

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

RAJYA SABHA
UN-STARRED QUESTION NO.631
TO BE ANSWERED ON 07.02.2024

SUPPORT TO FEMALES IN JUVENILE HOMES

631 DR. FAUZIA KHAN :

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

- (a) whether Government taken measures to identify the psychological burden and trauma experienced by females in juvenile homes, particularly in the light of findings highlighting an increased psychological burden on females in such institutions;
- (b) the details of initiatives focused on providing psychological support to females in juvenile homes, including recreational and therapeutic activities to help cope with the psychological challenges;
- (c) whether Government taken measures to mitigate the heightened psychological burden on females in juvenile homes aimed at facilitating their successful reintegration into society; and
- (d) if so, the details of the measures taken with notable achievements thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI SMRITI ZUBIN IRANI)

(a) to (d): The Ministry of Women and Child Development is administering the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015) as amended in 2021 which is the primary legislation for ensuring the safety, security, dignity and well-being of children. The Act provides for protection of children in need of care and protection and those in conflict with law by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment and social re-integration. The primary responsibility of implementation of the JJ Act lies with the respective State/UT Government. JJ Act, 2015 mandates that the State Government to establish and maintain in every district or a group of districts, either by itself, or through voluntary or non-governmental organisations, Child Care Institutions (CCIs) for rehabilitation of Children in need of Care and Protection and for Children in conflict with law including girl children. As per Section 2 (35) of JJ Act, 2015, Juvenile means a Child below the age of eighteen years.

The JJ Act, 2015 and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 (JJ Rules, 2016) (as amended in 2022) framed thereunder, inter-Alia specify the benchmark of services to be delivered to the children. The key processes and standards of care are important components of functioning of CCIs. These processes and standards, as prescribed under the JJ Act and Rules thereunder such as physical infrastructure, clothing,

bedding and toiletries, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, mental health, medical Care, education, vocational and recreational facilities are to ensure best interest of children living in CCIs. As per Section 41 of JJ Act, 2015, all CCIs housing Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) are to be mandatorily registered with the State Governments / UT Administrations.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development in collaboration with National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (NIMHANS) has established a National Initiative & Integrated Resource Centre for Child Protection, Mental Health, and Psychosocial Care named “SAMVAD” (Support Advocacy & Mental Health Interventions for Children in Vulnerable Circumstances and Distress) in NIMHANS, at Bangalore. SAMVAD is working in 4 key thematic areas, namely Mental Health, Care & Protection, Education and Policy & Law. SAMVAD has conducted various training and capacity building programs and through public discourse series conducted via Virtual Knowledge Network Systems. SAMVAD has reached 28 States and 04 Union Territories as of December, 2023, a total number of 1,48,242 child care professionals have been trained and sensitized towards care and protection of children in vulnerable circumstances in four key thematic areas i.e education, child mental health, and protection, law and policy over three years. In this connection, it is mentioned that SAMVAD is continuing to receive a large volume of requests for such support, from relevant departments in State Governments, Judicial Academies, and other agencies working in the areas of education, child mental health, and protection, law and policy.

The Ministry of Women and Child Development is implementing Mission Vatsalya Scheme for care, protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of children in difficult circumstances on predefined cost sharing basis between the Central and the State Governments. Under Mission Vatsalya Scheme, support is provided for setting up and maintenance of various types of Child Care Institutions (CCIs) and funds for Non-Institutional Care. Such children have access to both institutional and non-institutional care and rehabilitation as per Individual Care Plan (ICP) as mandated JJ Act, 2015 (as amended in 2021).

CCIs provide/support for boarding & lodging; age-appropriate education; access to vocational training; recreation; health care; counselling etc. Under the scheme guidelines, States/UTs have been instructed for mandatory Police verification of the CCI staff and other staff engaged at State and District level, prior to their appointment.

The Mission Vatsalya Scheme supports children through following modes of Non-Institutional Care:

- i. **Sponsorship:** financial support is extended to vulnerable children living with extended families/ biological relatives for supporting their education, nutrition and health needs.
- ii. **Foster Care:** the responsibility of the child is undertaken by an unrelated family for care protection and rehabilitation of the child. Financial support is provided to biologically unrelated Foster Parents for nurturing the child.
- iii. **Adoption:** finding families for the children found legally free for adoption. Central Adoption Resource Authority (CARA) facilitates the adoption programme.
- iv. **After Care:** the children who are leaving a Child Care Institution on completion of 18 years of age is provided with financial support to facilitate the child's re-integration into mainstream of society. Such support are given from the age of 18 years up to 21 years, extendable up to 23 years of age to help her/him become self-dependent.

The JJ Act, 2015 provides for Aftercare of Children living under the Institutional care vide Section 2(5) and section 46 which mandates that any child leaving a child care institution on completion of eighteen years of age may be provided with financial support in order to facilitate child's re-integration into the mainstream of the society in the manner as may be prescribed in Rule 25 of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Model Rules, 2016 (as amended in 2022). As per Rule 79 (9) of the JJ Model Rules, 2016 (as amended in 2022), where a girl, above eighteen years of age, is released from the Child Care Institution and has no place to go, she shall be provided with accommodation in the Working Women Hostels, or other such government facilities, till the time some other suitable arrangement is made by her.

As per the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act), The Child Welfare Committee is mandated to conduct at least two inspection visits per month of residential facilities for children in need of care and protection and recommend action for improvement in quality of services to District Child Protection Unit and State Government (Section 30 (viii)). The Juvenile Justice Board is mandated vide Section 8 (j) to conduct at least one inspection visit every month of residential facilities for children in conflict with law and recommend action for improvement in quality of services to District Child Protection Unit and State Government. As per Section 109 of JJ Act, National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has been mandated to monitor the implementation of the provisions of JJ Act.
