

Ms. Gracy Andrew
Special Advisor, Corstone Project

Bio

Gracy is a clinical psychologist by profession. Since May 2022 Gracy has a different role at CorStone. She works as a Special Advisor. Before joining CorStone in 2012, Gracy was with Sangath Society, a Goa-based NGO that has been a leader in the field of mental health since its inception in 1996. At CorStone she spearheaded in 2013-14 one of the largest effectiveness trials on a resilience program ever conducted in a low- and middle-income country.

She is co-author of several publications in India and globally and has contributed to training resources at the national level in India including the Rashtriya Kishor Swasthya Karyakram (RKSK), and more recently for the Ayushman Bharath program. She was also recently appointed as a member of the World Health Organization's guidance development group for promotional programs on global adolescent mental health.

Keynote Address on:

From Pilot to Scale: Institutionalizing a positive psychology intervention in government schools in Bihar, India

Abstract

CorStone is an internationally recognized non-profit that works in India, Kenya and Rwanda. In this presentation, we describe how an innovative resilience -based health program that has drawn heavily from the field of positive psychology evolved from a pilot program to getting scaled through government systems in Bihar India.

This program, now called Youth First was developed and piloted in India in 2009. After establishing the feasibility and acceptability of the program and adapting the content to the Indian context the program went through an effectiveness trial in 2013-14. Following the trial results that demonstrated improvements in self efficacy, resilience, gender attitudes and health seeking behaviours, the program went through several years of implementation science to assess and develop pathways for institutionalizing the program within the government system. Across the years per-posts tests showed similar improvements while establishing mechanisms for teacher training and support within the government system.

In 2018 CorStone signed an MOU with the government of Bihar and now is in the process of collaborating with the government of institutionalizing the program and building the required capacities of trainers within the government system.

Youth First consists of a resilience program (approximately 15 sessions), followed by a health program (approximately 5 sessions). The resilience program draws mainly from the field of positive psychology, emotional intelligence, and restorative practices, and includes topics such as character strengths, emotions, goal setting, assertive communication, and conflict resolution.