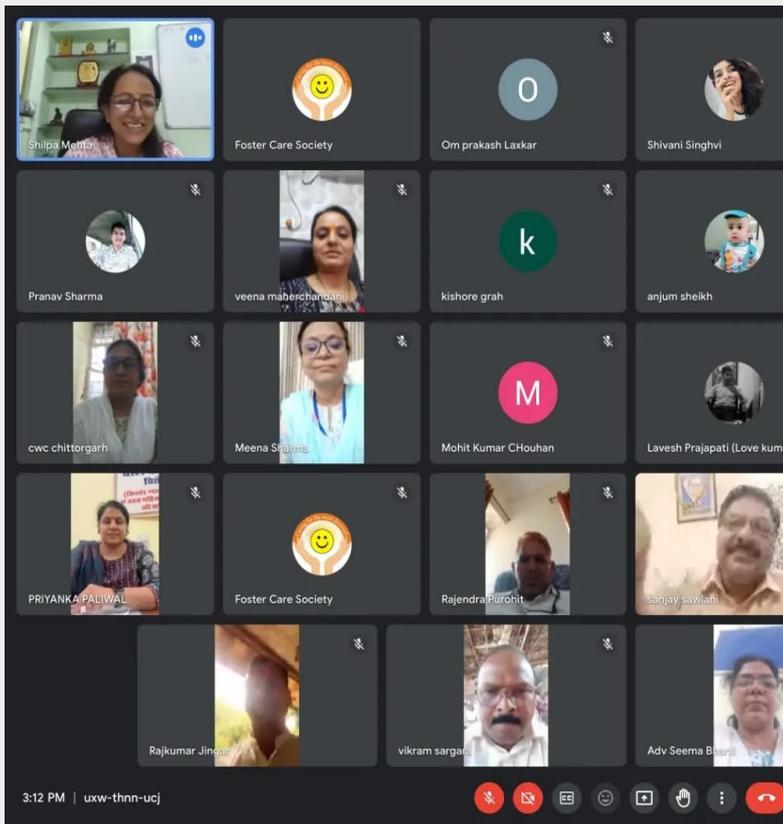
The workshop then focused on practical techniques for managing anger constructively. Mr. Doot introduced several coping strategies, starting with deep breathing techniques. Children were provided with colourful handouts of breathing loops and mindfulness breathing cards to practice. For younger children, a sun-shaped breathing loop was used, while older children used a Lazy 8 Breathing loop. Other

activities included using balloons to release anger, practicing self-hugs, writing about anger, and engaging in physical activities like jumping jacks and kicking a ball. The session concluded with children creating their own Anger Skill Cards, which they used to document their personal strategies for managing anger. The workshop ended with a Q&A session attended by various members of the Child Welfare Committee and Foster Care Society team, including Dr. Shilpa Mehta, Founder and President of the Foster Care Society, and other key project coordinators.

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## **Online Capacity Building Program for DCPU and CWC members for the better implementation of NIAC**

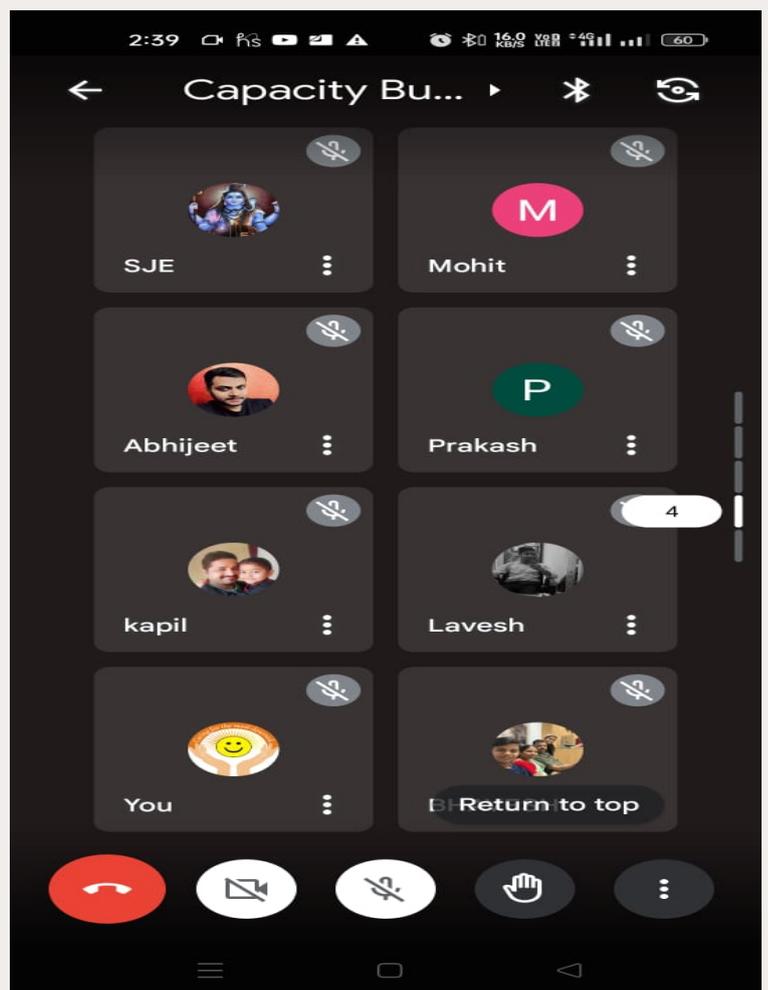
The Foster Care Society, in collaboration with UNICEF, hosted a one-day online workshop on Non-Institutional Alternative Care (NIAC) for members of District Child Protection Units (DCPU) and Child Welfare Committees (CWC) across ten districts in Rajasthan. The workshop, attended by 43 participants, was led by Mrs. Kusum Paliwal and aimed at strengthening the implementation of government schemes related to foster care. Dr. Shilpa Mehta, Founder-President of the Foster Care Society, highlighted the goal of enhancing NIAC schemes to position Rajasthan as a leader in foster care initiatives. Mr. Devashish Mishra, National Child Protection Consultant from CERI, served as the resource person, providing a



comprehensive overview of various related schemes and the specific roles of CWC and DCPU. The session underscored the importance of both Human Rights and Child Rights, referencing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Indian constitution, and emphasized Mission Vatsalya's commitment to foster care.

The workshop facilitated a valuable exchange of ideas and solutions among participants, highlighting several key areas for improvement. Officials suggested transitioning from online to offline meetings for better implementation and understanding of foster care processes.

They also recommended conducting block-level meetings to increase awareness and transparency about the screening process for foster families. The discussions revealed a need for broader awareness of foster care concepts and the necessity for collective efforts to address this gap. Members of CWC and DCPU raised pertinent questions about persuading families to foster, required documentation, screening procedures, and handling cases where a child does not adjust well. The workshop concluded with a commitment from the Foster Care Society to continue providing support and fostering collaboration, advocating for more face-to-face interactions to enhance the effectiveness of future initiatives.



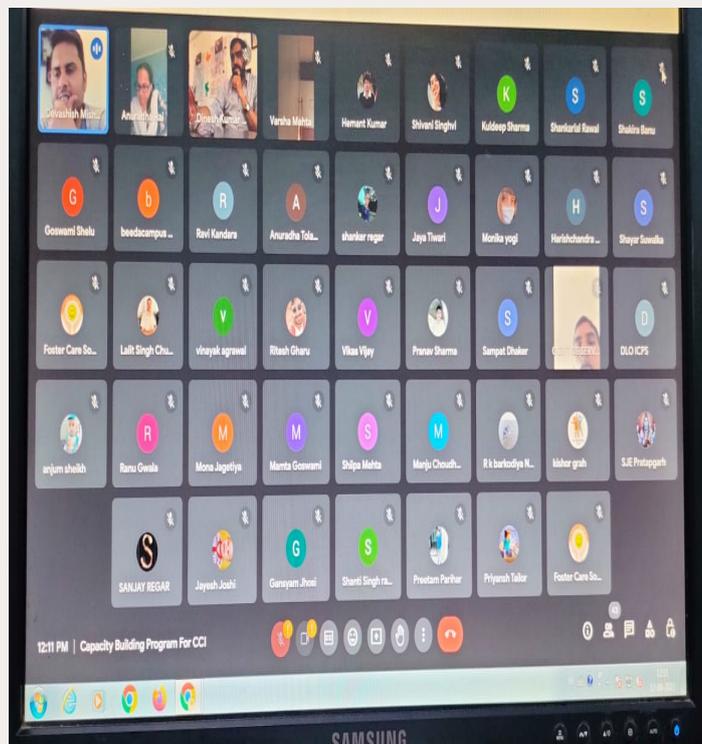
## Capacity Building Program for CCIs on NIAC



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## Capacity Building Program on Social Investigation Reports

The capacity-building program, held on December 1, 2023, focused on enhancing the understanding and practical application of Social Investigation Reports (SIR) within the framework of family-based care. With participants including superintendents and counsellors from child care institutions across ten districts in Rajasthan, the program aimed to build comprehensive knowledge on the importance of SIRs. The training addressed key objectives such as developing skills to gather relevant information, exploring effective interaction methods with children and their families, and understanding how to use SIRs to support the holistic development of children. Additionally, participants learned how to use SIRs to connect children with suitable family-based care schemes and identified challenges related to SIR implementation.

The workshop's expected outcomes included equipping participants with practical skills for effective SIR use, enhancing their awareness of SIR's importance, and ensuring that the best interests of children are prioritized through family-based care. The program also aimed to address and solve practical challenges encountered in SIR implementation, thereby improving overall child protection practices.

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## Positive Parenting Training

The Positive Parenting workshop, organized by the Foster Care Society in collaboration with UNICEF, provided a hands-on learning experience for foster parents, aimed at enhancing their parenting skills through practical activities. Conducted by Dr. Shalini Agarwal, the workshop covered various aspects of positive parenting, including effective discipline, trauma-informed care, and different parenting styles. The session included interactive



activities such as icebreakers, reflective art exercises, and discussions on managing anger, avoiding blame, and acknowledging mistakes. Participants engaged in identifying their current parenting approaches and learning new strategies to foster a supportive and nurturing environment for children.



The workshop also focused on understanding trauma's impact on children and introduced coping strategies to help children recover from past experiences. Parents were encouraged to develop healthy coping mechanisms and self-care practices to manage parental burnout. Feedback from the attendees indicated that they found the workshop highly valuable and engaging, particularly appreciating the insights on trauma and the practical parenting strategies provided.

The session successfully equipped foster parents with the tools and confidence needed to create a positive and supportive environment for their children.

## Channelling Emotions Healthily for Foster Children



The "Pravah" workshop, organized by Foster Care Society in collaboration with UNICEF, provided a comprehensive and transformative experience for foster children aged 5-18 years. Designed by certified therapist Ms. Srishti Khandelwal, the workshop aimed to help children channel their emotions healthily through a series of engaging activities. Participants began with deep breathing exercises to foster mindfulness, followed by mapping their emotions and exploring them through multimedia tools. The workshop also featured the creation of

emotion cards, real-life problem-solving scenarios, and an appreciation circle to build a supportive community. Reflective journaling and dance movement therapy rounded out the experience, allowing children to express themselves and celebrate their individuality.

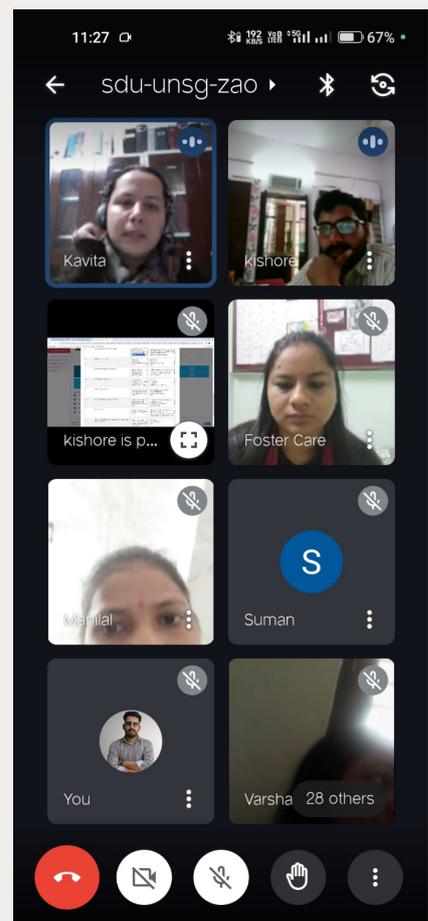
The workshop concluded with a certificate distribution, recognizing each child's participation and effort. Overall, "Pravah" transcended conventional learning by empowering foster children with practical emotional tools and fostering a sense of community and self-discovery. The positive impact of the workshop is expected to resonate in the participants' ongoing journeys towards emotional well-being and resilience.



## ICP & SIR Implementation Workshop

A one-day online workshop was conducted to enhance the implementation of Individual Care Plans (ICP) and Social Investigation Reports (SIR) within family-based care. The workshop brought together 44 members from Child Care Institutions across ten districts in Rajasthan. The session was led by Dr. Kavita Manglani, who addressed key questions regarding the use of ICP and SIRs and provided detailed guidance on their application and online submission processes. Participants engaged in a quiz to test their understanding of the topics, further solidifying their knowledge and application skills.

The workshop commenced with introductions and a review of previous training sessions, followed by an interactive Q&A and knowledge-building segment led by Mrs. Kusum Paliwal. Dr. Manglani's detailed explanations and the engaging quiz enhanced participants' understanding of the ICP and SIR procedures. The session concluded with a note of thanks from Mrs. Paliwal, reinforcing the workshop's success in deepening participants' understanding and commitment to effective child protection practices.



## Art Therapy Workshop

Foster Care Society, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized "Pravaah," a one-day recreational activity workshop aimed at helping children interpret, express, and resolve their emotions through art therapy. Attended by 23 foster children and numerous professionals including certified art therapist Ms. Deshna Sharma and Dr. Shikha Sharma, the event featured activities such as Zentangle, Wheel of Emotions, and Mandala drawing. These activities were designed to enhance the children's cognitive skills, promote relaxation, and improve emotional expression. The workshop created a supportive environment where children could freely express their thoughts and feelings, fostering creativity and emotional well-being.



Throughout the day, children were divided into age-appropriate teams and engaged in various art therapy activities. The Zentangle activity helped improve concentration and focus, while the Wheel of Emotions



allowed children to explore and process their feelings in a non-verbal way. The House-Tree-Person (H-T-P) drawing activity further helped children articulate their inner thoughts and emotions. The Mandala art activity provided a calming and meditative experience, promoting mindfulness and self-expression. Overall, the workshop was highly successful in reducing anxiety and stress, enhancing self-awareness, and improving social skills among the children.

## Samvardhanam

Foster Care Society, in collaboration with UNICEF, held the "Samvardhanam" strategic development dialogue program to foster positive connections between foster families and government officials. The event was attended by 19 foster children, their foster parents, and notable dignitaries including **Mrs. Sangeeta Beniwal**, Chairperson of the Rajasthan State Child Protection Commission, and Mr. Tarachandra Meena, District Collector of Udaipur. The main aim was to share experiences and challenges faced in fostering, with the goal of better implementing the foster care scheme. Dr. Shilpa Mehta, Founder and President of the Foster Care Society, presented on the organization's journey, highlighting both achievements and obstacles. The event also featured performances by foster children, the release of informative brochures, and heartfelt storytelling by foster parents.



During the dialogue, foster parents openly discussed their experiences and challenges, such as difficulties in obtaining passports for foster children and issues with government documentation. The session was fruitful, as officials like Mrs. Beniwal and Mr. Meena promised to address these concerns and advocate for



necessary amendments in the Vatsalya Policy. The event emphasized the importance of strong partnerships between government agencies, non-profits, and community organizations to support foster families effectively. The heartfelt speeches and interactive sessions underscored the positive impact of foster care on children and the need for continuous improvement and awareness to ensure every child finds a loving and supportive home.

# Partnership and Engagements

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## Partnership with Bijoy

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In the fiscal year 2022-2023, an exemplary collaboration emerged between the foster care society and Bijoy, illustrating a remarkable partnership built on the foundations of compassion and support. Bijoy, a benevolent individual extended a generous hand by providing much-needed financial assistance to the foster care society. This collaboration proved to be instrumental in bolstering the society's mission to provide a nurturing environment for children in need of care and protection. The financial support from Bijoy not only eased the society's operational burdens but also enabled them to expand their outreach, ensuring that more vulnerable children could find refuge and solace in their care. This heart-warming partnership exemplifies the power of collaboration in making a positive impact on the lives of those who need it the most.

## Partnership with UNICEF

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In a remarkable collaborative effort, Foster Care Society of Udaipur joined forces with UNICEF in the financial year 2022-2023 to advance their mission of supporting vulnerable children. UNICEF, recognizing the critical importance of the foster care program in Udaipur, extended a helping hand by providing significant financial assistance for a duration of six months. This partnership not only underscores the global commitment to the welfare of children but also illustrates the dedication to ensuring that every child, regardless of their circumstances, has the opportunity to thrive and grow in a loving and supportive environment. Through this collaboration, Foster Care Society and UNICEF are working together to make a meaningful impact on the lives of countless children in Udaipur and promote their well-being, development, and happiness.

## Engagement with DCPUs

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In the financial year 2022-2023, Foster Care Society in Udaipur Division embarked on a dedicated and strategic journey of engagement with the District Child Protection Units (DCPUs) to enhance the implementation and awareness of the Foster Care program. Recognizing the pivotal role of DCPUs in safeguarding the welfare of vulnerable children, this collaboration aimed to synergize efforts for a more effective foster care system. The engagement involved regular consultations, training workshops, and information dissemination sessions to ensure that DCPUs were well-versed in the intricacies of the foster care program. This proactive partnership has not only improved the operational efficiency of the foster care system but has also contributed significantly to fostering greater community awareness about the program, ultimately leading to the betterment of the lives of children in need within the Udaipur Division.

## Engagement with CWCs

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The engagement between Foster Care Society and the Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) in Udaipur division has proven to be a pivotal step in enhancing the implementation of the Foster Care program. This partnership reflects a commitment to improving the lives of vulnerable children in the region. By fostering a close working relationship with CWCs, the Foster Care Society has been able to streamline the placement process, expedite assessments, and ensure the best interests of children are prioritized throughout the placement journey. Through collaborative efforts, they have not only expanded the reach of the foster care program but have also been able to provide enhanced support and resources to foster families. This engagement is a beacon of hope for children in need, fostering a brighter future in the Udaipur division through the compassionate care of foster parents and the diligent oversight of CWCs.

## Engagement with CCIs

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Foster Care Society in Udaipur Division embarked on a proactive engagement strategy with Child Care Institutions (CCIs) to elevate the implication and awareness of the foster care program. This strategic partnership aimed to identify potential foster children and provide them with a nurturing and stable family environment. Through collaborative efforts, the Foster Care Society fostered a stronger sense of community and support for the foster care initiative. By working hand-in-hand with CCIs, this engagement not only highlighted the essential role of foster care in the lives of vulnerable children but also played a pivotal role in locating suitable candidates for foster placements. This effort ultimately contributed to the betterment of the lives of children in need and raised awareness about the positive impact of foster care within Udaipur Division.

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## Engagement with CERI

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Children Emergency Relief International (CERI) has been a beacon of hope for children in need, extending their compassionate services to partner with the Foster Care Society. CERI lent crucial technical support to this noble cause. Their collaboration included essential assistance in documentation, meticulously organizing activity planning, and preparing vital modules. This concerted effort aimed to streamline and enhance the foster care programs, ensuring that vulnerable children receive the best possible care and support. CERI's commitment to this partnership is not just about the present, but a testament to their dedication in shaping a brighter future for children in crisis.



## Contact Us

Your generosity illuminates the path to brighter futures for children in need, and we are deeply grateful for your invaluable support to our Foster Care Society. Thank you for being vital partners in our mission.



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