

DID YOU KNOW

A University dedicated to Children

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The Children's University, founded under the Children's University Act 2009, in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, is affiliated with the University Grants Commission (UGC). As the name suggests, 'child' is at the centre of all courses and programmes being offered at the University.

The institute, which is the world's first such university, conducts researches, education and training programmes for parents, teachers and students, thereby, aiming to create an environment that would facilitate the all-round development of children.

The University propounds that every child matters. It covers child and adolescence development — beginning from foetus till the attainment of 18 years of age. It works under four dimensions — education, research, training and extension. It advocates that children need to be brought up in such a way that it enables their all-round development — physical, mental, psychological, cognitive and spiritual, ultimately, leading to self-realisation.



The University through a scientific activity related to *Garbhadhana Samskar* aims to educate pregnant women on foetal health and child development. The State houses many such centres for the purpose. The first such centre to come up was the 'Tapovan Centre'.

The University often conducts seminars on subjects like couple counselling and parent education.

It has also started a centre for toddler education under the aegis

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of 'Shishu Paramarshan Kendra'. At this centre, parents get guidance and counselling lessons regarding innovative child rearing practices. They are also acquainted with various activities for the development of children in the age group of 0–3 years in a practical manner.

Another centre of importance is the 'Vidya Niketan'. The University is committed to update the knowledge of teachers and, therefore, organises training programmes for them through this centre.

Moreover, the institute is committed to develop an innovative curriculum with impetus on devising new methods of imparting school education rooted in the diverse culture of India. It has developed books, such as *Shaishavnu Smit* and *Parivarni Pathshala* to provide guidance to parents and guardians in matters of child rearing and development.

For young children, the University has brought out books like *Bhulakano Khajano*, *Varta.com* and *Vartano Rasthal*. These books contain interesting

value-based stories. Besides, it has prepared three CDs, comprising 43 patriotic, prayer and children's songs. These are available on the Children's University website.

Apart from these, a monthly magazine titled *Balvisva* is also being published by the University. It carries information, articles, puzzles, rhymes and stories useful for parents, teachers and children. The issues of the magazine are available on the University website. As of now, more than 350 stories have been uploaded on the website.

It also publishes a quarterly journal titled *Horizons of Holistic Education*, which stresses carrying out innovative researches in the field of child development and education.

Besides these, the University offers many courses in higher education like postgraduation in psychology, social work, English, food and nutrition, etc. The institute also awards M.Phil and PhD degrees to students carrying out research works and presenting dissertations in the field of childhood development and education. It also offers some part-time courses during the weekend, such as masters in education, and postgraduate-diploma in school counseling, pre-natal care and education. Two certificate courses of six-month duration in vocal music and drawing are also being offered by the University.

Apart from these programmes and initiatives, the University is planning to start 'Parivar Mitra',



Figure 1: Children's University at Gandhinagar in Gujarat.

which will serve as a counselling centre for family. Along with that, it will also launch 'Bal Mitra', a counseling centre for children. Moreover, workshops for developing soft skills in children are also being conducted on a regular basis.

The programmes and initiatives being conducted by the University are useful to parents, teachers and teacher-educators catering to children at the primary stage of schooling, enabling it to fulfill its aim of creating a *Bhavya-Divya Bharat*.

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