

# St. Joseph's Development Trust (SJDT)



## Holiday Activity Report

May 2025



### Introduction: A Time of Connection and Growth:

Summer holidays are a special time for our children—a season of rest, family reunions, and joyful discovery. After completing their annual school examinations, many of our children returned to their native villages to spend time with their families. However, not all could go home; some remained at the homes due to family circumstances. At SJDT, we believe that every child deserves meaningful experiences during their holidays. Whether at home or staying back, our staff worked tirelessly to ensure each child felt connected, cared for, and creatively engaged. This report outlines the activities and outreach undertaken during the summer holidays of 2025.

90%

Children went to homes



100%

children staying in the hostel learned something useful and valuable.



10%

Children remained in hostel



*“The summer is a great time to grow — not just flowers and vegetables, but dreams, habits, and character.”*

---

# 1. Outreach to Children on Holiday



## Visiting Families and Strengthening Bonds

Our dedicated staffs made personal visits to the homes of children who were on vacation. These visits served multiple purposes:

- **Emotional connection:** Children and families felt deeply valued and cared for.
- **Positive reinforcement:** Staff spoke with children about how their time at the orphanage had transformed their confidence, values, and education.
- **Family engagement:** Families often expressed gratitude and, moved by our work, referred other needy children for admission.

The children welcomed our staff with excitement and pride, introducing them to relatives and neighbors. These visits had a ripple effect, helping us reach more deserving children in remote areas.



# Department-wise Visits and Admissions (April–May 2025):

|                 |                       |                       |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Pudhu Punal     | 130+ Families Visited | 63+ Children Admitted |
| Pudhu Iruthayam | 80 Families Visited   | 57+ Children Admitted |
| Pudhu Vasantham | 60 Families Visited   | 16+ Children Admitted |
| Pudhu Udhayam   | 40 Families Visited   | 15+ Children Admitted |

|              |                              |                               |
|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Total</b> | <b>300+ Families Visited</b> | <b>150+ Children Admitted</b> |
|--------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|



## 2. New Admissions: Identifying the Most Vulnerable



During summer, SJDT also focuses on identifying and recruiting new poorest of the poor children. Staff members traveled extensively to impoverished tribal and rural regions with:

- No proper schools or roads
- Long and unsafe distances to school
- Frequent power cuts and no transport facilities
- Families with deep poverty, broken homes, or neglect

Referrals also came from our current students' families. When our staff explained the benefits of SJDT's homes — free food, quality education, shelter, safety, spiritual care, and infrastructure — many parents requested help for their children. Success stories of our alumni further motivated them.



# 34%



Increase in the number of children admitted.

# 60%



of families approached admitted their children



The approach to each family was made with compassion and clarity. Our staff patiently listened to the parents' struggles and helped them understand how the Trust could support their children's education and wellbeing. Many families who had lost hope in schooling were relieved to know there was still a path forward for their children.

In some cases, the children themselves expressed their eagerness to join, having heard from peers about the loving environment, regular meals, and joyful campus life at SJDT. These interactions were heartening and reinforced the importance of our outreach efforts in remote corners of the region.

Interestingly, a good number of new admissions came through referrals by children already in our care. Their positive testimonials to friends and relatives played a big role in building trust among new families. This peer-based network has become a silent but powerful channel of outreach.

Every new child admitted this summer represents a story of transformation waiting to happen. By welcoming them into our care, we not only offer immediate relief but also invest in their long-term future. The growth in admissions this year is a sign of deepening community trust and the growing impact of our mission.





---

# 3. SUMMER ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN STAYING IN OUR HOSTELS

For children who remained at the homes during holidays, SJDT organized a series of enrichment activities:



## a. Practical Skills and Eco Activities

- **Catering and Kitchen Skills:**  
Children learned to prepare simple meals and sweets.
- **Fruit Picking and Gardening:**  
Engaged in farm activities and learned to care for plants.
- **Sapling Plantation:** Each child planted at least one sapling, fostering love for the environment.



## b. Religious Formation

Children preparing for their **First Holy Communion** received spiritual guidance and celebrated their sacrament joyfully.

**Eucharistic celebrations** were held regularly with active participation by children in singing and playing instruments.



## c. Recreational Activities

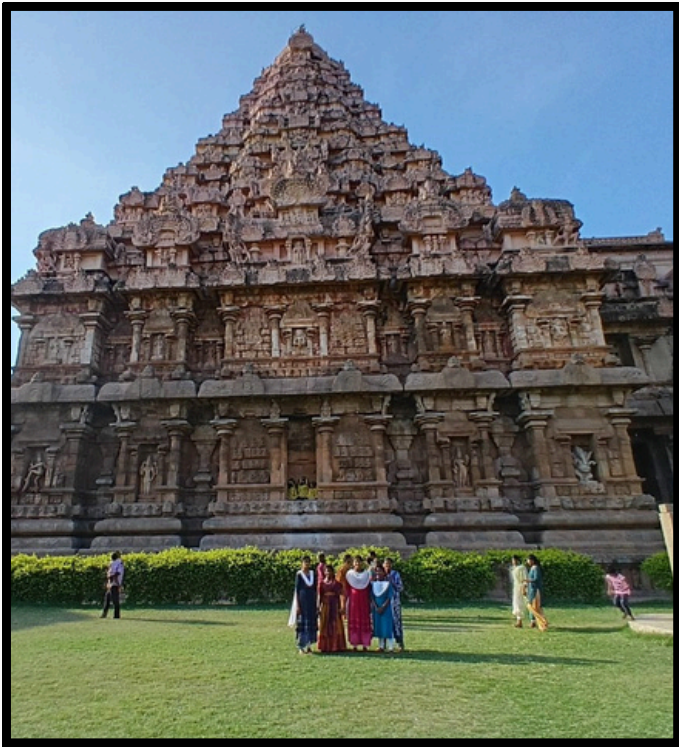
Picnic to **Velankanni Shrine** and **Beach** and Gangaikonda Cholarpuram Temple, Madurai **Meenakshi Temple** and Exhibition (8 May 2025): A fun-filled and spiritually meaningful day with prayers, sea bathing, and bonding.



## d. Birthday Celebration:

Our Loving mother Ms. M. Devibala Amma's **birthday was celebrated** on 12 May with music, dance, cake, and joy—a platform for children to showcase their talents.





## e. Visit to Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal

As part of their cultural exposure, the children were taken on an educational visit to **Thirumalai Nayakar Mahal** in Madurai. They were amazed by the grand architecture, majestic pillars, and rich history of the palace. The visit sparked curiosity about Tamil heritage and inspired many children to learn more about their own cultural roots.



## f. Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai:

The children also had the opportunity to visit the Meenakshi Amman Temple, one of the most iconic spiritual sites in Tamil Nadu. The visit was filled with awe and reverence as the children offered prayers and experienced the temple's vibrant traditions.





## g. Soft Skills Development

- **Communication & Teamwork:** Children enhanced their confidence through group tasks, peer learning, and expressive activities.
- **Leadership & Responsibility:** Older children mentored younger ones in activities like cycling, gardening, and organizing events, fostering leadership and accountability.

## 4. Dry Ration Distribution

For children at home, dry rations were distributed to ensure continued nutritional support. Families expressed heartfelt thanks for this timely and generous gesture, which reinforced our commitment beyond the campus.

## 5. Ongoing Support at Pudhu Udhayam

While many children went on holiday, the children with disabilities at Pudhu Udhayam remained in the institution, and their care and activities continued without pause. The staff ensured that their routine was filled with both support and meaningful engagement. Despite the break in the academic calendar, the children learned practical vocational skills such as **jewellery making, goat rearing, and phenyl production**. These activities not only provided them joy and stimulation but also built their confidence and independence. The continuity of care and learning at Pudhu Udhayam reflects our deep commitment to every child, regardless of ability.



## Jewellery Making

Children learned to design simple ornaments using beads and threads, improving their fine motor skills and concentration. The activity also nurtured creativity and gave them a sense of accomplishment.



## Goat Rearing

Through daily care of goats—feeding, cleaning, and observing—children developed responsibility, empathy, and an understanding of animal care. It offered them joy and a connection with nature.



## Phenyl Making

Making phenyl introduced children to basic production skills and hygiene practices. Measuring, mixing, and bottling enhanced their practical thinking and gave them a sense of usefulness and purpose.



---

## 6. Infrastructure and Maintenance Works

To ensure a safe, clean, and child-friendly environment, essential maintenance and repair works were carried out across all our homes during the summer holidays. These improvements addressed both safety and comfort, creating a better living space for the children.

Below are the various maintenance activities carried out across our different homes to improve infrastructure and ensure a safe environment for the children.

### **Pudhu Vasantham**



Cementing work on broken floor areas



Fixing of new doors in dormitories

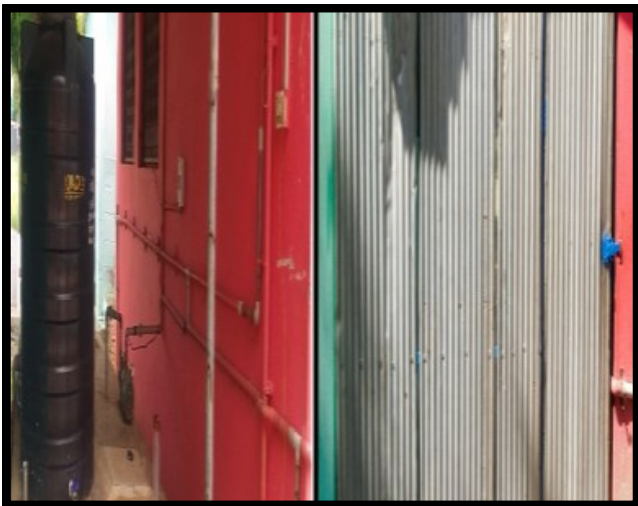


Repairing damaged pathway



Septic tank maintenance and cleaning

## **Pudhu Udhayam**



Fixing secure door for the water tank area



Repair and strengthening of the goat stable



Installation of new doors for increased accessibility



Roofing work for toilets



## Pudhu Punal



Cementing the side surfaces around the home



Deep cleaning of water tanks



Reworking and realigning damaged doors



Cementing Broken Areas

## Pudhu Iruthayam



Septic tank maintenance and treatment



Modifications in children's bathing area for safety





Painting and restoration of toilets



Staircase and attic work for the newly built cottage

## Conclusion

The summer holidays of 2025 were a time of joy, learning, connection, and growth for all our children—whether with their families or with us. Staff commitment, donor support, and the children’s enthusiasm made this season impactful. We thank our dear sponsors and well-wishers for enabling us to enrich the lives of the most vulnerable. With your continued support, SJDT will persist in offering hope, healing, and opportunity to every child in our care.

As we look back on these summer months, we are inspired by the resilience and potential of every child. From skill-building to spiritual growth, from cultural exposure to infrastructure improvements, each activity was a step toward a brighter, more empowered future. These moments may seem small, but together they form the foundation for lifelong change.