MAY - DECEMBER 2024

# THE LEARN FOR LIFE LANKA NEWSLETTER



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- Debate Mate Pilot Programme: Successfully conducted in Sri Lanka.
- Workshop on Professional Efficacy: Held for Zonal Education Office staff by Mr. Dhammika Kalapuge.
- Research: Assessing impact with Breakthrough Business Intelligences and a local university.

## HIGHLIGHTS



**Wellbeing Development Programme for Adolescents**

The Wellbeing Development Programme for Adolescents is currently being implemented. The modules are being taught through an integrated approach, ensuring a holistic learning experience for students.



**Debate Mate Pilot Programme**

Aimed at empowering students with debate skills and social-emotional learning, has been successfully conducted. The initiative reached 250 students and 60 teachers from under-resourced schools, focusing on critical skills.

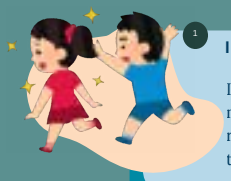


**Workshop on "Professional Efficacy" for Zonal Education Office Staff**

A workshop on "Professional Efficacy" was facilitated for the staff at the Zonal Education Office Colombo by Mr. Dhammika Kalapuge, a Corporate Trainer and Consultant specializing in Total People Development, Service Quality Enhancement, and Employee Motivation.

# Wellbeing Development Programme for Adolescents

## Voices of the Kids



1 **I HAVE CHANGED**

I fight less with my siblings now thanks to emotional regulation and breathing techniques I leant.

2 **MY FRIENDS LISTEN TO ME**

My friends listen to me more actively after the communication module, and I feel heard and seen.



3 **I AM TRYING HARDER**

In subjects that I felt are difficult for me, I decided to put in more effort and change my strategy without labelling them as hard.



4 **I AM HAPPIER**

Practicing gratitude has brought me so much happiness and positivity in my life.



5 **"I CANNOT DO IT YET"**

I no longer think "I cannot do", instead I think "I cannot do it yet" because if I work hard I will be able to do it better.



6 **OTHERS NOTICE A DIFFERENCE**

My friends and teachers tell me that I have changed for the better.

The Learn for Life Lanka Wellbeing Development Programme continues its mission to empower adolescents across Sri Lanka, helping them cultivate the emotional intelligence, resilience, and academic skills required to succeed in life. The programme is currently being taught in several schools, including:

- Al Hijra Muslim Vidyalaya- Dematagoda
- Al Hidhaya College- Panchikawatte
- Darussalaam College- Maligawatte
- St. Joseph's Balika Maha Vidyalaya- Grandpass
- St. Anthony's Balika Maha Vidyalaya- Dematagoda
- Sir Razik Fareed Muslim Ladies College- Mattakkuliya

This year, the programme has taken a step further by adopting an integrated approach to teaching. Rather than presenting each module in isolation, the programme ensures that all lessons are interconnected, providing students with a holistic learning experience. The focus remains on fostering social-emotional wellbeing and equipping adolescents with life skills that will help them thrive in both personal and academic contexts.





### The Wellbeing Development Programme covers a range of crucial topics, aiming to enhance not only academic skills but also personal development


Growth Mindset


Positive Communication


Critical Thinking


Positive Relationships, Empathy & Respect


Character Strengths


Gratitude


Emotional Regulation


Leadership


Meaning & Purpose


Learning How to learn

# OUR TRAINERS

We are excited to welcome our new trainers to the Learn for Life Lanka team. With a diverse range of experiences and qualifications, they are well-equipped to lead our programmes and contribute to the growth and development of the adolescents we work with.



### SACHINDA DULANJANA

- Training Consultant with 12+ years experience
- Visiting Lecturer in Leadership at University of Peradeniya
- Attorney at Law
- Visiting Lecturer in Program Planning and Evaluation



### DILANI WEERATNE WIJEWEERA

- Debate Mate Coordinator for L4LL
- Educator with 20+ years of experience in International Schools
- Former Educator at Avinya Foundation
- BCom, University of Auckland, NZ
- Diploma in Learning Disabilities (LCIPS)



### SHIYAMALAN VIYAKESH

- Mr. Shiyamalan Viyakesh
- MHPSS Consultant/ Clinical Psychologist
- MSc in Clinical & Health Psychology
- BSc (Hons) in Psychology
- Diploma in Counseling Psychology



### ATSHYA PANCHALINGAM

- 5+ years of experience in Tutoring
- MSc In Clinical & Health Psychology, University of West London
- BSc (Hons) Psychology, Cardiff Metropolitan University, UK



### ZAYNAB ZAFRAN

- Internationally Certified Education Coach & Trainer (SLITAD) (NAVEM) Train the Trainer (Malaysia).
- Teacher Trainer.
- ILM Level 5 Dubai, NCFE CACHE level 4 Dubai.
- Currently Head of Academic Standards & Quality Assurance in an International School in Colombo.
- Former Head of Training (Dubai, DXB)



### BANDINI JAYASENA

- Audiologist, Speech and Language Pathologist/ Operations Manager at Ratmalana Audiology Centre
- Former lecturer, Department of Disability Studies, Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya



"Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn."

– BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

## Research and Impact Measurement

As part of the ongoing efforts to improve the programme's effectiveness, Learn for Life Lanka is working closely with Breakthrough Business Intelligences, an independent research company, and a local university academic to measure the impact of the programme. This research focuses particularly on how the programme influences students' attitudes toward learning and their overall social-emotional wellbeing.

By measuring the impact, Learn for Life Lanka aims to ensure that the programme remains relevant, effective, and capable of making a lasting positive difference in the lives of the students. The data gathered from this research will also help refine and expand the programme in the future, allowing it to reach even more schools and students across Sri Lanka.

The Learn for Life Lanka Wellbeing Development Programme is committed to the continued growth and development of adolescents. Through this programme, students not only acquire academic skills but also develop the personal strengths needed to navigate the complexities of life. As the programme progresses, its integrated approach will continue to empower students with the tools they need to thrive, building the foundation for a brighter, more resilient future.














# Debate Mate Pilot Programme

Learn for Life Lanka has partnered with Debate Mate, a global leader in debate programmes, to empower 250 students from under-resourced schools in Sri Lanka. The pilot programme also provided training to 60 teachers from local schools and community centres. This initiative aims to develop essential skills such as listening, speaking, and critical thinking, helping students build confidence and prepare for future success.

The programme involved 18 schools from the Serendib Schools Development Foundation (SSDF), St. Anthony's Balika in Dematagoda, and trainers from the Foundation of Goodness. Over one week, participants attended an intensive training session at Khairiya Muslim Girls College. The training culminated in a competition, where students showcased their newly acquired skills.












The Debate Mate team, including Abby McGovern, Elissa Abbara, Sidharth Harigovind, Dale Connelan, and Alia Chohan, flew in from London to facilitate the programme. Their expertise, combined with the local curriculum developed by Learn for Life Lanka, provided students and teachers with valuable skills in critical thinking, public speaking, and social-emotional learning.

The programme, which has impacted over 65,000 young people globally, aims to inspire students and communities by demonstrating that these life skills are accessible to everyone. The partnership between Learn for Life Lanka and Debate Mate brings a global approach to addressing local educational needs, with future plans to extend the programme to corporate training in Sri Lanka.

Murtaza Esufally, Co-Founder of Learn for Life Lanka, shared, "We're excited to see how Debate Mate's 21st-century skills training, combined with our social-emotional learning programmes, will empower Sri Lanka's students and prepare them for leadership."







# Growth Mindset - Unlocking Potential

## "The Power of Yet" – Carol Dweck

Carol Dweck, a renowned psychologist at Stanford University, pioneered the concept of Growth Mindset, which has revolutionized how we view intelligence and personal development. Her research shows that the belief in the ability to grow through effort and learning is key to achieving success, not just natural talent.

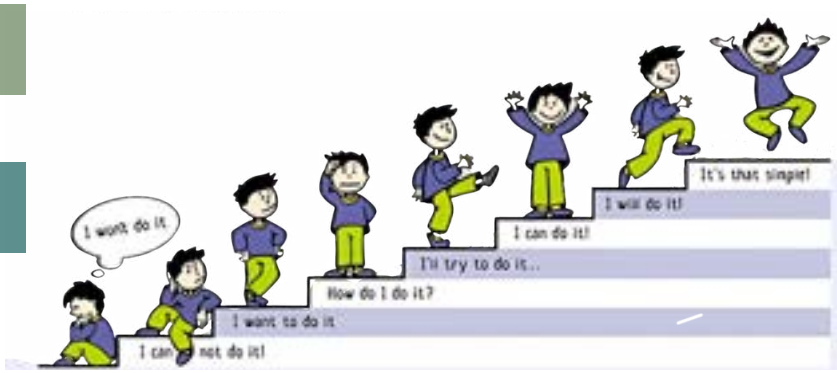
### What is Growth Mindset?

Growth mindset is the belief that you can improve through hard work, effort, and learning. It means seeing challenges as opportunities to grow, rather than as obstacles.




### How to Cultivate Growth Mindset

1. Embrace Challenges: Don't fear them, see them as chances to learn.
2. Learn from Mistakes: Mistakes aren't failures, they're lessons.
3. Celebrate Effort: Focus on trying your best, not just winning.
4. Use "Yet": Instead of saying "I can't," say, "I can't do this yet."




"For twenty years, my research has shown that the view you adopt for yourself profoundly affects the way you lead your life. It can determine whether you become the person you want to be and whether you accomplish the things you value. The passion for stretching yourself and sticking to it, even (or especially) when it's not going well, is the hallmark of the growth mindset."
— Carol Dweck, Mindset: The New Psychology of Success (2006)

# Professional Efficacy Workshop for Zonal Education Office Colombo

This workshop on "Professional Efficacy" was conducted at the request of Mr. P.R. Devabandu, Zonal Director of Education, Colombo. It was recently held for the staff at the Zonal Education Office, Colombo, and was designed to enhance the professional skills and effectiveness of educators. The session aimed to equip participants with key tools and strategies to improve their work performance and achieve greater career success.

Facilitated by Mr. Dhammika Kalapuge, a well-respected corporate trainer and consultant, the workshop focused on critical areas such as service quality, employee motivation, and overall organizational performance. Mr. Kalapuge, who is the Director of SIPCOM-1 (Pvt) Ltd and a principal management consultant, specializes in Total People Development and has extensive experience in improving operational efficiency across various sectors.

Through interactive exercises, discussions, and real-life case studies, Mr. Kalapuge engaged the staff in understanding how they can apply these concepts to enhance their professional lives. The workshop aimed to not only foster professional growth but also improve the overall effectiveness of the education system in Colombo.

The event was part of a broader initiative to support the development of education staff and ensure they are equipped with the necessary skills to meet the evolving needs of students and the educational system.









## OUR VISION

At Learn for Life Lanka, our vision is to become the most respected catalyst and provider of 21st- century life skills for adolescents in Sri Lanka. We aim to empower these young individuals to flourish both at school and in life, by equipping them with the essential skills to supplement their academic pursuits that they need to navigate the complexities of the modern world.

## OUR MISSION

At Learn for Life Lanka, our mission is to empower 5000 children within the next five years by equipping them with essential life skills. Through strategic partnerships, comprehensive training programs, and interventions designed to inspire, we aim to bridge the gap between education and social and emotional skills needed for tomorrow's challenges. Our journey is dedicated to making a significant impact on the lives of adolescents in marginalized communities, ensuring they are prepared to thrive in various aspects of life and industry.

# Connect with Us


Learn for Life Lanka

learn4lifelanka.org

Learn for Life Lanka- L4LL

info@learn4lifelanka.org

Learn for Life Lanka

learn4lifelanka

+9477 823 5629


*Empowering Hearts, Inspiring Minds. Building Resilience and Connection.*