Chairperson’s Message

The Children’s Act 2020 now makes better provisions for the care, protection and assistance to the children of our country. The recent legislation also reminds us of the necessity and importance of structured and holistic pedagogical responses for children in need of care and protection.

Today, after thirty-three years of existence, our mission to build families for children in need and to help them to shape their futures is never stronger. The Board, management and programme staff share the firm conviction that, together, we can build a brighter future for the children and young people entrusted to us.

Without the substantial support of the National Social Inclusion Foundation (NSIF), fulfilling our mission would have been a difficult task. We recognize and appreciate the financial support of NSIF. Nevertheless, providing a family-like residential setting to our children entails non-negligible costs - which costs are spiralling with the current rates of inflation.

The generosity of our benefactors has made it possible for us to pursue our mission. In 2022, we have cared for more than 90 children and young people in our family-like residential settings. Through our Family Strengthening programme, we have supported more than 600 children in communities and prevented them from being separated from their families. Our advocacy actions are involved in the fulfilment and protection of the rights of children without parents or at risk of losing parental care. Young people who have lost or are at risk of losing parental care often find the transition from school to starting a career particularly challenging. With the support of partners, our Youth Empowerment Programme has reached out to 500 young people in 2022.

Looking ahead, the Covid-19 pandemic has made us rethink new ways of working together to reach out to more children and young people and to make a deeper impact on their lives. Thus, to respond to the psychosocial needs of our beneficiaries, we are enlarging our innovative therapeutic programme launched in 2019.

It is my privileged task to thank, on behalf of the Board of SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius and in my own name, all our benefactors and well-wishers. We express the hope that we will continue to benefit from your support.

Mrs. Ah Foon Chui Yew Cheong (Retired Judge)
Chairperson - SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius

WHO WE ARE

Children all over the world are growing up without the care, protection and guidance they need. SOS Children’s Villages is there, working with children, young people and families to tackle this global issue on a local level.

We work to keep families together, provide alternative care when needed, support young people on their path to independence, and advocate for the rights of children. Together with donors, partners, communities and governments, we lay the foundations for a brighter future.
CHILD SAFETY IS EVERYBODY’S BUSINESS

The year 2022 has been very determinant as the Children’s Act and the Children’s Court came into effect on 24 January 2022. Our internal Child Safeguarding Policy is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children’s Act. We ensure that Child Rights are respected by having a Child Safeguarding Committee and a focal person in all our programmes and locations.

Capacity Building

In April, a 3-day workshop on Child Safeguarding was conducted by the SOS Regional Advisors from Ethiopia, where the target group was the whole Management Team and their respective officers. During the school holidays, a Child Safeguarding Module training was delivered to teachers and principals of our educational programmes. Moreover, continuous discussions on Child Safeguarding and life experiences between caregivers and a volunteer (retired primary school rector) were held during the year. We have noticed that colleagues are much more equipped to detect and report child incidents; this enabled needy children to benefit from an adequate holistic support. Child and Youth Empowerment continuous sessions on Child Rights are delivered to children and young people through the children and youth council. Furthermore, children and young people received a tailor-made training (video, quiz, interaction, art therapy and storytelling) on Child Safeguarding.

What we do?

**Awareness:** Raise Awareness on Child Abuse and its risks.

**Prevention:** Provide Guidance on how to safeguard children from abuses.

**Reporting:** Set up a clear and simple reporting procedure.

**Responding:** Ensure clear action is taken when child abuse is suspected or reported.
Word from the Child Safeguarding and Protection Coordinator

Providing holistic support to children relies on the professionalisation of social work and a strong Child Safeguarding structure with committed staffs. Stakeholders like Ministries, Ombudsperson for Children and benefactors are having and will continue to have a major role in sustaining a safe environment for children. The ultimate objective is to create strong partnership with key stakeholders, institutions specialised in child care and education, and communities so that a maximum of children are safe from abuse and neglect.

Timothy Nootoo
Child Safeguarding and Protection Coordinator – SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius

Child Safeguarding workshops for the management team, preschool educators, children and young people.
SOS KINDERGARTEN BEAU BASSIN
Celebrating 30 years!

The SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin located at Mare Gravier Beau Bassin started its operation in 1993. The pre-primary school is registered with the Early Childhood Care and Education Authority (ECCEA) and the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family.

SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin is an entity of SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius and provide inclusive early childhood education and development to children of the village and the local neighbourhood. The school puts much emphasis on learning through play and the development of the child's potential.

SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin at a glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Start of the operation of SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin. 15 pupils from SOS Children’s Village Beau Bassin were enrolled in the school.</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Four educators attended training in Zimbabwe with other SOS Kindergartens.</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Offer Early Childhood Education and Development to children aged to 2 to 5 years including children in the neighbourhood.</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Educators shared experiences with local pre-primary schools on the learning through play concept.</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>SOS Kindergarten Bambous (now Superstars Pre-primary School) starts its operation.</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>The Hermann Gmeiner Training Centre (MQA Certified) delivered first early childhood care and education to aspiring nursery and Pre-Primary teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Opening of the Education and Learning Centre (Pre-primary school in Curepipe).</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>Former SOS Kindergarten student registered his child at the SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>Norah Wong former student of SOS Kindergarten was proclaimed Laureate.</td>
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‘When we believe in our pupils, they will believe in themselves!’

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the preschool! Many children who have attended the school have succeeded with satisfactory performance in primary and secondary school. Three students who attended the SOS Kindergarten Beau Bassin in the past years became Laureates. ‘With our team of dedicated and experienced educators, a high-quality pre-school education is offered to our students. The knowledge we imparted to them has laid foundation to a lifelong learning,’ says Myana Palmyre, principal of the SOS kindergarten.

This year, Norah Wong, another student who attended SOS Kindergarten in the year 2007, was proclaimed Laureate after completion of the Higher School Certificate examinations. ‘When we believe in our pupils, they will believe in themselves!’ says Myana Palmyre.

The school facility, equipped with teaching and learning materials, provides a pedagogy which caters for the holistic development of a child. Pre-school programmes are provided, designed to stimulate young children in line with their talents and prepare them for admission to primary school.
Because we are brothers and sisters!

_Siblings Day is a way of honouring the special bond that happens within families, as brothers and sisters share life together from childhood into adulthood._

There is nothing like the bond shared between sisters and brothers, isn’t it? Last minutes before the celebration of Siblings Day, there was a lot of hustle bustle in the village. In the family houses, the children and young people helped their caregivers to set the table for lunch! On that day, a special meal was prepared in all family houses to mark the day. Needless to say, that the children and young people were so excited to cherish their brothers and sisters.

*Dany, one of the eldest children of the village, was waiting patiently near the gate, peeping in from time to time to see if his three brothers *Mathew, *Tommy and *Tom are coming! Dany’s brothers stay at SOS Children’s Village Bambous. On seeing each other, they could not wait to express their love by jumping up and hugging each other! Like the four brothers, other siblings spent quality time together. From studying, singing, gardening, offering flowers, sitting under the kiosk, playing to eating, siblings are always together in their day-to-day life.

*Welcoming new children*

In 2022, 13 children were welcomed in both SOS Children’s villages. New children coming to the village is like the arrival of a new baby in the family!

In the quietness and calmness of the home *Julia, Julian and Ornella managed to find peace and slowly put their past behind them. They were in search of something we all want: love and a family! At first Julia and her twin brother Julian, both 5-year-old and their sister Ornella 4-year-old, were very scared of the new faces around them. It did not take very long for the three siblings to adapt to their new life.

Julia and Ornella love to be pampered by their SOS mother (caregiver). They will grin cheerfully at her when she plates their hair. As for Julian, he is always seen playing with his friends. The three siblings are now at school and they are doing well in their studies. They have gone a long way since their arrival at the village!
Feeling relaxed, calm and more focus…

2019 marked the introduction of therapeutic activities in SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius! The therapeutic centre offers a wide range of therapeutic interventions including anger management, group therapy, sexual trauma recovery group work and developmental activities.

Kickboxing is one of the activities included in the therapeutic programme. Hands up, elbows in a 45-degree angle, knees slightly bent, the children and young people are always busy during the kickboxing session.

*Sophie and her brother *Rudy, are very good in this sport and are practising for more than two years now. Sophie has moved up in rank! She is an orange belt holder in kickboxing! ‘My dream is to be a kickboxing champion! I want to travel to compete at international level! As for Rudy, he has been awarded with the green belt and is determined to go further. ‘I’m still learning the techniques of kickboxing. I have lots of fun doing this sport.’ Kickboxing is helping the children and young people grow in confidence, boost their self-esteem, improve their focus and concentration and develop their self-discipline.

Mental health

Research shows that children and adolescents with alternative care experience are disproportionately affected by adverse childhood experiences. Mental health affects any individual irrespective of their age but children are at a higher risk. Mental health is a core component of our care. At SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius, we offer therapeutic interventions (psychosocial support, counselling, communication dynamics, art therapy, hyperactivity solutions, yoga, family therapy) to children, young people and families. The therapeutic experiences revealed to improve the self-esteem, concentration, resilience and positive attitude of participants, enabling them to face life challenges with a new dream!
Empowering young people on mental health

SOS Children’s Villages firmly believes that a supportive environment brings a lot to the positive development of a child and a young person, such as building on self-confidence, determination and resilience.

Mental health includes children’s mental, emotional, and behavioural well-being. It affects how children think, feel, and act. It also plays a role in how children handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

Mental health issues are one of the major challenges that people face in the workplace. It is important to prepare the young people to ensure their emotional well-being and its impact on their productivity.

SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius has successfully implemented a four-week based psychological support programme for the young people including sessions on psychological counselling with discussions on mental health issues. Other themes include self-esteem, stress management and team building.

Some 38 young people have benefitted from group and individual counselling and training sessions through the programme. They were provided with individual counselling sessions to help them further address personal issues affecting their emotional well-being as many of them come from difficult family or community background.

During the activity the young people acquired knowledge of the skills required in the workplace and how to cope with emotional exhaustion at work. In addition, they learned about the significance of building up a good self-esteem and self-confidence and creating a mentally healthy working environment.
Community Empowerment

SOS Children’s Villages works to help families stay together. Each child needs someone to support and protect them as they grow. But many parents face hardships that prevent them from giving proper care. SOS Children’s Villages offers tailored support to strengthen families in need, helping to keep them together. From counselling to skills development, parents are empowered with the resources they need to overcome their difficulties. With strong families, children and young people can receive the care and support they need to thrive.

Helping families in the communities…

During the economic hardships, SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius has extended its support further to beneficiaries of the Family Strengthening (FS) programme through innovative approaches. Counselling, mentoring and coaching of parents and young people through WhatsApp, regular phone calls and text messages were provided to the beneficiaries. ‘The team has strived to maintain strong connection with the beneficiaries to undermine increased risks of child neglect, parental conflicts, domestic violence, even depression and educational exclusion amongst others,’ says Wendy Ramasamy, Deputy programme unit coordinator of the FS programme.

In 2022 more than 150 families who went through a very difficult financial situation have received emergency food vouchers and hygiene kits. ‘I work on a casual basis and I do not earn much revenue. At times my children go to bed without adequate food. The food voucher I received was a relief to me as I was able to buy basic food items for my children,’ says Marie, a single mother who is registered in the programme.

Among the services offered to beneficiaries of the Family Strengthening programme, educational support was offered through payment of school fees for children in preschool and tuition fees for primary and secondary students and university fees for tertiary students.

Moreover, some 145 young people were provided an insight into career opportunities and are equipped with the specific skills needed to enter the world of work.
Other services offered to the community

**Educational activities** | Tuition, Remedial classes, Functional Literacy, Vocational Training
Activities with young people | Youth Employability skills training - youth camp, digitalisation
Activities with parents | Parenting skills, parental authority
Child Safeguarding | Awareness on Child’s rights
Activities with children | Field trips, Recreational activities
Psychological support | Group therapy, Individual sessions.
**Referral & Partnership** | Reference to other type of services offered by Government & NGOs and partnership with other NGOs

- Awareness campaign on Child’s Rights
- Literacy classes with young people
- Skills development session with the young people
- Partnership with other NGOs
- Young people obtained certificates for their fight against marine pollution
- Donation of food vouchers to vulnerable families
- Provision of food support to needy families
Nando and his future as a young seafarer

This is the story of Nando who has spent 14 years at SOS Children’s Village Beau Bassin. A young man, showing enthusiasm for new adventures and discovering new countries and cultures. Since his childhood, he has experienced difficulties and sorrows on his motherland.

Nando had the chance to discuss his new endeavours and had a clearer picture of the upcoming career opportunities available for seafarers training in Mauritius. He then decided to join the Acropolis Training Centre, which is an educational establishment providing first class maritime education & training to the ship officers, crew and shipping companies’ employees. Nando has worked very hard to obtain a certificate in basic and elementary safety training, first aid, personal safety and survival techniques, fire prevention and firefighting, security awareness of crew and passengers as well as crisis and crowd management.

After several weeks of training and last medical check-up, Nando was informed that he has fulfilled all requirements to start working on a cruise. Today, Nando is working on a cruise ship and is travelling across the oceans. ‘Travelling through the sea is a chance to start things anew,’ says Nando. All we can wish to Nando is to have fair winds and following seas...

Education and Learning Centre

52 children have completed their pre-primary education at the Education and Learning Centre (preschool in Curepipe). Dressed up in their graduation gowns, the children proudly received their certificates during the graduation ceremony last December.

The Education and Learning Centre is an entity of SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius. The children of the toddlers’ and pre-primary sections participate in various activities for their cognitive, social and emotional development.
Jorelie’s tale: From demotivation to finding her way...

Jorélie is a young dynamic girl of 19-year-old. Together with her family, she is enrolled in the Family Strengthening programme and are receiving support through a range of different interventions. Facing many challenges while she was sitting for the School Certificate (SC) exams for the second time, she was demotivated and dropped out school.

With proper guidance, Jorélie opted for an early childhood training. Thanks to Standard Chartered Bank who sponsored Jorélie’s training course. Today she is very happy and grateful to be able to pursue her dream to become a pre-primary teacher. Jorélie believes that education is essential for the healthy development and growth of children. ‘Transmitting values, teaching good manners and delivering quality education to children is my contribution to the society,’ she says.

Jorélie has completed her early childhood trainings course and is doing an internship in a pre-primary school.

Tribute to the SOS mothers

Being an SOS mother is a special profession with unique duties and challenges. While it is often described as a calling and a vocation, an SOS mother is the caregiver for children and young people and the ones who support them in their day-to-day life.

To thank our pool of dedicated and caring SOS Mothers (caregivers), an outdoor activity was organised to pay tribute to them on the occasion of Mother’s Day.

This day was the perfect time to thank them for the outstanding work performed during Covid-19 lockdown by showing appreciation for their efforts; makes them feel good about what they do and that sense of gratitude and accomplishment carries over between work and home. ‘We needed this break specially after these two challenging years of the pandemic. We feel valued and enjoyed a good time with our colleagues,’ says one of the caregivers.

*Names of all children and young people have been changed for privacy reasons.*
A GLIMPSE OF THE KEY ACTIVITIES...

Costume Day

Sports Day

Team building activity for the National and Senior management teams

Visit in one of the SOS Children’s Villages by His Excellency ZHU Liying - Embassador of the People’s Republic of China in the Republic of Mauritius

Celebration of the World Children’s Day

Signature of partnership agreement between DHL and SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius

Renovation of three family houses

Renovation of the village kiosk

Seven Strategic Initiatives have guided our journey for more impact since we started implementing Strategy 2030. These initiatives have driven our local and global work towards targets for building capacity and improving quality, focusing on the core challenges of tomorrow.

Over the next years until 2030 we aim to further our efforts and continue flourishing as an organization, steadily building on our values, which provide a solid and stable base for a growing flower.
WAYS TO HELP

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Be a FRIEND of SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius

- Regular contributions by bank standing orders
  A. Mauritius Commercial Bank Ltd: 000113527195
  B. State Bank of Mauritius Ltd: 62010100066902

- One-off or sporadic donation (MCB Juice 5 988 26 46)

- Cheque to the order of ‘SOS Children’s Villages Mauritius’

- You are a foreigner and you do not have a Mauritian Bank Account, please transfer your donation to International Bank Account Number (IBAN No.): MU58MCBL0911000003527195000MUR

- GivenGain Foundation: https://www.givengain.com/cause/5938/campaigns/15255/

Corporate Social Responsibility Donation

- CSR donation (Registration number NCSRF/2017/0131)

DONATION IN-KIND

- Meals, food parcels, school materials, hygiene kits, etc.

VOLUNTEERING

Give your time, share your talent and expertise

- Education support and tuition.

- Employee engagement (cleaning, fun day, developmental activities, etc.)
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