

**Special Issue of Learning to Fly** April & May 2021[View this email in your browser](#)**Dear Friends,**

*The last few months have been tumultuous for us in India. Several staff were infected with COVID-19 in this second wave. Some lost loved ones too. Nevertheless, we tried our best to support our staff, children, families and communities Butterflies is associated with.*

*There is much that is still emerging in terms of the psychosocial issues and mental health consequences for the diverse populations affected by this emergency.*

*This pandemic has forced hundreds of people, children to stay at their home to protect themselves and prevent the spread of the disease. While interacting with children and adults, we observed that children and their parents developed fear, anxiety of the future, or social isolation. Additionally, all outdoor activities have been restricted, schools are closed and children are attending classes online and as a result, many of them spend more time on screens (mobile/laptop/computer). With all these drastic and sudden changes, children are missing their schools, meeting friends and playing in the parks.*

*In the midst of the second wave of this pandemic, Butterflies has been able to address issues faced by our children and families. Our work prior to this pandemic over the last several years helped children be more prepared mentally and physically for this disastrous period. Concurrently our campaign against the sexual abuse of boys continued, supported by our valued partner NGOs in several states of India. The lockdown also witnessed Butterflies' Resilience Centre being converted into a temporary quarantine center for children (girls) recovering from Covid.*

*All this and more in this issue. Happy Reading.*

### *Hoping for the best, Preparing for the Worst*

Prior to the lockdown, our Child Rights Advocates (CRA- social worker-educators) were visiting the contact points and conducting classes and sports activities with children to keep them engaged and stress free. Both before and during the lockdown, CRAs were also lending emotional support to families and children through tele-counselling and helped them through the emotional crisis they were experiencing. Regular phone calls were also made to children and families to find out how they were faring and to reassure them that they are not alone and they could reach out to us whenever they wanted support.

### **The Clown's Act**

JKSMS, our Child Health and Sports Cooperatives' partner in Rajasthan had come up with an innovative way of sensitizing children and adults on the dangers of contracting COVID-19 and its variants. Dressed up as clowns, the staff enacted a play sensitizing children on the risks of COVID-19 in a fun and lighter way. Clowning came up as a pleasant surprise for children who were already anxious with all the negative news around them. Now that's what we call edutainment.



### **Strength and Awareness through Posters**

Posters on vaccine registration, home isolation tips, protection from the new Covid variant were developed and circulated by the CHSC team. Stressing on the need to take care of one's mental health during the lockdown, tips on developing a sound mental health, encouraging people to seek help were shared through posters by the mental health team.

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# TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

You are not Alone in this Crisis!  
You are not a Burden!

It is okay to ask for support!

Walk  
Play  
Exercise  
Dance  
Do household work!

Physical movement is crucial for mental health!

## Stress is natural in difficult situations

Use your coping skills:  
art, craft, cook, meditate, dance, play motor games...anything that makes you happy

Sleep  
Have nutritious food  
Hydrate yourself  
Get some sunlight  
Do breathing exercises

## Emotional health during the pandemic

- Prevention is better than cure! Take all the precautions against COVID 19 and strengthen your immunity
- Express yourself in positive emotions and thoughts
- Differentiate between what you can control, what you can not. Overthinking causes harm, take help
- Do not believe everything you think
- Do not overthink and avoid assumptions 'might be' is not real
- Keep things simple
- Focus on only highlights, not all the information. Many are recovering. Watch symptoms, take medicines and have hope
- Empathize
- Just because you can not see, it does not mean it is not there. Listen and be kind
- Stay connected to your beloved
- Distance is only physical, not social
- Keep your coping strategies active
- Anything which helps you to relax: music, art, craft, dance, play, meditation, exercise, cooking...

More news on the Child Health and Sports Cooperative can be read in their newsletter [Chit-Chat](#) (15 minute read).

## Better Awareness, Better Outcomes

A sensitization campaign titled CHILDLINE Se Dosti was organized in March to sensitize the public on CHILDLINE Services. This helped children reach out to CHILDLINE especially during the second wave of this pandemic.



## Providing Support to Families during the Second Wave of the Pandemic

## Rescue, Relief, Rehabilitation

Like last year Butterflies has been serving lunches and dry ration kits to families affected by Covid-19. The ration kit consists of rice, wheat flour, spices and pulses, oil, onions & potatoes and sanitation items. We solicit your support in continuing this-

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### Other Support

In addition, Child Rights Advocates (CRA)/ Child Development Officers(CDO) are coming up with their own e-lessons on all subjects, like language, geography, GK and storytelling. It has been noticed that some adolescents have joined in re-narrating stories and uploading on WhatsApp groups for the students. Students have reported that they are finding these lessons very informative and interesting; when they have any doubts, they call the concern CRA or CDO and ask for clarifications.

Group videos calls are proving greatly beneficial as both the CRAs and children feel more connected with each other. Parents have been motivated to spend time with their children, have conversations and make it a point to have meals together, and engage in regular yoga and meditation.

Parents have also asked about the vaccination of COVID-19. They want to know whether it is safe to take the vaccine. We made it clear that the vaccine is indeed safe, and informed them on the process of vaccine registration as well as the additional precautions that can be taken to avoid the virus.

### Concurrent Campaigns

Along with Family for Every Child, UK, we are running a campaign to raise awareness on the sexual abuse of boys. In order to highlight this widespread yet hidden issue of sexual exploitation of boys, a sensitization campaign titled Blue Umbrella Campaign was launched by Family for Every Child, UK and Butterflies in India on April 16, 2021. [Blue Umbrella Day](#) (BUD) is an international day to encourage adults to play a bigger role in protecting boys from harm and caring for them in ways that best support their wellbeing. Globally this campaign is intended to raise awareness of sexual violence affecting boys by engaging social media channels and inviting other organisations to take part too. Follow our social media campaign [here](#).

As part of this campaign Butterflies and FFEC, UK also conducted a study on the sexual abuse of boys. This study focuses on perspectives and childhood sexual experiences of boys in the context of masculinities and sexuality. Mapping the interventions of government as well non-governmental organizations, it further examines different practices and challenges faced in the process of addressing the issues emanating from the dominant notions of masculinities and sexuality in the context of India. Read more on the study [here](#).

### BBC during Covid

The Butterflies Broadcasting Children (BBC) have been doing their part really well by creating and sharing [radio programmes \(14 minutes each\)](#) on topics like importance of being physically active, tips on remaining positive during these perilous times.

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**Important Announcement on our new email ids**

The last two years have been tumultuous for our technology solutions providers too. Several shut down forcing us to shift to temporary email ids. However, we managed to get a new set of permanent email ids. The new email id of anybody you want to contact in Butterflies will be [firstname@butterfliesngo.org](mailto:firstname@butterfliesngo.org), eg. If the name is Sujay Joseph, the email id will be [sujay@butterfliesngo.org](mailto:sujay@butterfliesngo.org)

***Thank you for your time and support to Butterflies.***

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