

Hriday Dialogues 2024

Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem

Healing the Self to Heal Systems



Hriday Dialogues 2024: Healing the Self to Heal Systems

White Paper Documenting Insights From the 2024 Edition of Hriday Dialogues, an Annual Stakeholder Consultation for Strengthening India's Child Protection Ecosystem



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Protsahan
India Foundation



In picture: Jaswinder Singh, Executive Director, Pratsahan India Foundation



In picture (from left to right): Smita Sharma, Independent Journalist, and Aparna Uppaluri, Senior Philanthropy Advisor, Founder, Antara Advisory

Introduction

The Philosophy and Purpose of This Document

Hriday Dialogues is an annual stakeholder consultation representing a profound commitment to the well-being of vulnerable children across our nation. Bringing together an extraordinary coalition of minds, it aims to serve as a platform where voices from government, media, civil society, funding organisations, and key legal and psychological institutions converge. This dynamic gathering is a step toward shaping a nurturing ecosystem that empowers children to heal, grow, and thrive, through investment in the capacity building of proximate leaders.

The conversations this year revolved around several critical themes. Participants examined the interconnected levels of self, system, and society, reflecting on how healed individuals can heal communities. The importance of listening to children and engaging with them was highlighted, on an interpersonal level and on a policy level. Intersections of gender, caste, class, ability, and more were discussed, while representing the intricacies of situations of children in child care institutions, classrooms, and family units.

Masterclasses at the consultation emphasised the neurobiology of trauma, exploring how its manifestations affect children and how healing can be supported through art-based approaches. We were honored to launch the open source D-I-Y H.E.A.R.T Toolkit for frontline caregivers, decoding the psychosocial aspects of trauma for social workers in an accessible format.

A common thread emerged from the discussions on the day, centring on the idea that networks create the conditions for change. Change cannot happen in silos; it requires the sharing of power, reflexivity, and a commitment to systemic transformation.

This White Paper seeks to encapsulate the insights and perspectives shared during this day. It is a deliberate effort to preserve and document the invaluable contributions of each speaker and participant, ensuring that their voices resonate beyond the walls of the consultation. Recognising that spoken language often carries a fluidity that differs from the written word, the statements captured here have been thoughtfully edited for clarity and conciseness while striving to retain the depth and authenticity of their intent. This white paper aims to serve as a resource for stakeholders in the country's child protection ecosystem.

By spotlighting best practices and enabling meaningful exchanges, Hriday Dialogues aspires to create conversations that enable reflection, cross-dialogue, and the illumination of ideas of change. It aims to support discourse and narrative building that furthers the best interests of the child. This White Paper captures the essence of these conversations - the stories, the strategies, and the shared vision of a future where every child can find the safety, support, and opportunity they deserve.





Highlights: Dil se Charcha

Protsahan Girl Champions in Conversation
with Kiran Khalap, Protsahan Board Chairman

Strengthening India's
Child Protection Eco

“प्रोत्साहन में हम कला को एक स्किल के तौर पर नहीं देखते, हम इसे आत्मविश्वास का एक माध्यम मानते हैं। जब लड़कियाँ cards बनाती हैं, उनका लिखा एक हिम्मत का टुकड़ा बन जाता है, जो उन्हें याद दिलाता है कि उनमें भी कोई बात है। जो art हम करते हैं – चाहे pottery हो, theatre, या games – लड़कियों को लगता है कि वो अपनी life को shape कर सकती हैं और अपना वजूद महसूस कर पाती हैं।

- Mala, Protsahan Youth Peer Leader, who helps thousands of adolescent girls stand on their own feet and speak without fear



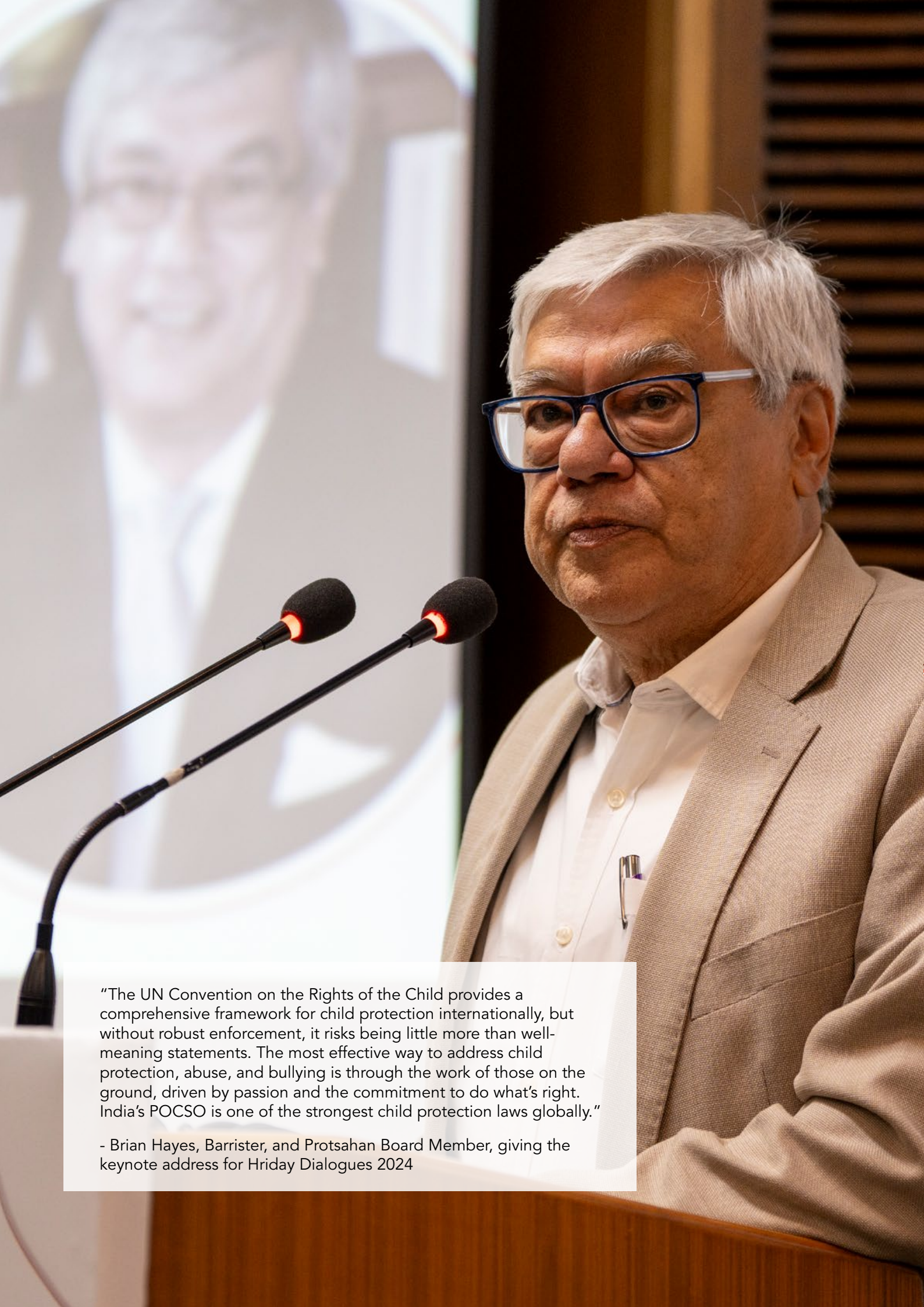
“प्रोत्साहन की ma'ams ने मुझे समझाया, 'अगर हम try करेंगे, तभी तो कुछ हासिल होगा।' जब कोई हम पर believe करता है, तो हमारी क्षमता दोगुनी हो जाती है।”

- Uzma, 11-year-old chess aficionado, who wants to become a barrister and work for girls' rights



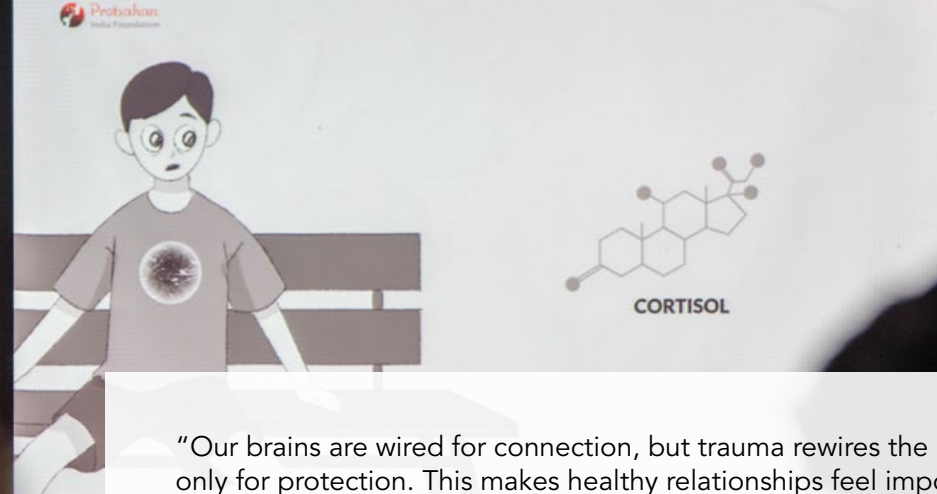
“समुदाय की लड़कियों को अक्सर लगता है कि वह job नहीं कर सकती, और अगर करेंगी भी तो उत्तम नगर के अंदर ही। हम उन्हें खुद पे विश्वास करना सिखाते हैं, ताकि वह खुद को सीमित करना बंद कर दें। मैं लड़कियों को digital tools सिखाकर उनका confidence वापस लाना चाहती हूँ, जहाँ उन्होंने अपना confidence खो दिया है। आने वाला समय AI और तकनीकीकरण का है - लड़कियाँ पीछे नहीं रहनी चाहिए।”

- Jyoti Yadav, Protsahan Youth Peer Leader, who teaches digital literacy to thousands of girls



"The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child provides a comprehensive framework for child protection internationally, but without robust enforcement, it risks being little more than well-meaning statements. The most effective way to address child protection, abuse, and bullying is through the work of those on the ground, driven by passion and the commitment to do what's right. India's POCSO is one of the strongest child protection laws globally."

- Brian Hayes, Barrister, and Protsahan Board Member, giving the keynote address for Hriday Dialogues 2024

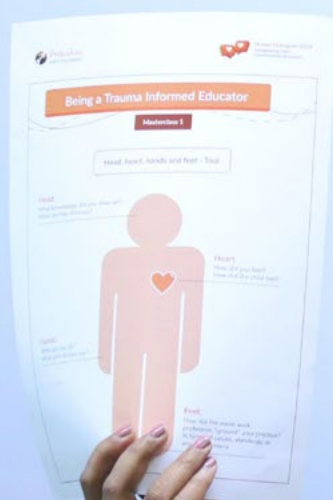


“Our brains are wired for connection, but trauma rewires the brain only for protection. This makes healthy relationships feel impossible for wounded children. The toolkit by Protsahan decodes concepts like the polyvagal theory, expressive arts therapy, sociological models, the amygdala, and the hippocampus, for caregivers closest to the child. Why shouldn't social workers understand what's happening in the child's brain? Why shouldn't parents understand what's happening in the brain of their child?

The brain's most important function is not cognition and learning, the brain's most important function is survival. How do our social works decode that? How can we, as a collective, nurture children's healing with arts and connection?

The toolkit is not just a resource, it is an invitation to every social worker, parent, caregiver, and changemaker, to understand the pain behind a child's behaviour, hold space for their healing, and guide them towards connection and safety. As we launch this today, I'm filled with extreme hope, because I know that together, with the right knowledge and the right tools, we can shift that story of trauma into a story of resilience, that pain into power, and that silence into strength.”

- Sonal Kapoor, Founder-Director Protsahan, launching an open-source public good on trauma-informed care for 170 million children, aligned with India's National Education Policy, 2020, designed for educators and child care professionals across India



Day Dialogue
Strengthening India's
Protection Ecosy



Panel Discussion Highlights

Policy and Possibilities

Building a Trauma-Informed Child Protection Ecosystem

“

While the Juvenile Justice Act is well-drafted, gaps in its implementation often result in trauma for children. Long-term institutional care frequently neglects family restoration efforts, leaving children unsupported, isolated, and forgotten by the system, until they turn 18. Alternatively, children are sometimes suddenly returned to abusive family environments, and this abrupt de-institutionalization causes further trauma.

Older children placed in foster care often face rejection due to unpreparedness on both sides, and cases of disruption are common.

Care-leavers also struggle, when at 18, these children are expected to become independent, yet many lack access to proper documentation, education, or family support, compounding their vulnerability.

”



Satyajeet Mazumdar

Director - Advocacy,
Catalysts for Social
Action

“

Legal frameworks aim to create environments where individualized mechanisms and approaches can be enabled. Trauma-informed care requires individualized attention, which is challenging in systems catering to large numbers and scale. Trauma is very deep, intensive, and it requires time, patience, and priority.

The Juvenile Justice Act's key principles include presumption of innocence, family as the first resort, institutionalization as the last resort, and a commitment to dignity, equality, and restoration. These principles reflect intent but often face barriers in practice.

One Stop Crisis Centres intend to guarantee a lot of services, but survivors often end up having to navigate a complex web of referrals to access them. This process, exhausting for adults, is even more overwhelming for traumatized children, leading some to feel alienated and unsupported.

”



Sharmila Ray

Child Protection
Specialist, UNICEF



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Protsahan
India Foundation



A school is more than a building and textbooks; it is a network of conversations, feelings, and actions within a set of relationships. We need to ask ourselves questions about what kind of conversations we are enabling, what feelings are left behind, and what they achieve or fail to achieve. Work needs to be done around three pillars: the classroom, the education system, and society itself. **कक्षा, शिक्षा, और समाज।**

Classrooms need to be comfortable and engaging. Classrooms that are silent and disciplined can be detrimental to mental health. The simplest pedagogical tool is to smile a lot at children. Before we teach, we need to connect. Children's minds have a lot more going on than we'd expect. Understanding it, connecting to it, and responding to it, can lay the cornerstone for trauma-informed classrooms.



Subir Shukla

Former Educational
Quality Advisor to
MHRD



Sandhya Mishra

Senior Director, Miracle
Foundation India



Over 70% children in Child Care Institutions (CCIs) have families, and are often placed there due to poverty or abuse. Family strengthening and restoration are critical to breaking cycles of institutionalization. Miracle Foundation India's THRIVE Framework focuses on key well-being domains - family relationships, education, health, household economy, and living standards - ensuring holistic support for families and children

Family restoration cannot be a one-time transition. With strong case management, the organization ensures a structured five-step approach - intake, admission, planning, follow-up, and case closure - enabling transitions that are thoughtful and trauma-informed.



Exponential problems require exponential efforts. How do we align and cooperate in a way that we, as non-profits, psychologists, lawyers, media representatives, and stakeholders, can all be in sync? In nature, networks create the conditions for emergence, they are the first stage of emergence. Benefiting from the diversity of individuals, perspectives, voices, and strengths, helps us work towards common goals.

The Ashoka ASPIRE program has learnt from grassroots organizations like Protsahan, being closest to the problem and working directly with children and their social circles, that they are critical for generating knowledge for the entire network. But this role must be identified in advance, scale is not an afterthought. It requires foresight, flexibility, and learning from failures.



Polina Nezdiikovska

Community Development
Lead, Centre for
Exponential Change



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Protsahan
India Foundation

EIGHT QUESTIONS YOU MUST ANSWER WITH A "YES"

FOR TRAUMA-INFORMED CLASSROOMS

A Comic Strip Drawn From Subir Shukla's Talk at Hriday Dialogues 2024

1. Do children feel comfortable in class? Do they speak up?



Smile a lot at children!



Before you teach, you must connect.

2. Do you try to understand what is going on in a child's mind?



They see things differently!

When you try to understand what is going on in a child's mind, they start to share



Having someone who will listen is restorative.

3. Do you communicate that you value children's knowledge and experiences?



Children shine when they talk about their interests!

4. Do you engage children? Do you generate reflection, application, and creation?



Providing children with a sense of accomplishment and purpose helps them flourish.

5. Do you use the curriculum fully, and not just for test prep?



Art, physical activity, and music help cope with stress and encourage regular self-expression

6. Do children run the class along with you?
Can they take charge of their learning?



Is there self-assessment, target-setting, collaboration, and assessment by demand?

7. Do you track participation and well-being?



If a child's participation dips, that might be a clue to something that needs deeper understanding. Talk, connect with the child, find out, take action.

8. Do you use success as a weapon against trauma?



Do you enable the child to set standards and ambitions and support them in achieving them?



This is how children feel valued and capable, with something to look forward to.

The feeling of progressive successes backed by adults can lead to confidence and overcoming trauma.



Small wins pave the way towards trauma-informed learning spaces!

Mini Masterclass One Highlights

The Polyvagal Connection

Engaging Head, Heart, and Hands in Trauma-Informed Care for Abused Children

By understanding the Polyvagal Theory, social workers can shift from seeing children's behaviors as "problems" to understanding them as survival strategies. This perspective fosters deeper empathy, builds trust, and lays the foundation for healing.

The masterclass on Polyvagal Theory provided participants with a hands-on, tactile activity that illuminated the connection between behaviors and the states of the polyvagal ladder. By understanding the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) and how it governs trauma responses, participants explored how abuse disrupts a child's ability to remain in the ventral vagal state - the state of safety and connection.

The session emphasized that trauma is not merely psychological but deeply physiological, with the body remembering abuse through hyperarousal (fight/flight) or hypoarousal (freeze) or a mix of both (fawn), even when a child cannot verbalize their experiences. The masterclass highlighted the critical role of social workers as "safe anchors," who can model calm and regulated behavior, use tone and body language to communicate safety, and replace punitive responses with empathy to build trust. These were the three states of activation that were explored:



Dorsal Vagal Activation:

Attitude: "I am buried under a huge load and I cannot get out. I am alone in my despair. The world is empty, dead, and dark."



Ventral Vagal Activation:

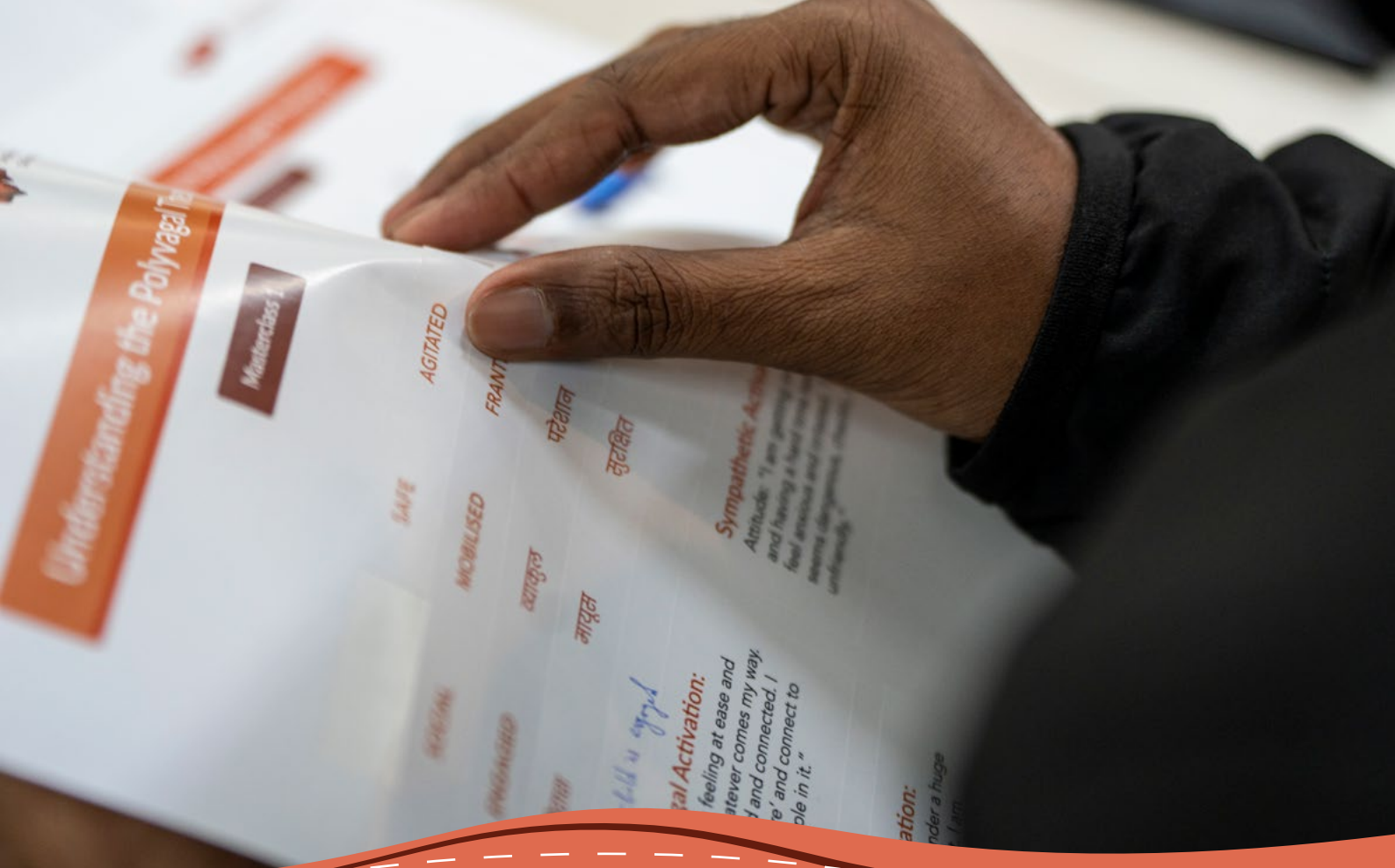
Attitude: "I am getting overwhelmed and having a hard time keeping up. I feel anxious and irritated. The world seems dangerous, chaotic, and unfriendly."



Sympathetic Activation:

Attitude: "I am feeling at ease and can manage whatever comes my way. I feel empowered and connected. I see the 'big picture' and connect to the world and people in it."





Panel Discussion Highlights

The Body Keeps the Score

Understanding Psychosocial Narratives

“

The brain consumes 20–25% of the body's energy, and often switches to autopilot to conserve energy. This can influence behavior. Further, trauma manifests in varied ways, including fight, flight, freeze, or fawn responses. The fawn response involves pleasing the abuser to minimize harm. Children also respond to trauma with hypervigilance, “monkey-see, monkey-do” responses, and mirrored fear or shame. The hippocampus shrinks under trauma to avoid storing painful memories, making trauma difficult to detect externally.

Trauma need not exhibit itself in the way one would expect. A child's perception of their safety and their surroundings significantly impacts their behavior and emotional expression. Understanding trauma's varied manifestations fosters more effective and empathetic responses.



Gayathri Swahar
Senior Director,
The/Nudge Institute

”



Harsuchetun Kaur
Arts Based Therapist,
Mental Health Cell,
Govt. of Punjab

“

Our relationships with primary caregivers during the first 5–7 years of life shape how we form, sustain, or break relationships throughout life. These early experiences create a template for emotional responses such as love, anger, fear, and helplessness.

In shelter homes, children may project behaviors learned from their primary caregivers onto staff, such as wardens, counselors, or superintendents: this is called transference. Further, staff in shelter homes may unconsciously project their unresolved childhood patterns onto the children, such as favoritism or emotional distance, based on their own experiences of love or neglect. This is called counter-transference.

Without self-awareness and therapy, staff risk repeating these unconscious patterns, which can hinder a child's healing process and perpetuate cycles of trauma. To effectively support children, shelter home staff must prioritize their own healing through regular counseling and therapy - ideally at twice the frequency of children's counseling sessions.

”





Alok Sarin

Clinical Psychiatrist,
Sitaram Bhatia Hospital

“

The Body Keeps the Score highlights critical mind-body interconnectedness. Diagnoses often categorize complex human experiences into artificial frameworks; while useful, these frameworks should be questioned.

The concept of the “exposome” underscores how environmental exposures shape health, reflecting broader interconnectedness between societal factors. Why did COVID cause economic disruption? How did infection cause homelessness? Understanding interconnectedness is key to addressing systemic issues and fostering holistic well-being.

”

“

Imagine being a seven year old, and having a vibrant twin that only you can perceive. You love spending time with the twin, but nobody else can see or love them, and you cannot tell anybody about them. Transgender children carry this weight of invisibility throughout childhood, not being seen and loved, and carrying the responsibility of giving justice to this part of themselves.

Look around you, hear, and understand. Systems of science, psychiatry, and neuroscience can fail sometimes – up until recently, being transgender was pathologized in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). Societal attitudes influence scientific perspectives. Listening to the experiences of children and marginalized communities is essential to creating inclusive systems.

”



Shaman Gupta

Founder, Mysfit

“

When reporting on POCSO cases, four areas presenting challenges are evident. One, mandatory reporting can become highly complex in cases where the abuser is a family member or a primary caregiver, destabilizing the household. Especially in extremely marginalized households, this is challenging, as nutrition and sustenance come under question.

Two, patriarchal mindsets in police, judiciary, and child protection systems often lead to victim-shaming and insensitivity. Trauma-informed approaches and capacity-building programs are crucial for all stakeholders.

Three, children’s homes often impose patriarchal norms, such as dress codes, perpetuating trauma by placing responsibility on victims. And four, when it comes to media practices, quick reporting demands often conflict with the survivor’s need for time to process trauma. Trauma-informed journalism should prioritize survivors over deadlines.

”



Priyanka Tupe

Journalist, Behanbox





In picture (from left to right): Sandhyaa Mishra, Senior Director - Miracle Foundation India, Subir Shukla, Former Advisor to MHRD, Sharmila Ray, Child Protection Specialist - UNICEF, Satyajee Mazumdar, Director - Catalysts for Social Action, and Polina Nezdiikovska, Community Development Lead - Centre for Exponential Change

Day Dialogues 2024

Strengthening India's
Protection Ecosystem



Learning with
Leher:
Bal Suraksha Hub

Delegate Tasha Koshi, Leher



Strength-Based Framework

Mental health is a priority in care of Udayan Care

- Trauma informed care
- Tenets of Bowlby's attachment theory - secure adult interpersonal relationships, Mental Parents concept was conceived
- Integrating Udayan's psychosocial theory of development with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems approach

Mental Health Approach

- Promote positive mental health, early identification and intervention
- Individual & Community Approach (Strategies, Health coaching)
- Enhance emotional and social wellbeing
- Build resilience, improve coping skills
- Address behavior modification
- Nurture a protective future
- Case Management Approach, Exposure to Higher purpose in life
- Hope and Faith

Continues Research and Publications

Bowlby's Stages of Psychosocial Development



Bowlby's Attachment Theory



Delegate Ranjana Srivastava, Udayan Care





Mini Masterclass Two Highlights

Creating Trauma-Informed Learning Spaces

Understanding Chaos and Connection

In this masterclass, participants delved into the intricacies of how a child's brain processes dysregulation and attachment complexities, guided by the H.E.A.R.T. framework. Designed for educators and caregivers, the session illuminated the neural underpinnings of stress and connection, providing insights to enhance caregiving interactions and foster resilience. Central to the session was a hands-on, tactile activity that used symbolism to deepen understanding.



Ants, Representing Chaos

Participants were invited to place ants onto a silhouette of a child, reflecting on the chaos and dysregulation often present in a traumatized child's brain. The ants symbolized the overwhelming, scattered activity driven by the amygdala during moments of stress or trauma. This heightened state represents confusion, difficulty processing emotions, and challenges with self-regulation—a reality faced by many children navigating complex emotional landscapes.



Butterflies, Representing Connection

In contrast, participants placed butterflies onto another child silhouette, representing the calm and harmony that emerge when a child feels safe and supported. Butterflies symbolized the activation of the prefrontal cortex, a state where emotional regulation, creativity, and the capacity for meaningful relationships thrive. This stark juxtaposition highlighted the transformative power of connection in a child's journey toward growth and learning.

The session explored the interplay between these two states, exploring intersections of vulnerability and the ground realities of social work. It was aided by a play representing the intricacies of the fear in a child's brain. The caregivers' roles in facilitating transitions from chaos to connection was explored, emphasizing the importance of a social worker that says "I see you". Through the arts-based approaches, participants were equipped to respond to signs of dysregulation in children, create environments that promote a sense of safety and belonging, and encourage the development of self-regulation and resilience.

This masterclass reaffirmed that while chaos may be inevitable at times, connection holds the power to transform - fostering resilience, nurturing growth, and paving the way for healing.



Panel Discussion Highlights

Collaborative Pathways

Trauma-Informed Narratives in Public Discourse

“

In many cases, the focus of CRY has been on the invisibility of being a funder or intermediary. The restoration of a child's rights is every adult's duty: how do you create that invisibility at the NGO level? The only person real to the child should be the caregiver, the didi, the person holding that community together. How do we build the capacity of the duty-bearer?

(...) My realization for CRY as an institution was that change must happen at three levels – self, society, and the system. Permanent change cannot happen without all three of these. The realization of change at the “self” level was particularly relevant because unhealed individuals cannot heal communities. We heard school teachers use casteist insults and carry deep prejudice. We realized that unless people look into their prejudices, they are going to transfer them.

We brought this hope of transforming the self into CRY as an institution. We would have to constantly train our people to look into these mirrors, integrating self-reflection and trauma-informed practices into leadership and training.

(On transferring power) The real challenge that we, as social workers, face, is the reality that we came here to transfer power, not take it. There is a difference between saying “Didi will open a school” and “we will open a school together” – the paradigm shift from the orientation towards playing god, to asking, “How can I help people find the powerful creature within themselves?” If you transfer power, you might make yourself redundant, and that is scary.

Many find it scarier giving power to children. A lot of people ask me why we must give agency to children instead of making intelligent decisions for them. But how will a child miraculously begin taking their decisions at 18? The concept of evolving the capacities of children and communities is what caregiving should be about.

”



Puja Marwaha
CEO, Child Rights & You



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Pratsahan
India Foundation



Smita Sharma

Independent Journalist



Indian media, especially television, often lacks sensitivity and contextual depth in reporting trauma. There is a need for more representation of women and marginalized voices in newsrooms. Further, journalists must develop empathy to build trust with their sources and report responsibly.

Newsrooms often do not emphasize on the language being used, and political victim-blaming is prevalent. When speaking to child survivors as reporters, we must assess how much to dig into them. Do we make the child recall what they have gone through and suffer that trauma all over again? If we do not do that, how do we bring the truth to light, and create documentation for the struggle to justice? Often that sensitivity is absent in journalists who shove a mic into the child's mouth.

Training on language and victim-sensitive reporting is critical and should be prioritized. Alternative and digital media journalists, such as Dhanya Rajendran and Jyoti Yadav, are setting examples of sensitive reporting, focusing on the nuances of language and representation.

Trauma stories often disappear from collective memory. We move quickly to box away trauma. There is a need to revisit and document these stories to support survivors and ensure systemic accountability.



Philanthropy holds power over resources, systems, and narratives, along with other stakeholders in the ecosystem. Sharing this power requires reflexivity and commitment to systemic change.

Power isn't limited to funding, it also involves narrative building. It is important to analyze how power functions to understand how and which resources get distributed. We must reflect on the frameworks that lend legitimacy to "theories of change", and find ground for renegotiating power.

Measurement frameworks often overlook why interventions work, focusing instead on what works, invisibilizing lived experiences. Arts-based approaches are very difficult to fund, because they are difficult to measure. But there is evidence that funding for arts-based approaches is central to deep shifts at the individual, interpersonal, and community level. How do you heal communities without arts-based approaches?

A shift towards understanding and scaling systemic change is essential. As you start to unpack the methodological rigour of your work, you can evolve the ways in which you communicate with your funders.

Global norm-setting, such as SDG 16.2 (ending violence against children), must align with grassroots realities and advocate for building evidence, shifting norms, and changing narratives, to drive meaningful change.



Aparna Uppaluri

Senior Philanthropy
Advisor, Founder,
Antara Advisory



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



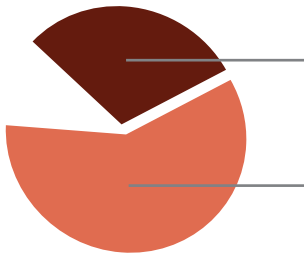
Pratsahan
India Foundation



The event ended with a stellar, powerful rap performance by Khushboo, Protsahan Girl Champion, expressing passionate rage against the societal evil of child marriage

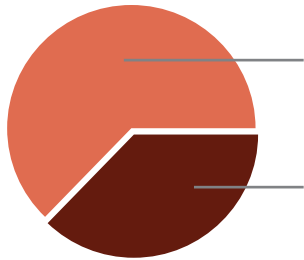
Hear from the Participants

In our post-event feedback survey, we were honoured to receive encouraging feedback:



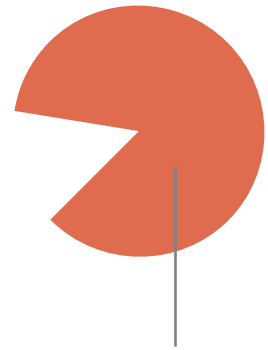
30% participants stated that they are *likely* to use insights gained from Hriday Dialogues in their work

59% participants stated that they are *very likely* to use insights gained from Hriday Dialogues in their work



63% participants gave Hriday Dialogues an overall rating of 5/5

37% participants gave Hriday Dialogues an overall rating of 4/5



85% participants stated that they are *very interested* in attending future editions of Hriday Dialogues



#HridayDialogues by Protsahan India Foundation was perhaps the most unique dialogue I have ever attended. Blending neurobiology with art to solve one of the trickiest and dire problems of healing trauma amongst survivors of abuse, was ingenious. The panel discussions were amazing and the Girl Champions' stories were extremely inspiring. Well, my biggest takeaway from this: is to always use my Head, Heart and Hands to create meaningful solutions for a better child rights ecosystem.

- Baishali M, Founder, Vaishali Skill and Development Centre



A big shoutout to Protsahan India Foundation for creating #HridayDialogues - a safe and much-needed space for practitioners to candidly discuss practical, often overlooked or trivialized challenges in trauma-informed care across levels.

Their work in equipping adults with the right resources and tools to support children with childhood trauma is the need of the hour. It's a powerful reminder that we adults need to keep learning, unlearning, and doing better—because children deserve not just better, but our best!

- Dr. Gayathri Swahar, Senior Director, The/Nudge Institute



Hriday Dialogues 2024
Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Protsahan
India Foundation

Hear from the Participants

“

Thank you, Protsahan India Foundation, for inviting me. The D-I-Y H.E.A.R.T Toolkit reflected evidence and insights from the field. I look forward to participating in many more such discussions.

- Raghwendra Singh, Junior Research Consultant at the National Human Rights Commission of India

”

“

What really stayed with me was the reminder that it's so important to heal ourselves before stepping into this kind of work. How often do we pause and reflect on that? This deeply resonates with what we focus on at Dawn Child Foundation (NGO). I am looking forward to exploring the toolkit made by Protsahan and finding ways to integrate those learnings into our own work with parents and communities.

- Mukul S Gulati, Co-Founder and CEO, Dawn Child Foundation

”

“

'Our brain seeks favours attachment over authenticity'. Was an extremely enlightening day to understand the impact of Child Sexual Abuse on the child. It highlights the need the prevention and protection even more. Great immersive programme by Protsahan India Foundation.

- Naomi Joy Yadav, content creator, Sakshi NGO

”

“

As teachers, child protection feels like a primal instinct. Yet, there are times when we may overlook even the most apparent clues in a child's behavior or their lack of interest in the classroom. To this regard, the mini masterclass on creating trauma-informed learning spaces at Hriday Dialogues served as a crucial nudge toward being more observant, empathetic, and, most of all, aware - aware of how a child's behavior can act as a window into their mind and a be a direct reflection of their sense of safety, or the lack of it.

We as educators, must always be aware and use intent observation as a pathway to ensuring a child's safety. This was one of the many takeaways I had the pleasure of bringing home from this day-long event.

- Pavni G., IB Educator

”



Hear from the Participants

“

“Human beings are inherently resilient”, “We have the capacity to cope with crises and trauma”, “We always find ways to bounce back and move forward”... You might have encountered these affirmations more than once. These affirmations become problematic when we try to paint entire humanity with the same brush, and not consider the population mix and their vulnerability, especially a girl child. I realised this even more when I attended the Hriday Dialogues 2024.

For every child who has overcome such adversities, there are many who haven't and are struggling. This is precisely why we need systems and individuals that are sensitive and empathetic to the diverse needs of children, the risks they are exposed to, the impact adversities has on their educational outcome and social behaviour, and think through ways where help can be made more accessible, easy to navigate through, and doesn't cause further stress to them.

- Subhojit Goswami, Senior Program Manager at the Leprosy Mission Trust India

”

“

The visual representation of what goes on in a child's brain during trauma (from the mini masterclass at Hriday Dialogues) depicts the toxic stress that can be damaging to the child's developing brain.

Which brings me to the question - In school, how many teachers are aware that they could be interacting with a student who is looking out for safety, constantly sending the message - I can't hear you, I can't respond to you, I am just trying to be safe!

- Sonali Jha Chatterjee, Resource person, Oxford University Press

”

“

Shared some thoughts on trauma-informed media reporting of sexual abuse and sensitive issues involving child safety from conflict to war zones to daily events unfolding. (...) Was wonderful to hear insights of fellow panelists Puja Marwaha and Aparna Uppaluri on building collaborative pathways and institution building.

A loud shout out to the wonderful team at Protsahan India Foundation building #hridaydialogues strength to strength with each edition into a platform offering safe spaces for such needed conversations and insightful workshops.

- Smita Sharma, Independent Journalist

”





In picture: Jaswant Kaur, Director (Finance & HR), Protsahan India Foundation

Strengthening India's
Child Protection Ecosystem



Protsahan[™]
India Foundation

✉ info@protsahan.co.in

🌐 www.protsahan.co.in

   
@NGOProtsahan

C- 62, 2nd Floor, C-Block Community Center,
Block C 6A, Janakpuri, New Delhi, Delhi, 110058