



## Symbiosis Centre for International and Comparative Child Rights Law



## ABOUT

# SYMBIOSIS INTERNATIONAL (DEEMED UNIVERSITY)

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is a multi-disciplinary university offering its students and faculty a vibrant learning ecosystem designed around its multi-cultural and innovative ethos. Symbiosis was established in 1971 by Prof. Dr. S. B. Mujumdar and is a 'home away from home' for international students. The institution is based on the principles of the Vedic thought of "World as One Family." The university's name fittingly captures the quintessence of its relationship with international students—a mutually beneficial bond between India and the international student community.

The campuses of Symbiosis University, spread across four states and six cities in India and Dubai, are resplendent with activities and students from more than 85 countries. All campuses epitomize the Symbiosis vision of "Promoting International Understanding through Quality Education" and are a beehive of international students from across the globe, who are privy to Indian culture and hospitality.

Symbiosis International (Deemed University) offers programs across eight faculties, namely Law, Management, Computer Studies, Medical and Health Sciences, Media and Communication, Humanities and Social Sciences, Engineering, and Architecture and Design. SIU has 46 constituent institutes, 11 research centers, and 10 support departments for skills and continuing education. The university has been awarded Category-I status by the UGC and an 'A++' Grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). It has been ranked 31st in India by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) 2024 and 10th by the Atal Ranking of Institutions on Innovation Achievement (ARIIA) 2021.

The university has also been ranked 31st in the QS World Ranking 2025, 13th in the Management category, and 5th in the Law category under NIRF 2024. Symbiosis International (Deemed University) is committed to the generation of knowledge, innovations, and its contribution to the development of the nation.



## ABOUT SYMBIOSIS LAW SCHOOL, PUNE

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Symbiosis Law School, Pune (SLS, Pune) stands for excellence in legal education and is nestled in the city of Pune. Symbiosis Law School, Pune, piloted and enriched by the vision of Dr. S.B. Mujumdar, was established in 1977 under the illustrious banner of the Symbiosis Society. SLS, Pune, endeavors to secure an all-round contribution to the betterment of the field of law, to create world-class professionals, to produce committed academicians and law reformers, to train justice dispensers and invigorate community crusaders, and to create a strong watershed of new and upcoming expertise in law relating to business and corporate matters. SLS, Pune, has been ranked 5th in 2024 by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

SLS, Pune, has been ranked 1st by GHRDC and IIRF and 5th by NIRF in 2024. Since 2007, SLS, Pune, has consistently been ranked among the top 10 out of more than 1,000 law schools in India by the India Today-Nielsen survey. This stature is attained through various programs such as the five-year integrated BA. LL.B. (Hons.)/ BBA. LL.B. (Hons.), the three-year LL.B., and the one-year LL.M. with nine specializations. SLS, Pune, has an impressive track record in internationalization, comprising international project grants, collaborations with leading universities overseas, international summer schools, and semester-abroad programs, to name a few. It is a recipient of the Jean Monnet (JM) Chair and JM Module. SLS, Pune, has established SCALSAR, which serves as the center stage for research, quality publications, government interface, hosting scholars in residence, undertaking interdisciplinary legal studies and research projects, training teachers, and designing training modules.

# ABOUT CENTRE

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The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs) represents the highest aspirations for a bright future for the world's children and is a crucial opportunity to realize the rights of the child worldwide. It provides a clear framework for implementation and aims to improve children's lives through a universal agenda with clear goals and targets. Fulfilling children's rights is a prerequisite for realizing the 2030 Agenda of sustainable development. A universal, integrated approach is needed throughout the world to implement the 2030 Agenda in a manner which protects and promotes children's rights, recognizing the relevance of all SDGs to all children, their rights, wellbeing and development in all countries at all stages of their childhood.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is an international treaty that recognizes the human rights of children, defined as persons up to the age of 18 years. The Convention establishes in international law that States Parties must ensure that all children – without discrimination in any form – benefit from special protection measures and assistance; have access to services such as education and health care; can develop their personalities, abilities and talents to the fullest potential; grow up in an environment of happiness, love and understanding; and are informed about and participate in, achieving their rights in an accessible and active manner.

The interlinked nature of the rights of the child under CRC and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda has been clearly established-highlighting that all SDGs and targets, while not explicitly naming children, are linked to protecting and promoting children's rights. Therefore, respecting, protecting and fulfilling children's rights under CRC also means achieving universal sustainable development. Adopting best practices from different countries and regions, amending legislation, standards and policies is necessary to ensure that they are not discriminatory – either directly or indirectly, considering that children are at greater risk of being left behind. For children in many countries, the pursuit of justice remains hampered by a lack of access to equitable and child friendly justice systems and authorities that will make decisions in their best interests.

# ABOUT CENTRE

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It is in this context that the SIU, Faculty of Law has established the **Centre for International and Comparative Child Rights Law**. The Centre was inaugurated at the 11th Annual International Research Conference- Rule of Law in Context: Globalisation and Indian Resonances to Sustainable Development Goals (SYMROLIC 2023), held between (May 5th-6th ) at Symbiosis Law School Pune by **Prof. (Dr.) Asha Bajpai**, *an expert in international child rights and Scholar in-residence, Symbiosis Law School Pune, Founding Dean, School of Law and Professor of Law at Tata Institute of Social Sciences.*

The Centre will provide international and comparative research, finding statutes and cases of individual countries, and private international law treaties. Working on international and comparative domestic relations, teaching and training, law reform, child advocacy opportunities so that equitable justice systems, access to justice and other forms of child protection are provided to children. The Centre aims to promote equitable access to justice for all children whose rights have been violated, whether they are offenders, victims or witnesses. It will promote new and more child friendly access to justice for all children around the globe. The Centre is relevant for students with a particular interest in children's issues as well as for students interested in social change.

# ABOUT CENTRE



## Objectives

1. To develop global and comparative legal research along with analysis of substantive and procedural children's rights and laws from a child-friendly justice perspective.
2. To ensure access to justice for all children through international and comparative legal perspectives.
3. To engage in capacity building of all stakeholders in the child justice system.
4. To promote child advocacy.
5. To advance community education.
6. To promote legislative & policy reform.
7. To enhance research in child rights in synergy with criminal justice, climate justice, international law, human rights law and family law.



Dr. Atmaram Shelke, Dr. Richa Dwivedi, Dr. Asha Bajpai, Dr. Shashikala Gurpur,  
Prof. Karthiayni A. and Prof. Shreyasi Bhattacharya

# RESEARCH, PUBLICATION AND CONFERENCES

Name of Faculty	Publishing Year & Month	Publication	Journal	Index
Dr. Aditi Mane & Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur	Apr-22	Education Under Attack: Right to Education of children in the Red Corridor Region, India	International Journal of Early Childhood Special Education (INT-JECSE) -ISSN: 1308-5581	WoS
Dr. Aditi Mane, Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur	Jun-22	An Uneven Battlefield where Gender Matters: A Critical Analysis of the Reintegration Programme of Girl Child Soldiers in Global Armed Conflicts	Journal of Positive School Psychology <a href="http://journalppw.com">http://journalppw.com</a> 2022, Vol. 6, No. 3, 8636-8641.	Scopus
Ms. Purba Das, Dr. Manika Kamthan	Apr-23	Impact of Polygamy on Indian Women and Children: A Critical Study	Res Militaris EISSN:2265-6294-vol.13, no.3, March Spring 2023	Scopus
Ms. Shobhana Sanjay Singh, Dr. Sapna Bansal, Prof. Karthiayani A.	Jul-24	India, Inter Country Parental Child Removal and the Law	International Journal for Legal Research and Analysis with the ISSN [2582-6433]	NA
Dr. Aashish Deshpande, Dr. Trupti Rathi, Mr. Manish Rathi, Ms. Arpita Kulkarni, Ms. Sakshi Singh	Sep-24	Child Pornography in India - Issues and Challenges	Multidisciplinary Science Journal Conference Paper Vol. 6 (2024)	Scopus

## Presentations:

Authors	Date	Conference	Topic
Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur, Director, Symbiosis Law School  Dr. Sujata Arya, Assistant Professor, Symbiosis Law School  Dr. Manika Kamthan, Assistant Professor, UPES Dehradun	Sep 30 2024 to Oct 1 2024	Youth Climate Justice Conference, School of Law, University College Cork	The Impact Of Natural Disasters On The Rights Of Children: Perspectives From India

## Upcoming Publications:

Book Title	Authors
International Handbook of Child Protection – Laws, Rights, Policies and Practices	Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur, Director, Symbiosis Law School  Prof. (Dr.) Asha Bajpai Founder Dean School of Law, TISS, Mumbai



# PhD Research in Child Rights

## A. List of Candidates granted PhD in the area of Child Rights:

Year	Student	Guide	Topic
2024	Dr. Aditi Mane	Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur	Socio-legal Analysis of Child Soldiering Laws and Policies in India.

## B. List of PhD Candidates working in the area of Child Rights:

Year	Student	Guide	Topic
2023- 2024	Ms. Kirti Singh	Dr. Anuradha Vinod	Childhood Abuse and Victimization
2024- 2025	Ms. Shreelakshmi Sayajirao Raje Bhonsle	Dr. Alisha Verma	Challenges for Implementation of the laws relating to Child Marriage in India with reference to Maharashtra State
2024- 2025	Ms. Alisha Shashikant Karpe	Dr. Syed Iqbal	POCSO Law and its Effective Implementation
2024- 2025	Ms. Bhagyashree Patil	Dr. Alisha Verma	Rights of Children of Migrant Workers
2024- 2025	Ms. Shobhana Sanjay Singh	Dr. Syed Iqbal	Cross-border Child Custody Issues: Interpreting Indian Law and Practice

# COLLABORATION WITH NCPCR

The Round Table Discussion on "Draft Guidelines for Conducting Preliminary Assessment under Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice (JJ) Act, 2015" was held on January 16, 2023, at Symbiosis Law School, Pune, in collaboration with the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR). The session featured insights from Prof. (Dr.) Shashikala Gurpur, *Fulbright Scholar, Director, Symbiosis Law School, Pune Dean, Faculty of Law, SIU, JM Chair Professor (EUC Lamp co-funded by the EU)*; Justice (Dr.) Shalini Phansalkar Joshi, *Former Judge, Bombay High Court Judge Scholar in Residence*; Prof. (Dr.) Asha Bajpai, *Founding Dean, School of Law, Tata Institute of Social Sciences Fullbright Scholar-in-residence, Missouri Western State University*; Dr. Sheila Ramaswamy, *Technical & Operational Lead, SAMVAD*; Dr. Harish Shetty, *Psychiatrist*; Dr. Jaya Sagade, *Scholar in Child Rights*; Adv. Shirin Merchant, *Senior Advocate*; Sister Lucy, *Maher*; Dr. Swarupa, *Secretary, State Human Rights Commission* and Adv. Chaitraly Deshmukh, *Journalist and PhD Scholar in Child Rights*.

The event featured expert deliberations on key principles such as the best interests of the child, right to privacy, presumption of innocence, and natural justice. The event served as a platform to foster discourse on ensuring a fair and just juvenile justice system while balancing rehabilitation with accountability. Recommendations were given on the draft guidelines on Section 15 of the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015. An outcome report of the round table discussion was submitted to NCPCR.



The Round Table Discussion



Resource Persons for the Event

# INTERVENTION AND LITERACY

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Symbiosis Law School, Pune has been involved in child rights through intervention and literacy initiatives. The Community Legal Care and Literacy (CLCL) Cell has been working tirelessly to protect and promote child rights through various legal awareness initiatives. By addressing important issues such as Good Touch & Bad Touch, Child Marriage Prevention, Financial Literacy, and Online Safety, these sessions have helped children gain the knowledge and confidence to protect themselves.

The sessions on Good Touch and Bad Touch taught children how to understand personal boundaries, recognize unsafe situations, and seek help when needed. The workshops on child marriage prevention made students aware of the legal consequences and impact of early marriage, reinforcing their right to education and a safe childhood. Through financial literacy programs, children learned how to navigate digital transactions safely, helping them avoid cyber fraud and financial exploitation. Through Anti Ragging Awareness Session, students were educated about the legal aspects of anti-ragging measures and associated consequences.

## **Legal Aid and Financial Assistance Under the Manodhairya Scheme**

One of CLCL's most significant contributions has been assisting victims in obtaining financial compensation and rehabilitation under the Manodhairya Scheme. Implemented in collaboration with the Maharashtra Legal Services Authority, this scheme provides crucial financial support to survivors of rape, sexual assault, acid attacks, and cases under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act. It aims to restore dignity and provide immediate relief to those affected.

from 2018 to 2022, the CLCL Cell has successfully handled 627 cases under this scheme, ensuring that survivors receive the financial aid and support they need to rebuild their lives. The cell has worked closely with the Maharashtra Legal Services Authority and the District Legal Services Authority, Pune, to help individuals below the age of 18 access financial compensation and rehabilitation. This initiative has been a lifeline for many young survivors, helping them take the first steps toward healing and a better future.



CLCL Students at Good Touch and Bad Touch Awareness Session



Team of CLCL Cell & Pro Bono Club along with the schoolstaff at Speed Mentoring Session

### **Speed Mentoring: Empowering Children Through Awareness**

CLCL's Speed Mentoring Sessions have played a crucial role in addressing real-life challenges faced by children, such as online safety, substance abuse, and mental health.

In the session on Online Security and Digital Privacy, students learned about cyberbullying, phishing, and cyberstalking, gaining essential tools to protect themselves and seek help when necessary. Discussions on digital detox encouraged healthier technology use and reinforced their right to online safety.

The session on Substance Abuse and Mental Health helped students understand issues like stress, addiction, and coping mechanisms, giving them a safe space to talk about their emotions and seek support when needed. They were reminded that their mental health matters and that help is always available.

Through these sessions, CLCL has given children the confidence to stand up for themselves, make informed choices, and navigate life's challenges with greater awareness and strength.

### **Commitment to Protecting and Empowering Children**

CLCL's initiatives are driven by a deep commitment to ensuring that every child is protected, informed, and empowered. By providing legal aid, financial assistance, and educational programs, the cell is shaping a future where children are not only aware of their rights but also have the tools and support to lead safe, dignified, and independent lives.

Through its continued efforts, CLCL is helping build a society where every child has access to justice, protection, and opportunities to grow without fear or exploitation.

### **Awards and Achievements**

Community Legal Care Center, Symbiosis Law School, Pune, won the prestigious Herbert Smith Freehills' Community Engagement Award - 2016 in the "Community Investment through Legal Work" category. The award comprised of a certificate, trophy and prize money of 2000 Euros.

Individuals and teams from various law schools across the country had competed for this award. SLS, Pune submitted their entry in the format of a short film of 5 minutes duration on Community Investment through Legal Work at SLS, Pune. On 5th September, 2016 the CLCC, SLS, P entry was shortlisted for the award. The final result of the prestigious award was declared on 14th September 2016.

The award ceremony on 26th September, 2016 was held in The Imperial, New Delhi at The Spice Route. The Chief Guest for the occasion was Mr. Christopher Parsons, Chairman - India Practice, Herbert Smith Freehills. Dr. Shashikala Gurpur, Fulbright Scholar, Director, Symbiosis Law School, Pune and Dean, Faculty of Law SIU, along with Mr. Akhil Ennamsetty and Ms. Sai Kaavya Peddibotla, represented CLCC and SLS, Pune at the event and received the award.

Link: <https://www.symlaw.ac.in/press-reports/pressreport33HSF2016>

# INTERNATIONAL ADVISORS

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## **Prof. Kris Gledhill**

Professor Gledhill's 40 years in the law, as both a practitioner and an academic, has spanned many aspects of law but has focused on criminal law and human rights law, particularly international human rights. As a barrister in London he largely worked as a criminal lawyer and representing the rights of detained people.

Although he had always contributed to academia through teaching, journal articles and books, he became a full-time academic when he and his family moved to New Zealand in the mid-2000s, first at the University of Auckland.

Professor Gledhill joined AUT Law School in 2016, attracted in part by the focus of AUT on industry connections and the willingness to integrate "real world" examples into academic learning. One of his roles has been to establish clinical legal education as part of the Law School curriculum.

He maintains ongoing links with the legal profession, providing advice to practitioners and policy makers, being involved in drafting legislation, and regularly providing continuing professional development lectures; for many years, he has been on the Executive Committee of the Criminal Bar Association.



Prof. Kris Gledhill,  
Professor,  
AUT Law School, New Zealand



Prof. Conor O'Mahony,  
Vice Dean Research,  
University College Cork, Ireland

## **Prof. Conor O'Mahony**

Professor Conor O'Mahony is a graduate of UCC (BCL 2001, LL.M. by Research 2002) and the University of Wales, Aberystwyth (PhD, 2005). He has lectured in UCC since 2005, and is currently the Vice-Dean for Research in the School of Law. He is the Director of the Child Law Clinic at UCC, through which he works to support litigation concerning children and to advocate for law reform in the area of child law. From 2019 to 2022, he served as Special Rapporteur on Child Protection to the Government of Ireland.

Professor O'Mahony's research interests lie broadly in the areas of constitutional law and child law, with a particular focus on family and children's rights. He is the author of *Educational Rights in Irish Law* (Thomson Round Hall, 2006) and has published articles in such international journals as the *International Journal of Constitutional Law*, *Public Law*, the *Human Rights Law Review*, the *International Journal of Children's Rights*, the *Harvard Human Rights Journal*, the *International Journal of Law, Policy and the Family*, the *Journal of Social Welfare and Family Law*, the *Child and Family Law Quarterly*, the *International Journal of Children's Rights* and *Children and Youth Services Review*. He has delivered papers at conferences in eleven different countries. He has been invited to provide expert testimony to various Oireachtas Committees as well as the Constitutional Convention and the Citizens' Assembly, and contributes regularly to analysis in the national media.

# EVENT

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## POSTER-MAKING COMPETITION

The Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Research (SCALSAR), Symbiosis Centre for International & Comparative Child Rights in collaboration with Human Rights Cell (HRC) and Community Legal Care and Literacy Cell and Pro Bono Club organised a Poster Making Competition for Symphoria 2024 with the aim to raise awareness on the rights of children, and various interesting areas of exploitation experienced by them while encouraging thought on methods to redress this grievous issue. The event invited participants to create posters to highlight critical issues such as child exploitation. The theme of the event was “Exploitation of children and remedies for their protection”, allowed students to explore various components of child rights and made students more aware regarding this topic. This competition not only fosters artistic expression but also encourages participants to deal with important social issues and empowerment of children. The event was held on 17th of October, the second day of Symphoria between 6:30 P.M and 8:30 P.M. Along with the main theme there were multiple sub-themes also such as:

- A. Child Rights and Environmental Protection
- B. Child Abuse and Neglect: Labour, Hunger, and Homelessness
- C. Begging and Exploitation of Children
- D. Barriers to Education for Children
- E. Child Soldiers: Innocence Lost to Conflict
- F. Stateless Children: Rights in Limbo
- G. Protecting the Rights of Children with Disabilities



Poster on Child Rights



Human Rights Cell Member

Objectives of the event were to:

1. Raise awareness
2. Encouraging advocacy
3. Promoting legal literacy
4. Encouraging creative solutions
5. Fostering engagement with social issues
6. Recognizing excellence

The participants could draw anything they wanted within the scope of the theme provided, they may attach a brief description or artist statement along with their poster. The event lasted for 120 minutes and the event was held offline. The decisions of the judges would be final and binding and the participants were asked to bring their own stationary and paints. The contestants were marked on the adherence to theme, originality and creativity, visual appeal, capturing audience attention, prize distribution and memoirs. The outcomes achieved through this event were achievement of an ability to communicate complex ideas through artistic expression, learning of social issues and advocate effectively for child rights, deepening of knowledge pertaining to child rights and legal frameworks that protect them. This session made the event of Symphoria 2024 more educational and memorable and contributed towards a more learned and aware student community at Symbiosis Law School Pune.



Human Rights Cell Member



Poster on Child Rights

# UPCOMING EVENT

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## **CHILD RIGHTS SEMINAR**

The Symbiosis Centre for Advanced Legal Studies and Research (SCALSAR), in collaboration with the Centre for International & Comparative Child Rights and the Academic and Research Cell of Symbiosis Law School, Pune, is organizing a one-day seminar on "Safeguarding Child Rights" on March 28, 2025.

The seminar will provide a platform for students from BA LLB, BBA LLB, PhD, and LLM to engage in meaningful discussions, exchange ideas, and propose actionable solutions to address the challenges faced by children. Through paper presentations, and deliberations, participants will gain valuable insights into the multifaceted aspects of child rights and their protection, thereby enhancing their academic and social perspectives.

The event will cover key sub-themes:

- Child Marriages and measures to combat it
- Protection of Children from Trafficking
- Climate Justice and Child Rights