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# ALL INDIA WOMEN CONFERENCE

REPORT

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON  
“JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND CRIMES”

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# Report

## ROUND -TABLE DISCUSSION ON “JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AND CRIMES”

(Report prepared by Ms. Vijaya Bhasin, Program Manager)

Under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Amendment Bill 2015, criminals under the age of 18 years are to be treated as juveniles, except in case of heinous crimes (rape and murder)

These days' headlines in newspaper have caught everybody's attention towards rising rate of crime among adolescents and youth. It is really shocking to know 14-16 year old committing murders, rape, robbery..... The list is endless. The data showing rising rate of crime among adolescents is very disturbing and it points out to the fact that how for society and family is responsible for this? Can we do something to correct the situation? Can we prevent a young person from involvement in inappropriate, harmful and illegal conduct? May be we can if we understand the causes of juvenile delinquency .Since, adolescents represent a major potential human resource for the overall development of a nation, proper action taken during adolescence to channelize their energies in a positive way can play a very important role in determining their future and help them to make right choices..

Research studies done on the subject reveal many factors responsible for the situation. With the development of society, a child's mind is going through the most transitional phase. As per psychological perspectives of the juvenile delinquency, poverty, illiteracy and family disturbances are the main reasons for the criminal activities among young children. Often, juvenile crime can emerge out of sheer ignorance also. A study done by the Delhi Commission for Protection of Child Rights in June last year found that “a majority (70.3%) of the children who were serving in the detention centers were quite unaware about the consequences of their acts. It is inferred that driven by the immediate rewards and other unique characteristics such as impulsiveness, adventurism/risk taking and susceptibility to peer influence, they tend to make wrong choices.”Experts are also of the view that in growing cities and towns, parents are faced with challenging dynamics, both financially and socially, which leaves them with very little time to spend with children. The high expectations from children also build up pressure on children.

Concerned on this burning issue, AIWC feels that we should try to address this issue through our field based workers. There is an urgent need to discuss this issue on a common platform, have deliberations with experts working for adolescents drawn from the fields of child rights, police, legal affairs, NGOs and also have interaction with youth and adolescents to know their point of view. The interventional strategy would help to formulate a course of action that may help in reducing the incidences of juvenile crime.

In view of the above, a roundtable discussion on the increase in Juvenile delinquency was held in the Head Office on April 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018. The objective of the consultation was to discuss the in recent years root causes for juvenile crimes, types of crimes, motive behind the juvenile and came up with preventive actions which can be designed in a module. The discussion meeting was attended by members from Juvenile Justice Board, Juvenile Homes, researchers and NGO representatives working on the issue.

The following topics were discussed during the roundtable-

#### **Discussion topics**

- Juvenile delinquency –Introduction, perspective and magnitude of problem in India
- Emerging trends and patterns of Juvenile delinquency
- Factors responsible for the Juvenile behavior from the point of view of Psychologists, psychiatrists, NGOs, civil society
- Laws relating to children offences like POCSO act ( Prevention of children from Sexual Offence)
- Preventive measures-action plan

#### **Participants-**

There were around 58 participants from NGOS, colleges, youth from community, psychologist, police, education department etc. (list of participants is annexed with the report)

#### **Resource persons**

Experts were drawn from Child line India Foundation, Child Rights, Research organizations

, Butterflies, Salaam Balak Trust, Prayas Institute of Juvenile Justice, Juvenile Board, NGOS, psychiatrist/psychologist, Leher foundation and Civil society

## **Proceedings**

**Mrs. Rakesh Dhawan, president AIWC** welcomed the Key note speaker- Ms. Nayeema Mahjoor, Chair person J& K women's commission. She spoke about crime in rural and urban areas and hoped that the discussions would be helpful in finding out the solutions.

**Mrs. Kalyani Raj, Secretary General** was overwhelmed by the presence of audience comprising of NGOs and commented that presence of such large no. of organizations shows how important the discussion topic is. She introduced the topic of discussion and highlighted concern on the rising rate of crime. She quoted data stating that Delhi shares highest rate. She said that idea of this meeting is not to discuss figures of crime rate but to elaborate on the factors contributing to this situation. She focused on recent cases of crimes committed by young students in Ryan International school and Greater Noida and raised concerns on the negativity building up among children? The juvenile may have their own justification. Are we as civil society, parents encouraging this? In the proceedings we may highlight all these factors. She hoped that the outcome of discussion will help AIWC to prepare a module to be implemented by AIWC's branches across the country that may prove helpful in prevention of Juvenile crime. This initiative may turn into a nationwide Campaign.

**Ms. Nayeema Mahjoor, Chair person J& K Commission women's commission** delivered the key note address and presented the situation of Juvenile Crime in J&K. She said that cases of Juvenile crime are much less in Kashmir. She narrated two cases in which one was against 80 years old grandfather which later proved to be false accusation. The reason was to get property share by the daughter in law. The other case was of a minor girl who was raped by a top official and later she married him. She said that post 1990 generation have only seen guns in the state. At every step their identity needs proof. Imagine a situation where 10 times they have to show their I. Card. She said that this has toiled upon young minds. She stated that the youth is into "Drugs". Drug addiction and unemployment are the reasons for turning towards terrorism. They need to be understood, talked and assured of a better and peaceful future. She spoke about inclusive development and gender equality.

**Ms. Vaidehi from Juvenile Justice Board, Delhi** talked about “Emerging trends and patterns of Juvenile delinquency.” She said that we need to understand the problem broadly. The word “delinquent” conveys a negative feeling. Children commit crime due to many temptations e.g. to have a better lifestyle, to experiment, to prove themselves and also due to poverty etc. She narrated the type of crimes committed age wise .She informed that crime in affluent class children are more of cyber crime, theft of vehicles ,whereas crime committed by children from poor families are of theft,pick pocketing etc. Mostly children are used by parents to commit crimes for economic gains like pick pocketing, bag snatching, mobile stealing etc.She talked about JJ act and the age factor in act.

She highlighted the following factors responsible for J.crime-

- Drugs
- Substance abuse
- Disturbed families
- Migration
- Dense population
- Poverty
- Disability (both physical and mental)
- Aggression

She said proper rehabilitation is necessary for correction otherwise 1st time offenders become habitual after repeating the crime second time. She covered crime committed by third gender also.

While quoting Delhi’s scenario of crime she said that crimes are reported well in proportion to population density and that is why the data shows high crime rate .

She suggested preventive intervention at school and community level.

**Mr. Vishawajeet** from Prayas spoke about the origin of Prayas and its activities. He also narrated some of the success stories. He said that children between 16-18 years commit crime due to peer pressure, economic circumstances. Each child needs to be understood individually as for each child situation is different that has compelled him to commit crime.If you put a child to correction home, you are cutting his income. We need to rehabilitate them properly so that such situation will not come again to compel him to commit crime. We need to redesign the

rehabilitation strategy. He said that when a child is on road, it is nobody's concern but as soon as he is in correctional home, he becomes a national asset.

We need to provide a holistic and conducive environment for the child. Let him feel that he is a part of family.

He informed about the "Yuva Connect" program of Prayas that is providing training to 100 children. He spoke about another program "Champion in me" that focuses sports as intervention. He also explained "drug abuse" and how Prayas is dealing with this issue.

**Ms. Nicole Rangel from Leher foundation** remarked the "Child age" that has been taken differently under child labor law and JJ act. She said that it is very disheartening that suddenly a child becomes adult due to description of children under these acts. They are given severe punishment and there is demand for death penalty. This is not the solution. She said that child's brain develops till 25 years of age. She said that we are stripping children from their childhood at the cost of contradictory laws. Where is the system to protect such children? What are we doing to rehabilitate them, understand them? She stressed on conversation with child, life skills and proper parenting, proper use of technology.

**Mr. Anant Asthana (Lawyer)** criticized POCSO that has ruined childhood. He said stringent laws and punishment is no solution. He explained that the system spends a lot on making laws and punishment, but we have no money for prevention and for welfare programs. Today's children are living in conflict. Theft is a major crime which is done either due to lust or poverty. Migration /urbanization are also responsible for the situation.

**Mr. Bannerjee from SPYM** spoke on drug addiction and work of SPYM. He shared his views on the psychology of drug addicts. He said that first time they experiment with drug and then become habitual. They get cravings and can do anything from theft to murder to get the drug. This is done unaware of the consequences. He also emphasized on motivation and proper direction combined with skill training and rehabilitation

During discussion some points were cleared by resource persons on proper use of technology and parental control

Various organizations participated in the discussion on “**Intervention and preventive steps**” , Following are the main recommendations given by each;**(Fight for right, Salaam Balak Trust (SBT), Child Line India, BAL Gram, Aman Biradari, Centre for women development, SPYM, YP Foundation**

- Proper socialization of the child should be the duty of parents. Parents should give proper and sufficient time to children.
- Moral education is more important at family, school and community level.
- Parents of such children also need counseling for proper rehabilitation.
- The educators should develop a perspective with respect to child’s mind, that will give more peace and learning to the children rather than throwing the pressure on them and making them just a machine to run behind indefinite goals.
- Trained and expert counselors having experience and who have proper understanding of the juveniles should be there to counsel the juveniles.
- An Integrated child protection scheme, where civil society, school, NGO, parents all should work together can be one of the preventive.
- Social policing is more important than police station.
- We should enhance the role of foster care, adoption, counseling, moral education, parenting sensitization programs.
- We should develop programs for beggars on the road as they get deviated to anti social behaviors.
- Transgender should be included
- Family members and adults in the family need to be sensitive about what the child is learning at home.
- Convergence of resources (Information Education Communication material in regional language, extra focus on visual aids)
- Special therapy session needs to be conducted for first time offender.
- Value based education and moral education should be imparted at school level



## **Few tips for families and parents ...**

**Family is the role model of every child and a model behavior by the parents and siblings can give motivation to the child to behave positively .Teens should know how to respect family and other people**

Juvenile Delinquency is a serious threat for our society and our future as a nation. We cannot really blame any single person or authority for this problem. Parents, schools, society, local and government agencies are all somewhat responsible for youth crimes. So, instead of simply passing the buck, it's better to accept the responsibility and collaborate on fighting the problem. We have got a few pointers on how to prevent juvenile delinquency, in case you plan on combating it as a parent and as a society.

### **Spend Quality Time with Teens**

In many cases, teens are involved in criminal acts simply to gain attention which they failed to get from their family, especially their parents. They crave for their existence to be acknowledged. It's extremely important that you take out time to sit down and have a conversation with your youngsters every day. Give them the attention they desire so that they don't feel the need to go searching for it elsewhere.

### **Provide Guidance and Supervision**

Increase in height or shoe size does not mean that teens are mature enough to deal with everything themselves. They still need your supervision and guidance at every step. Parents must always remain on a lookout for signs of stress and trouble in their youngsters' life. Guide them when they do something wrong. Behavior like stealing, bullying etc. should be taken seriously as they can lead to serious crimes. Keep an eye on teens' behavior with others. Also, be sure to remain in touch with his teachers so that you remain informed of how they behave in school.

Keep reading to learn about the delinquency programs that currently exist and how government agencies and individuals can do better to minimize the instances of juvenile delinquency in society

# Tips on Role of Society/NGO/Schools

## **Understand the causes of delinquent behavior**

Try to understand underlying causes of delinquent behavior at family level. It may be due to-

- Economic problem in family
- Family disturbances,
- Mental illnesses or other psychological problems like depression, frustration, aggression or hyper behavior showed by the parents can make the child feel deprived and inferior among friends.
- Parenting style also matters and many researchers say that it is one of the biggest reason why teens commit crime. Parents are some time very harsh and they punish their children for small issues. Children start disrespecting their parents and they become violent

## **Identify such cases and refer for counseling**

If you identify such cases in the beginning e.g. drug abuse, over aggressiveness, habit of stealing in school unaware of its consequences, try to counsel them or refer them to counseling centre, involve such children in constructive activities

- Connect them with government schemes such as education programme, skills training programmes, financial assistance schemes
- Try to involve them in AIWC “Life skills training programme”
- Encourage parents to send their children in schools
- Provide assistance to them in the form of ( Books, Writing pad, pencil) or supportive education
- Connect them with rehabilitation centers.

## **Stand against Youth Violence**

According to recent research studies, youth violence is one of the several causes of juvenile delinquency crimes. Teens who experience violence at a young age at home, in school, or any other place are more likely to commit a crime to take revenge or escape trouble. Every individual in the society should join hands to address, confront and counter youth violence. Start with your own house. If you or anyone in your family is involved in youth violence, then it's time to stop it immediately. Also, look at your surroundings. The evil needs to be condemned before it eats the roots of our society.

### **Think beyond Social, Ethnic and Class Differences**

There is a strong connection between youth crimes and social, ethnic and class differences. These are the differences that make teens feel inferior. They are unable to enjoy the trust, feeling of belongingness and empathy from society. The feeling that they are being rejected by a specific social group or class stirs rebellion in them. Frustrated over being rejected, they decide to teach everyone a lesson by going against the rules and breaking the laws. As parents and society, you need to be careful not to push teens down this path of destruction. Appreciate them for what they are, celebrate their difference, and accept their uniqueness. Refrain from being judgmental as it can never lead to anything good.

**(Note: Above content has been taken from reliable resources)**

# **Guidelines for AIWC branches to conduct the program**

## **Home work before the program**

- Identify the target group (parents of adolescents, teachers,)
- (If possible try to get brief information about the behavior of children, note down if there is any problem faced)
- Identify and list down the institutions working for Juveniles in the area, list down the contact details of child guidance centre, counseling centres.Keep the list ready for reference
- Identify the topics
- ( Agenda of the program conducted by Head office, annexed with the report) may be taken as reference and modified as per local needs
- Identify the resource persons ( Psychologists,counsellors,Juvenile Justice board members, representative from NGO)
- Fix the date, time and Venue

## **Program**

- Conduct the program as per schedule
- Give time for interaction and answer questions raised by participants
- Case studies
- Give tips for solution
- Follow up
- Maintain a record of problem cases with proper follow-up and referral services
- Tie up with schools for consultancy and follow up

**ALL India Women's Conference  
Program Schedule**

Time	Topic	Speaker
11.00a.m.-11.10a.m.	Welcome address	Mrs. Rakesh Dhawan- President-AIWC
11.10 -11.20 a.m.	Introduction of the discussion topic	Kalyani Raj- Secretary General,AIWC
11.20.-11.35 a.m.	Key note address	Ms. Nayeema Mahjoor Chairperson- J & K State Women's Commission
11.35 a.m. - 11.50 a.m.	<b>Session 1:</b> Introduction, perspective and magnitude of problem in India	Mr. Vishwajeet Ghoshal- Prayas
11-50 a.m.-12.05	Emerging trends and patterns of Juvenile delinquency	Ms Vaidehi, Juvenile Justice Board
12.05 -12.20 p.m.	<b>Session 2:</b> Legal perspective of the problem	Mr. Anant Asthana- Advocate
12.20-12.35 p.m	Factors responsible for the Juvenile behavior/increase in crime	Ms Nicole Rangel-Leher
<b>12.50-1.30 p.m</b>	<b>Open house discussion</b>	
<b>1.30-2.15 Lunch Break</b>		
2.15 -2.35 p.m	<b>Session 3:</b> Possible intervention & Preventive steps	Dr. Rajesh-SPYM  Fight for Right and representatives from other NGOs
2.35 – 3.00 p.m	<b>Open house discussion</b>	
3.00-3.10 p.m	Summing up	Mrs. Kuljit Kaur,MIC
3.10-3.15	Vote of thanks	Dr. Manju Kak,Treasurer AIWC

