

Role of Social Workers in Juvenile Justice Board as a Child Protection Mechanism for Children in Conflict with Law

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Abstract : Every child has a fundamental right to be protected and it is only a safe, supported child who can effectively cope with difficult circumstances and lead a happy childhood. The vulnerability of children has increased due to emerging lifestyles, raising cost of living, higher expectations from adults, parental and care-giver stress /burn-out and a general raise in demand for services for children. A major area of concern is the rise of juvenile crimes in the overall crimes committed in the country. The UNCRC 1989 and JJ Act 2000 enables the structures to handle the juvenile children in care and concern in its real terms. One of the mechanisms to protect the children is the JJB a justice system. The aim is to hold a child culpable (guilty) for offence they committed, not through punishment, but counseling the child to understand their actions and persuade them away from such deviated activities in the future. The JJB consists of two social workers and a judicial magistrate and one of whom should be a woman. This study aims at understanding the role of social workers in best practices in deciding the best course of action for the rehabilitation of the child. Two case studies were carried out through in-depth interviews with the social worker member of the JJB of two Udupi and Mangalore districts. The best practices reported in which children are being allowed to express themselves in a child friendly environment and in the best interest of the child. The study highlighted team work to be very effective in understanding the child in their reformation.

Keywords : child protection, best practices, juvenile justice, reformation teamwork

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