

TRANSFORMING LIVES

CAL IN ACTION



"A future of well-being, value and equality for every child, everywhere."

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*This newsletter consists of updates
on CAL activities for the months of
January, February and March 2025*

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FEATURE ARTICLE

ANTI-BULLYING WORKSHOP

Strong advocates of child rights and protection, CAL continually seeks to create a society where every child is valued and safe. Aligning with this goal, an Anti-Bullying workshop was conducted at the Colombo CDC.

Targeting students between the ages of 8 years and 16 years, the primary objectives of the workshop were to create awareness about bullying, encourage self-reflection and equip children with strategies to address bullying behaviors.

The workshop, facilitated through a collaboration between the CAL team and P&H Training & Consultancy, incorporated interactive discussions, role-playing, group work and artistic activities to engage participants effectively.

Many children in the CAL community come from difficult environments, where exposure to violence, drugs and unhealthy role models is a daily reality. These external influences shape their perceptions of relationships, power and respect, often normalizing aggressive or harmful behaviors. For some, bullying is a learned response—either as a defense mechanism or as a way to assert control among the street community.

Over the course of the workshop, the participants were observed to be honest and open, displaying healthy levels of self-awareness. The students also identified behaviours that adversely affected their peers and occasions during which they were bullied, acknowledging the accompanying feelings and emotions they battled during these incidents.

At the completion of the workshop, an improved understanding of bullying and its impact was observed in the students, together with a greater self-awareness of bullying behaviours. The workshop participants were also equipped with strategies to handle and prevent bullying, resulting in safer environments in which they can learn and grow.



CAL is determined to transform lives through creating secure spaces in which street-connected children can recognize their self-worth, tap into their potential and create good futures for themselves.



ACTIVITY-BASED LEARNING

AT CAL PRE-SCHOOLS

Propelled by the strong belief that education is the foundation for positive change in society, CAL is committed to be an ongoing provider of employable education. CAL pre-schools, operational at 6 CDCs, are a means of laying a strong foundation for learning and development in young children.

CAL pre-schools have adopted the activity-based learning approach, considering the myriad of benefits that this learning strategy offers young children.



Activity-based learning has proven to foster improved understanding and retention of information. Through hands-on exploration, experimentation and problem-solving, young children are increasingly engaged and motivated in the process of learning. Activity-based learning also promotes critical thinking in young children, providing opportunities to evaluate information, explore different perspectives and make informed decisions.

This year, our pre-schoolers have been learning through exploring various themes, such as 'Me, Myself & My School', 'Transportation' and 'Fruits'. Utilising the activity-based learning approach, each theme offered our curious little ones opportunities to actively engage in a wide variety of activities as they discovered and learned.

From role play, to playing dress-up, to preparing fruit salads, to building vehicle models, to coloring and painting fruits, little minds and little hands were abuzz with excitement and curiosity.

Each day, our little ones stepped into their pre-schools with bright eyes, eager for yet another day of exploration and discovery. Educators at every pre-school were amazed by the level of engagement that they witnessed in the children and the depth of insight that the children were receiving as they actively interacted in the various learning activities.

The activity-based learning approach is transforming the learning experiences of CAL's pre-schoolers, ensuring a stronger foundation on which our brilliant children can build, transforming their lives, families and communities in the years ahead.







THE BATTICALOA BUS

CAL's Batticaloa CDC is a bustling hub of learning, growth & development. Children from various villages in Batticaloa eagerly gather at the CDC each day, receiving healthy meals, participating in classes and engaging in sports & recreation.

However, it became increasingly evident that the poor transport systems available in Batticaloa posed as a hindrance, preventing many children from reaping the benefits of the CDC. Infrequent and irregular bus services to and from rural villages, together with the imminent danger posed by wild elephants along travel routes, became a growing concern to the children and families of the Batticaloa community.

Aware of the challenging situation, friends from Lyne and Longcross Parish Church, St. John' Egham and Kingston United Reform Church (UK), together with longtime partner, Mrs Sue Stafford, determined to support CAL in resolving this troubling issue. In February 2025, through the generous contributions of these friends, a brand-new bus was donated to the Batticaloa CDC, ensuring that transportation challenges would no longer hinder children from receiving nutrition, education and protection through the CDC.



Since then, the new bus has greatly alleviated the pressing transport issue. At present, the bus transports more than 70 children to and from the CDC. Traveling up to 75km daily over 4 trips, the bus is able to access the most rural spaces, providing children in these areas an opportunity to learn, be nourished and kept safe. Both children of the CDC and their parents are deeply grateful and thankful for this essential service that has eradicated a threat and ensured added safety.

CAL is deeply grateful to its dedicated friends and partners for their generous and crucial contribution. Together, CAL looks forward to transforming many more lives in the Batticaloa district.





COMMUNITY OUTREACH

CAL's impact is not contained within the walls of its Child Development Centres. CAL strives to influence lives, impacting whole communities in turn.

As part of its efforts to transform whole communities, the following initiatives were carried out in the first quarter of 2025:

Child Safety Awareness Programme – Galle

The team at the Galle CDC organized an awareness programme on child safety for parents and families in Galle – these families are not direct beneficiaries of CAL, but were invited to the event as a means of contributing towards the larger community around the Galle CDC. Held at the Dalawella Temple, the awareness programme was attended by 40 participants. Staff from the CDC worked together to train the parents who attended the event, offering them practical and essential information on creating safe spaces for their children to grow and develop in.



Training of Trainer Programme – Batticaloa

The Batticaloa CDC management organized a crucial Training of Trainer Programme for members of their Child Protection Committee. Conducted by Mr Niroshan, a National Child Protection Officer, this training, attended by close to 50 participants, created greater awareness on child protection strategies and implementation





Workshop on Cultivation – Kandy

With the objective of promoting self-sufficiency in food production, an awareness programme was organized for 14 mothers, who owned sufficient land or space for a home garden, of pre-school children attending CAL's Kandy CDC Pre-School. Conducted by 2 Agriculture Officers and the Development Officer of the Katukelle Division, this training empowered women to sustainably cultivate their own vegetation, contributing towards the nutrition and livelihood of their families.

Medical Camp in Collaboration with the MOH – Batticaloa

The Batticaloa CDC collaborated with the Ministry of Health (MOH) to conduct a Medical Camp for children and families in its care. This important initiative, a collaboration between government health professionals and CAL's dedicated team, ensured that under-served communities received essential medical attention, screenings and medical counsel – all free of charge.

A range of medical services were provided during the camp, such as general health check-ups, nutritional assessments and consultations for children and parents. For many families, especially those facing financial hardship or living in remote areas, this was a rare and much-needed opportunity to access quality healthcare close to home.



Community Awareness Program on Child Protection- Colombo

The Colombo CDC staff conducted a Community Awareness Program on Child Protection for seven identified community members. The main goal of the program was to educate the community, particularly parents, on ensuring the safety of children both within and outside of the center. The session was facilitated through trained community leaders, and the participants responded positively, showing interest and engagement throughout the program.



Community Awareness Program on Drug Prevention - Colombo

A special Drug Prevention Program was held to raise awareness among community members about the dangers of drug abuse and impart tips to build a safer, healthier future for children and families. The session was conducted by Ms. Dilhara Waragoda, Assistant Drug Education Officer at the National Dangerous Drug Control Board, in collaboration with the dedicated team from the Colombo CDC.

The program reached 28 community members, offering valuable insights into the harmful effects of drug abuse and the long-term impact it can have on individuals and families. With a strong focus on prevention and early intervention, the session emphasized practical strategies to protect children from exposure to drugs and ways to effectively respond to and intervene in substance abuse scenarios.



Bringing Healing Hands - Gampola

On 26th March, a meaningful milestone was crossed at Child Action Lanka with its first physiotherapy session for children in need of physical rehabilitation and support. Eight children participated in this inaugural session, each with unique needs and remarkable potential. It was a moment of hope, care and progress—for them and for all of us.

Physiotherapy is not just a medical service—it is a vital step towards improving the quality of life for children who face physical challenges. For many of these children, everyday tasks such as walking, sitting upright, or even playing with their peers can be difficult without the right support. With proper therapy, they gain not only physical strength but also greater confidence and independence.



COLLABORATIONS

CAL's impact on street-connected communities in Sri Lanka is constantly boosted by the dedicated support of benevolent and generous partners. In the first quarter of 2025, the CAL community received essential contributions that greatly aided in boosting regular school attendance:

School Uniforms Distribution – Kandy

The Inner Wheel Club of Kandy Metropolitan

In an effort to lessen the risk of school dropouts due to lack of school supplies, it has been a longstanding initiative of the Kandy CDC to distribute uniforms to its students. The Inner Wheel Club of Kandy Metropolitan has been a partner of this initiative for more than a decade. This year, the Inner Wheel Club of Kandy Metropolitan donated uniforms to the Grades 1, 2 & 3 students of the CDC.



The Buddhist Global Relief (BGR) and Mitgefühl in Aktion (MiA)

The Buddhist Global Relief (BGR) and Mitgefühl in Aktion (MiA) also collaborated to distribute uniforms to the Grades 4-11 students of the CDC. The BGR and MiA also distributed school uniforms at 4 other CDCs. This successful joint initiative has ensured that many children from CAL's CDCs will have necessary school attire for the year.



Distribution of School Bags & Shoes – 5 CDCs

Bryanston School (England) generously donated school bags and shoes to children at 5 CAL CDCs. This initiative, once again, lessens the probability of school drop outs due to a lack of school supplies.



Stationery Distribution – All CDCs and Shelter Home

Acuity Knowledge Partners, a longstanding partner of CAL, generously donated school stationery to all children of the CAL community, including the Shelter Home. Children from pre-school to Grade 11 received stationery packs that consisted of essential stationery for the school year.



Empowering Education Together

CAL is excited to share the wonderful news of a growing partnership with Teach Sri Lanka, a passionate youth-led organization dedicated to promoting education equity across Sri Lanka. Teach Sri Lanka's recent donation included essential school supplies, such as books, pens, pencils, erasers, rulers, and more—tools that are simple yet powerful in the hands of a child eager to learn. These resources were distributed among children at the Kandy CDC, many of whom come from under-resourced backgrounds and struggle to access basic learning materials.

This partnership with Teach Sri Lanka is rooted in a shared vision: to create equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their background. Through this collaboration, we are not only addressing material needs but also encouraging a deeper investment in the futures of these young learners.



HOW TO BECOME A SPONSOR

- Donation of \$ 15 (Rs. 4500/-) will cover the monthly educational expenses of one child
- Donation of \$ 180 will cover the yearly educational expenses of one child

SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS:

- Make a one-time donation of USD 15 (LKR 4,500) or more
- Sign up as a sponsor for 12 months with monthly donations of USD 15 (total of USD 180 for one year)
- Choose to sponsor one child or more

To sign up as a sponsor, kindly email mihiri@childactionlanka.org with the subject, 'Sponsor for HMF'.

A ONE-YEAR SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENT WILL BE ENTITLED TO:

- A quarterly update from the centre to which your sponsorship has been assigned to
- A CAL Newsletter subscription
- A personalized 'thank you' card made by CAL kids



To become a sponsor, scan the QR code and send us your details.



HEAL, EMPOWER, LOVE, PROTECT

WOMEN'S DAY COMMEMORATION

Daughters, sisters, wives, mothers, grandmothers, friends – Women. CAL highly esteems the fundamental role that women carry in society and is continually committed to cheering women on in their pursuit of transformation and advancement.

CAL actively advocates for the rights of women, seeking to empower them to build good futures for themselves and their families. Recognising that women play a critical role in ensuring a prosperous and productive society, especially through their invaluable role in family, CAL offers women various avenues through which they can be empowered to nurture their children, safeguard themselves and their children and tap on their skills and potential to generate sustainable income for their families.

CAL demonstrates its commitment towards empowering women through major initiatives, such as the WRAP Project and Together & Co. Coffee Shop project. Both projects offer women opportunities to be equipped with the vocational skills necessary to secure gainful employment and generate sustainable income for their families.

This year, on International Women's Day, in an effort to emphasise the invaluable contribution of women to their families, teams at CAL CDCs pulled out all the stops to show their honour and appreciation for the women in their communities. Cooking demonstrations, heartwarming speeches and tokens of appreciation were just some of the creative ways in which women in the CAL community were celebrated.



Join us and **SHARE A MEAL**

Scan the QR code to donate



SPECIAL EVENTS

CAL's holistic approach to child development acknowledges the significance of initiatives that foster unity, promote tolerance and inculcate understanding and acceptance of one another. With these goals in mind, CAL CDCs made special efforts to commemorate Sri Lanka's Independence Day and the Thai Pongal festival.

To commemorate Sri Lanka's Independence Day, children were taught the significance of celebrating Sri Lanka's freedom and independence and the importance of playing our part in building a cohesive and united society, even in the midst of diversity.

Thai Pongal festivities also taught our children the importance of understanding and accepting the beliefs & practices of different cultures and religious groups.





SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Employable education equips individuals with skills and knowledge directly applicable to the workforce, offering numerous benefits including increased job opportunities, higher earning potential, career advancement and enhanced job satisfaction, while also contributing to personal development and lifelong learning. Such adeptness ensure that employees thrive in their careers, enabling them to support and transform their lives and their communities.

At the heart of CAL's mission to transform lives lies a core belief in the essentiality of employable education

As part of its commitment towards being a provider of employable education, practical initiatives were carried out in the first quarter of 2025 at various CAL CDCs.

At the Colombo CDC, 'Brain Games' was launched. Brain games enhance cognitive skills like problem-solving, memory and attention, while also fostering critical thinking, creativity and social skills through engaging and fun activities.



Activities such as Draughts, Team Drawing Challenge, 3-in-a-Row and Sequential Cup Opening were carried out among the children at the CDC. The CDC team observed encouraging behaviour among the children, such as longer attention spans, stronger teamwork and increased enjoyment in engagement.

The Akkarayan and Kilinochchi CDCs also launched a Career Guidance Programme for 24 youth who are part of the Youth IT Programme. Conducted by the Skills Development Officer and Technical Officer from the Divisional Secretariat Office, the training equipped participants with skills and knowledge required to thrive in job interviews, possess professional ethics & craft effective CVs and also provided insight on National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) levels and available career pathways.

The training, driven by the aim to enhance career opportunities for young individuals by equipping them with the knowledge and skills required for employment, empowered youth with a renewed confidence in succeeding in the workforce.



Yet another initiative adopted by CAL to enhance skills development is the implementation of sports initiatives. Recognising that sports engagement leads to improved physical and mental health, enhanced social skills, leadership development and increased academic performance, CAL CDCs offer children opportunities to be trained in various sports initiatives, including Cricket and Badminton. Students who display outstanding skills are also provided with specialized coaching, further honing their skills, and opportunities to compete in district-level tournaments, competitions and leagues.





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The Impact of Donations

Your donation gives our children hope for the future and ensures that their nutritional & health requirements are met, and their primary and higher educational journeys are supported. It also enables protection from violence & abuse and the empowerment of girls & women. Children are the starting point in breaking the cycle of poverty and your donation will help make this a reality.

Donate through the CAL charity page by scanning the QR code below.

Scan the QR code to donate.

Help us reach the target of providing 10,000 meals.

Join us and **SHARE A MEAL**



Donate through Star Points



Support us by donating your Star Points directly via the MyDialog app or text #141*6*10# CAL

