B.Ed.,

Semester - II

Child Rights and Protection

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Child Rights and Protection

Syllabus Framework

COURSE OBJECTIVES

CO1: To understand the theoretical knowledge of child rights with practical applications and examples

CO2: To identify all forms of violence against children

CO3: To enlighten various Child rights Policies, laws and institutions

CO4: To realize the importance of child friendly learning schools and the role of Teachers

CO5: To promote skills for ensuring child participation and protection

UNIT 1: CONCEPT OF CHILD RIGHTS

Concept and definition of child and child rights - Definition of a child under various laws in India: History of child rights in Tamil Nadu and India , Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) working for child rights in Tamil Nadu and India - Historic treatment of children - Understanding child rights from the perspective of affected people - Importance and need to the rights of children - United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) - Children's rights sustainable development goals.

UNIT 2: VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Violence Against Children (VAC): Various forms and trends in Tamil Nadu –Abuse of trust - Discrimination - Drug dependency among children - Online abuse - Suicidal endency among Children- Intersectionality - Consequences of impact of violence on children - Factors leading to vulnerability of children in Tamil Nadu and root causes.

UNIT – 3: CHILD RIGHTS – LAWS, POLICIES AND INSTITUTIONS

Juvenile delinquency, Juvenile Justice and Protection of Children Act 2015 - Rights to free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 - The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) 2012 - The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006 - Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act,1986 - National and State Policies for Child Protection - Vishaka Committee - Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girls Act, 1956 (SITA) - Child Protection System in India - The United Nations (UN) Human Rights Council - UN Committee on the

Rights of Children and Special Rapporteurs on issues related to children.

UNIT – 4: CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS AND ROLE OF TEACHERS

Child friendly schools – Concept and importance - Role of teachers in safeguarding the rights of children in schools - Importance of child protection policy in schools - Creating space and opportunity for children to participate and express their voices/opinions - Importance of child rights clubs in schools – Role of School ManagementCommittees (SMCs) – Challenges of teachers as child rights practitioners.

UNIT - 5: SKILLS FOR CHILD PROTECTION AND PARTICIPATION

Identification of children in vulnerable situations - Identifying and recognizing the warning signs and factors of varying types of child abuse and neglect - Skills to deal with the children affected by violence – Role of teachers and other professionals in diagnosing and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect - Psycho-social support and referral services for the vulnerable children – Teachers as mentors of children for ensuring their participation and protection – Positive discipline techniques for the teachers - Skills for celebrating child rights.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

1. Conduct awareness programmes / debates and discussions on child rights and child protection in school.
2. Visit to Child Helpline / District Child Protection Unit / Child Welfare Committee /Juvenile Justice Board, etc.
3. Producing audio-visual materials / documentary videos / short videos / YouTubevideos / songs / cartoon / comic books / performing arts on child rights
4. Screening and discussion on educational feature films, documentary andshort films:
    a. Iranian films like "Birds of Paradise," "Where is my friend's Home?" forstudents to view collectively. (or)
    b. Not One Less is a 1999 drama film by Chinese director Zhang Yimou,adapted from Shi Xiangsheng's 1997 story A Sun in the Sky (or)

c. Red leaves Falling – A story of sex Trafficking and child pornography,Stairway Foundation (or)

d. A Good Boy – Story of Pideophilia produced by Stairway Foundation &

e. Short Film

i. Online Predators in Tamil (https://youtu.be/xzYmoe5NDNQ) (or)

ii. Cyber Safety https://youtu.be/IF7ignIGkNw (or)

iii. Child Sexual Abuse https://youtu.be/hCehDOJ1vWI (or)

iv. Freedom from Fear https://youtu.be/Ntz0 hQ7tw (or)

5. Suggested any two activities to enhance the learning outcomes

Case studies on Violence Against Children 1. Child Marriage 2. Physical Violence 3. Child Sexual Abuse 4. Child in Conflict with Law 5. School Drop Outs

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11. Palli Koodathil Paagupaadu (பள்ளி கூடதில் பாகுபாடு)- Manatkeni Publishers
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RESOURCES:

1. https://www.haqcrc.org/child-rights/
2. https://home.crin.org/resources
3. https://hrea.org/resources/
4. https://ncpcr.gov.in/bare-acts-related-children
5. https://ccl.nls.ac.in/publications/
6. https://dsdcpimms.tn.gov.in/landing/index.html
7. https://www.arpan.org.in/children-and-adolescents/
8. https://www.arpanelearn.com/coursedetails.php?id=10
9. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/
10. https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/play-based-learning-activities- children-aged-3-10
11. https://www.unicef-irc.org/playing-the-game

COURSE OUTCOMES:

After completion of the course, the student-teachers will be able to:

CO1: Construct their own conception and meaning on child rights, interpret history ofchild rights

CO2: Distinguish various forms of violence against children, relate the factors ofvulnerability

CO3: Defend child rights, elaborate policies for children and utilize the services of child protection institutions.

CO4: Build the child friendly environment in schools and realise their roles.

CO5: Execute the skills of child Protection and Participation

OUTCOME MAPPING

Course Outcomes (COs)	**Programme Specific Outcomes (PSOs)**																							
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**14**	**15**	**16**	**17**	**18**	**19**	**20**	**21**	**22**	**23**	**24**
CO1	*							*											*					
CO2											*										*			
CO3			*									*		*										
CO4		*	*		*	*	*				*	*		*		*				*	*			
CO5	*		*									*		*			*	*			*			*

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FOREWORD

Every child is a unique thread, woven into the fabric of society with equal significance regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, or religious affiliation. As agents of a collective future, children inherently possess the right to live, the right to protection, the right to development, and to actively participate in shaping the world around them, as enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Indeed, childhood is the most precious gift bestowed upon humanity, representing an important and formative stage that holds the promise of a brighter tomorrow for any society.

However, in the Indian context, the sanctity of childhood faces a daunting challenge. The surge in crimes against children, marked by instances of abuse, exploitation, and trafficking, paints a grim future for childhood in our otherwise developed country. Tragically, many children find themselves compelled to toil in hazardous conditions, falling prey to the shackles of sexual exploitation and trafficking. The repercussions of these crimes are profound, inflicting enduring physical and mental scars on the innocent. This underscores the urgency of addressing this pressing issue.

While our country grapples with the challenges posed by crime against children, the COVID-19 pandemic has added another layer of complexity with increase in household violences. Especially crimes such as Child Sexual Abuse. Child abuse manifests itself in various settings, with five primary locations witnessing the majority of occurrences: within the family, the community, educational institutions, institutional centers, and the workplace. Astonishingly, the first two categories reveal that perpetrators often have close ties to the child. This calls for a comprehensive and targeted approach to safeguard the well-being of children in these diverse environments.

In light of this sobering reality, the organization ‘Thozhamai’ has emerged as a beacon of hope. Operating as a rights-based organisation since 2006, Thozhamai has collaborated with the Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University for the past five years. Their visionary initiative, advocating for the inclusion of a core syllabus on Child Rights and Protection in the B.Ed. curriculum, is a pioneering step toward nurturing a society where children can thrive without fear.

Thozhamai’s persistent efforts, backed by UNICEF support, led to the approval of a new syllabus on Child Rights and Protection as a core paper in the second semester of the B.Ed. course. This significant achievement, spanning ten months of meticulous planning and collaboration, has now been implemented in 639 B.Ed. colleges across Tamil Nadu, making it the first-of-its-kind effort in South Asia.

The driving force behind this transformative initiative is Mr. A. Devaneyan, Director of Thozhamai, whose passion has been the guiding light. The dedicated committee, consisting of Dr. Annadurai Muthusamy, Ms. Stegana Jency L.T., Prof. Andrew Sesuraj, Mr. Varunanvelu framed the syllabus and guidebook.The noteworthy co-ordination of Mr. Prabakar, Coordinator from Thozhamai, has been instrumental in realizing this groundbreaking endeavour. Special mention must be made of Prof. Dr. A. Rajeswari, HOD, Curriculum Planning and Development of TNTEU for supporting Thozhamai on behalf of TNTEU and Ms. G. Aishwarya, Advocacy Manager at Thozhamai, for their advocacy in bridging the gap between the Department of Higher Education and TNTEU. We thank Mr.Kumaresan, Child Protection Specialist, UNICEF office of TamilNadu and Kerala for their support through this process.

As we embark on this journey to protect and empower our children, let us be reminded that child rights are human rights. Together, let us forge a path towards a child-friendly state where every child can flourish, free from the shadows of abuse and exploitation.

Let this effort serve as an inspiring testament to the collective power of compassion, advocacy, and education in building a brighter and safer future for our children.

With hope,

Prof. Dr.P.C.Naga Subramani

Registrar (i/c)

TamilNadu Teachers' Education University

Karappakkam,

Chennai

Towards Child Rights as a culture…

Thozhamai, a term resonating with the essence of 'Solidarity,' was born in 2006 with a foundational philosophy rooted in unity. Initially conceived as a resource center for human rights, Thozhamai has transformed into an important force in human rights advocacy and community development. At its core, the organization has committed itself to championing the cause of child rights and advocacy, delving into the legal intricacies of various cases involving Child Rights and Protection.

Our journey has been marked by a firsthand encounter with the diverse forms of violence that children endure. Through participation in fact-finding missions on violence against children and engaging with the legal system, we have come to recognize the undeniable truth that prevention far outweighs the cure when it comes to safeguarding children. With an unwavering belief that education is the key to instilling a culture of child rights, Thozhamai has tirelessly advocated for the promotion of child rights at the grassroots, in the media, in political spheres, and within educational institutions.

The genesis of our collaboration with the Tamil Nadu Teachers Education University (TNTEU) emerged from our participation in the celebration of Human Rights Day, hosted by TNTEU's Center for Human Rights. This marked the beginning of our endeavor to integrate a core syllabus on Child Rights and Protection into the B.Ed. curriculum. Dr. V. Iraianbu IAS, the former Chief Secretary of the state, played a pivotal role in swiftly endorsing our proposal.

With the support of Mr. Karthikeyan IAS, the Higher Education Secretary, and Mr. Elango Henry Dass, the Additional Secretary of Higher Education, our proposal received the green light. The proactive involvement of Prof. Dr. P.C. Naga Subramani, the Registrar of TNTEU, and Dr. A. Rajeswari, the Head of the Department for Curriculum Planning and Development, further propelled this visionary initiative.

A ten-month-long journey ensued, involving the meticulous framing of a syllabus and the creation of a comprehensive guidebook. Today, this initiative stands as the first-of-its-kind effort in South Asia, implemented across 638 B.Ed. colleges in Tamil Nadu, a testament to the commitment and dedication of Thozhamai and its expert committee.

The driving force behind this transformative effort includes Dr. Annadurai Muthusamy, Ms. Stegana Jency L.T., Prof. Andrew Sesuraj, and Mr. Varunanvelu, who played commendable roles in the formulation of the syllabus and guidebook. The coordination led by Mr. Prabakar, the Coordinator from Thozhamai, has been instrumental in bringing this ambitious project to fruition.

Our kudos extends to Ms. G. Aishwarya, Advocacy Manager at Thozhamai, for her efforts in bridging the gap between Thozhamai's efforts and the Department of Higher Education and TNTEU. Special thanks to Mr. Kumaresan, Child Protection Specialist at the UNICEF office of Tamil Nadu and Kerala, for unwavering support throughout the process.

To implement the syllabus effectively, Thozhamai and TNTEU organized eight Training of Trainers (ToT) programs across different zones. These programs, conducted in collaboration with various colleges, aimed to equip faculty members from 638 B.Ed. colleges with the necessary knowledge and skills. The trainers has now emerged as figures poised to educate approximately 50,000 student teachers annually. These trainers and their students will play active roles within Child Protection Networks in their respective regions, collaborating with Zonal NGOs and government bodies such as District Child Protection Units (DCPU) and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs).

Conducted by resource persons integral to the syllabus and guidebook drafting committee, the training sessions ensured a profound understanding of the content and its practical application. The ultimate objective was clear: to empower teachers with the tools needed to protect and actively involve children, foster child-friendly schools and eliminate school discontinuity.

In the long term, this collective effort is poised to benefit around 6.8 million children annually, spanning grades 6 to +2 in Tamil Nadu. Our shared vision is to contribute substantially to the creation of a child-friendly Tamil Nadu.

As we embark on this transformative journey, let this preface serve as a testament to the collaborative spirit, resilience, and unwavering commitment of all those involved in this pioneering initiative. Together, we strive to create a future where every child can thrive, unburdened by the shadows of abuse, and where education becomes a powerful force in shaping Child Rights as a Culture.

Sincerely,
A Devaneyan
Director,
Thozhamai

Tamil Nadu vs. India - Child Statistics - Related indicators[1]

INDICATORS	TN	INDIA	SOURCE
Incidence of multi-dimensional poverty (in %)	30.5	52.7	OPHI, 2016
Loss in HDI due to inequality in income, health, education (%)	27	32	IHDI,UNDP,2011
Child Population (In Million and %)	22, 29%	440, 34%	CENSUS 2011
Sex ratio at birth for children born in the last five years (females per 1,000 males)	878	929	NFHS-5, 2019-21
Stunted children below 5 yrs (%)	25	35	NFHS-5, 2019-21
Children with anaemia aged 6-59 months (<11.0 gm/dl) (%)	57.4	67.1	NFHS-5, 2019-21
Children fully immunised (12-23 months) (%)	69.7	62	NFHS-5, 2019-21
Girls with BMI less than 18 (15-18 yrs) (%)	35.2	44.7	RSOC, 2013-14
IMR (per 1000 live births)	12	23	SRS 2018
Under 5 Mortality Rate (per 1000 live births)	17	36	SRS 2018
MMR (per 100,000 live births)	60	113	SRS 2018
GER (Class 1- 8)	98	97.8	UDISE+ 2019-20
GER (Class 9-10)	90.5	77.9	UDISE+ 2019-20
GER (Class 11-12)	73.2	51.4	UDISE+ 2019-20
Currently married women of 22-24 yrs before 18 yrs (%)	12.8	23.3	NFHS-5, 2019-21
Children 5 -14 yrs engaged in labour (%)	2.49	4.5	CENSUS 2011
Households practicing open defecation (%)	43.4	45.5	RSOC 2013-14
Total crimes against children (Rate of crime per 100000 child population)	4338 (21)	128531 (28.9)	NCRB 2020
Total juveniles in conflict with law(Rate of crime per 100000 child population)	3394 (16.4)	29758 (6.7)	NCRB 2020

1 Tamilnadu state policy for children 2021

UNIT – 1:

CONCEPT OF CHILD RIGHTS

Perceptions and myths about children – History of Child Rights in Tamil Nadu – Understanding child rights – United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) - Definition of a child in India.

Concept and Definition of Child

Children are not seen as a separate group but were traditionally thought of as a property of their parents. A child is generally defined as a young human being who is below a certain age or has not yet reached adulthood. The specific age at which an individual is considered a child can vary depending on the legal, cultural, and social contexts. In many countries, including India, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) provides a widely accepted definition of a child. According to the UNCRC, a child is defined as any individual below the age of 18, unless the age of majority is reached earlier under the national legislation of a particular country. It is important to note that different laws and regulations may have their own specific definitions and age limits for children based on their respective purposes and requirements. These definitions can vary across jurisdictions and can cover different aspects such as protection, education, labour, and criminal responsibility.

Historic Treatment of Children

Children were treated differently throughout history and across different cultures. It's important to note that child-rearing practices and attitudes toward children have evolved significantly over time, influenced by factors such as social, economic, religious, and cultural beliefs. Early civilizations often saw children as valuable members of the community and future contributors to society. In ancient Rome, for example, children were considered the property of their fathers, and their well-being was primarily the responsibility of the family. In ancient Greece, education and physical training were highly valued for both boys and girls. During the Middle Ages in Europe, children were generally viewed as miniature adults who were expected to contribute to the family's livelihood. They often had to work from an early age and were not afforded the same protections or rights as adults.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, Enlightenment thinkers began to advocate for more humane treatment of children. The concept of childhood as a distinct and vulnerable stage of life emerged, emphasizing the importance of nurturing and educating children. Philosopher John Locke's ideas about the tabula rasa (blank slate) and the need for gentle upbringing influenced parenting practices during this period.

The Industrial Revolution in the 18th and 19th centuries brought significant changes to the lives of children. Many children were forced to work in factories and mines under harsh conditions, often enduring long hours and dangerous tasks. The plight of child laborers eventually led to labour reforms and laws aimed at protecting children from exploitation. Throughout the 20th century, there was a growing recognition of children's rights and the need for their protection. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, outlined the fundamental rights of children, including the right to life, health, education, and protection from abuse and exploitation.

Today, Children are considered vulnerable for several reasons due to their unique characteristics and circumstances:

Physical Vulnerability: Children's bodies are still developing, making them more susceptible to illnesses, injuries, and physical harm. They have less strength and resilience compared to adults, which can make them more vulnerable to accidents, abuse, and neglect.

Cognitive Vulnerability: Children's cognitive abilities are still developing, and they may lack the knowledge, understanding, and critical thinking skills to navigate complex situations and make

informed decisions. This cognitive immaturity can make them more vulnerable to manipulation, exploitation, and abuse.

Emotional Vulnerability: Children may not have developed the emotional resilience and coping mechanisms necessary to deal with stress, trauma, and adversity. They may be more easily overwhelmed by negative experiences, which can have long-lasting effects on their mental and emotional well-being.

Dependency: Children are reliant on adults for their care, protection, and support. They depend on adults to meet their basic needs, provide a safe and nurturing environment, and guide their development. This dependency puts them at the mercy of their caregivers and makes them vulnerable to mistreatment and neglect.

Lack of Power and Agency: Children often have limited social, economic, and political power. They may lack the ability to assert their rights, advocate for themselves, or make decisions that affect their lives. This power imbalance can leave them more vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination, and violations of their rights.

Legal Protection: Laws and regulations in many countries recognize children's vulnerability and provide specific legal protections for their rights. These laws aim to ensure their well-being, safety, and development and to safeguard them from abuse, exploitation, and discrimination.

It's important to note that vulnerability is not a fixed characteristic of childhood but varies depending on the individual child's circumstances, environment, and support systems. While children are vulnerable, it is the responsibility of adults, communities, society, and the state as a whole to protect and support them, ensuring their rights and well-being are upheld.

Concept and Definition Child rights

The concept of child rights is based on the recognition that children, as individuals, have specific rights that are essential for their survival, development, protection, and participation in society. Child rights are rooted in the principles of equality, non-discrimination, and the best interests of the child.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most comprehensive international treaty on child rights. It sets out a range of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights that should be guaranteed to all children.

Child rights are not just theoretical principles but have practical implications for policies, laws, and practices that aim to safeguard and promote the well-being of children. Governments, communities, families, and individuals all have a responsibility to uphold and respect child rights, ensuring that children are able to grow, develop, and thrive in a nurturing and supportive environment.

Perceptions and myths about children

Perceptions and myths about children can vary across different cultures, societies, and historical periods. Here are some common perceptions and myths that have been associated with children:

1. **Children are innocent:** There is a widespread belief that children are inherently innocent and pure. This perception often associates children with qualities such as honesty, trustworthiness,

and naivety. However, it is important to recognize that children, like adults, are capable of a range of behaviours and emotions.

2. **Children are fragile:** Another common perception is that children are fragile and vulnerable. While it is true that children are physically developing and require care and protection, they also possess remarkable resilience and adaptability. Underestimating their capabilities can hinder their growth and development.

3. **Children are blank slates:** This perception suggests that children are completely malleable and shaped solely by their environment. While the environment plays a crucial role in child development, children also have innate characteristics and genetic predispositions that influence their behaviour and personality.

4. **Children are naturally obedient:** There is a myth that children should always obey without question and that disobedience is a sign of disrespect or misbehaviour. However, children naturally explore boundaries, develop autonomy, and question authority as part of their cognitive and emotional development.

5. **Children are all the same:** It is often assumed that children of a particular age or gender exhibit similar characteristics or behaviours. However, children have unique personalities, abilities, and interests, and they should be recognized as individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses.

6. **Children are manipulative:** Some people believe that children purposefully manipulate adults to get what they want. While children may exhibit behaviours that seem manipulative, it is often a result of their limited understanding of social dynamics and their attempts to meet their needs and desires.

7. **Children are solely the responsibility of their parents:** Although parents have a primary role in raising children, it is important to recognize that children are part of a broader community and need support from various sources, such as extended family, schools, and society.

It is crucial to approach these perceptions and myths with a critical mindset and recognize the diversity and individuality of children. Understanding the realities of childhood can help foster healthier and more informed attitudes towards children and their development.

Understanding child rights from the perspective of affected people

The Indian society is ridden by inequalities based on class, caste, religion, ethnicity and gender. The economic class very often endures the generation-old caste-based divisions of the Indian society. As a result, the Dalit communities are even today subjugated to feudal practices such as bondage, and untouchability, owing to lack of access to education, health facilities, for economic uplifting it becomes extremely difficult for these communities to break the shackles of poverty and exploitation. The plight of the backward classes including the poor peasants and the small artisans is also grave and it is very often found that the worst forms of violation take place against these sections of the Indian society. The socio-economic status in terms of education, employment health etc. of the religious minorities in India is very often poorer compared to the other sections of the population. The

indigenous communities in India have by and large faced isolation and alienation not only on account of their cultural differences with the so-called 'Mainstream society buy also because of the active role played by this so-called mainstream society in stripping them of their fight to life and livelihood by taking over their land, environment and culture. Similarly, women have for long being exploited and continue to suffer at the hands of their men folk. The child in India also has to undergo discrimination on account of these inequalities in addition to being subjugated by the hierarchy of age. Thus, all children in India suffer from certain violation on account of their status as a child. Wherein the adults unilaterally impose their belief systems and complexities onto children where in children is property of their parents and where in children do not have any political space to retaliate the exploitative action of the adults. In addition to this, children are also subjected to discrimination on account of their class, caste religion, ethnicity, and gender. Violence against children is further aggravated due to these hierarchies.

Concept of Rights

The concept of "Rights" and basic human rights values has a long history. At every moment in history, when there is a protest against any kind of oppression, be it religious, caste or one single individual, there is a strong commitment for human rights. (Eg: Evolutionary Theory by Darwin and how it initiated discussions among religious groups).

In very early days, when human beings lived in small groups, oppressive thoughts were not found. When there was evolution of family and property, power based oppressive behaviors slowly crept in. When there was accumulation of wealth and feudal societies were growing up, we could see the emergence of Ruler and Ruled and slowly women's oppression too started.

In feudal society, the common people lost all their basic human rights and were forced to be slaves.

Why are Rights important?

As a guarantee for all persons, communities and oppressed peoples the right to live in dignity and security – human rights deny any form of inhuman existence or practices.

i. It is a guarantee for all persons, communities and oppressed peoples the right to live in dignity and security. Human rights deny any form of inhuman existence or practices.

ii. Rights are significant for monitoring actions and institutional decisions of the state and its agencies, the corporate sector.

iii. Including human rights standards that are internationally accepted helps alleviating the oppressed from their miseries. International standards also help evaluate a country and ensure that its government is accountable.

iv. Human rights are also customary rights that are not discriminatory and unequal. These rights are not always respected or recognised by State law. Yet they are important human rights for the oppressed and marginalized peoples especially in third world countries.

v. Rights are important for adults and children –it creates a democratic thinking and culture –it supports efforts for transparency and accountability.

vi. Human rights are especially significant in our country for the articulation of the voices of oppressed and exploited, of indigenous peoples, fishing communities, women, Dalits, children, workers, artisans and peasants- it is essential for the voices from below against exploitation, domination and corruption of the ruling classes and castes.

Human rights are important for the creation and continuance of decent standard of living and sustainable ecosystems in all regions and across class, caste, gender, ethnicity, and nationality. It is concerned about an economic and cultural system that does not undermine the sustainability of ecology and livelihoods for the present and future generations. Central Human Rights are political systems which do not repress their own citizens and a system of national and international supervision which can prevent government from infringing human rights standards.

Increasingly today the state subverts its own laws meant for the promotion and protection of human rights the state indulges in torture, killings, discrimination and neglect lawlessness and secrecy in decisions. Security forces have been given unlimited powers to shoot and kill or detain persons and a host of antiterrorist laws under preventive detention laws like "Goondas" Act, National Security Act etc. in these conditions human rights of persons to resist and protect themselves against state oppression is very significant.

i. To enable victims of human rights violations to seek justice and human rights protection- Rights are essential for seeking justice for the victims and services such an obtaining compensation, counselling, rehabilitation, shelter etc.

ii. In societies where inequalities exploitation and social injustice prevails human rights of persons and communities who are discriminated against are exploited this culture of rights to resist and dissent.

iii. Right to life and liberty is the core of all human rights, to defend and gain new rights we need a human rights approach.

iv. The core of democracy is information-we need rights to be able to gain access to information and disseminate the same.

v. Very importantly rights are important to create a culture and understanding of our Constitution – to ensure that resources are equally shared and all actions by the propertied classes / castes to concentrate wealth and resources is a violation of human rights.

Human Rights Declaration:

The Universal Declaration on Human Rights in 1948 spelt out clearly that freedom, social justice and Peace can be ensured only when human dignity, equality and basic human rights are ensured. The importance of basic human rights is recognized by the entire world after this declaration.

Human Rights – a definition:

Human Right is universal Legal Guarantees protecting individuals and groups against actions, which interface with fundamental freedoms and dignity. It gives basic moral guarantees that people in all countries and cultures allegedly have their basic rights simply because they are people, which means, it gives recognition of the dignity and equality of all human beings and guarantees everyone

can make claim a remedy from abuse not only from the State parties but also from non-state parties for example accountability of private business, corporate sector, etc.

Basic Principle of Human Rights:

i. Comes with our birth as a human being.
ii. Principle of non-discrimination
iii. Principle of equality
iv. No one can take them away from us
v. Common to all
vi. Comes with a responsibility and it is limited.
Also obliged to ensure the rights of the others.

Understanding child rights from the perspective of affected people involves recognizing the views and lived experiences of children themselves, as well as considering the insights of individuals and communities closely involved with children's lives, such as parents, caregivers, educators, and social workers. It is crucial to understand child rights through the lens of those directly impacted because they can provide valuable insights into the realities, pain, consequences, challenges, aspirations and needs of children.

Here are some key aspects to consider when seeking to understand child rights from the perspective of affected people:

1. **Respect for the child's voice:** Recognizing and respecting the views, opinions, and experiences of children themselves is fundamental. Children should be given the opportunity to express their thoughts, feelings, and concerns on matters that affect them. Their perspectives should be listened to, valued, and considered when making decisions that impact their lives.

2. **Contextual understanding:** It is essential to consider the specific cultural, social, and economic contexts in which children live. Each community may have unique challenges, traditions, and norms that influence the understanding and realization of child rights. Acknowledging these contextual factors helps to develop more effective strategies for promoting and protecting children's rights.

3. **Engaging with caregivers and communities:** Engaging with parents, caregivers, and communities is vital for understanding the needs and experiences of children. These individuals play a crucial role in shaping children's lives and have valuable insights into the barriers and opportunities related to child rights. Involving them in discussions, decision-making processes, and policy development ensures a more comprehensive understanding of child rights issues.

4. **Listening to marginalized groups:** It is important to pay particular attention to the perspectives of marginalized and vulnerable groups of children who may face multiple forms of discrimination or disadvantage. This includes children with disabilities, those from minority ethnic groups, indigenous communities, refugees, and children living in poverty. Understanding their unique challenges and experiences is crucial for developing inclusive and equitable approaches to child rights.

5. **Incorporating lived experiences:** Listening to the lived experiences of affected individuals can provide invaluable insights. This can be done through qualitative research, interviews, focus groups, or participatory methods that actively involve children and other stakeholders in sharing their stories, challenges, and aspirations. These personal narratives help to inform policies, programs, and interventions that address the real needs and aspirations of children.

By adopting a holistic and inclusive approach to understanding child rights, one can gain a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by children and work towards ensuring the realization of their rights in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Importance and the need to ensure the rights of children

There are many reasons for singling out children's rights in a separate human rights Convention:

1. **Children are individuals.** Children are neither the possessions of parents nor of the state, nor are they mere people-in-the-making; they have equal status as members of the human family.

2. **Children start life as totally dependent beings.** Children must rely on adults for the nurture and guidance they need to grow towards independence. Such nurture is ideally found from adults in children's families, but when primary adult caregivers cannot meet children's needs, it is up to the State as the primary duty bearer to find an alternative in the best interests of the child.

3. **The actions, or inactions, of government impact children more strongly than any other group in society.** Practically every area of government policy – from education to public health – affects children to some degree. Short-sighted policymaking that fails to take children into account has a negative impact on the future of all members of society.

4. **Children's views should be heard and considered in the political process**. Children generally do not vote and do not traditionally take part in political processes. Without special attention to the opinions of children – as expressed at home and in schools, in local communities and even in governments – children's views go unheard on the many important issues that affect them now or will affect them in the future.

5. **Many changes in society are having a disproportionate, and often negative, impact on children**. Transformation of the family structure, globalization, climate change, digitalization, mass migration, shifting employment patterns and a shrinking social welfare net in many countries all have strong impacts on children. The impact of these changes can be particularly devastating in situations of armed conflict and other emergencies.

6. **The healthy development of children is crucial to the future well-being of any society.** Because they are still developing, children are especially vulnerable – more so than adults – to poor living conditions such as poverty, inadequate health care, nutrition, safe water, housing and environmental pollution. The effects of disease, malnutrition and poverty threaten the future of children and therefore the future of the societies in which they live.

7. **The costs to society of failing its children are huge**. Social research findings show that children's earliest experiences significantly influence their future development. The course of their development determines their contribution, or cost, to society over the course of their lives.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Background

During the last century, universal concern for childhood has grown alongside the ideas of human rights. Human rights are today understood more in the form of the individual civil rights within a nation. United Nations Organisations has in fact established an international community, which sets up ideal standards to be laid down in many matters including the treatment of children. Thus the concern for children, which initially started as part of the concern for the future of individual nation has grown over the boundaries of the nation and became a universal concern. This was further borne out while going through the whole process of evolution of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is in this context that various steps were taken in protection of the interests of the child. One can say that the most significant one was "Declaration of Geneva" which was promulgated in 1924 by the "Save the Children Fund International Union". This declaration put forward five basic principles of child welfare and protection.

The League of Nations endorsed this declaration in the same year. Then came the more devastating World War II after which the U. N. O. was set up on 24th October 1945. The Declaration of Geneva was further revised and extended in 1948 and in 1959 by the U. N. The Declaration on the Rights of the Child was adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20th November 1959.1 However, Declarations are not conventions.

While declarations are certain general principles put forward as guidelines and are not binding. Technically these are known as "soft laws", whereas Conventions are binding. Conventions that have been ratified by the parties to it become a legal instrument. These are known as "hard laws". Hence though the declaration on the Rights of the Child was unanimously accepted by the U. N. General Assembly in 1959 it was not legal binding on the member states. Hence, the movement towards the convention on the Rights of the Child and finally the UN General Assembly adopted the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and opened it for signature in 1989.

UNCRC

In 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It came into force on September 2, 1990.The Convention consists of 54 articles that address the basic human rights of children everywhere. UNCRC outlines the fundamental rights and protections that all children around the world should enjoy. The UNCRC is based on four core principles that guide the implementation of children's rights:

1. **Non-Discrimination:** The principle of non-discrimination emphasizes that all children have the right to be treated equally and fairly, without discrimination based on factors such as race, gender, religion, disability, or social background. States Parties to the UNCRC are obligated to ensure that all children have equal access to their rights and opportunities.

2. **Best Interests of the Child:** The best interests of the child principle places the child's well-being and needs at the centre of decision-making processes. It requires that actions taken by governments, institutions, and individuals consider what is best for the child in terms of their physical, emotional, and social development.

3. **Right to Life, Survival, and Development:** The UNCRC recognizes every child's inherent right to life, survival, and development. States Parties are responsible for ensuring that children have access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, education, and other essential services to support their overall well-being and enable them to reach their full potential.

4. **Participation:** The principle of participation upholds children's right to express their opinions, have their views considered, and participate in decisions that affect them. It encourages children to actively contribute to matters that concern them, promoting their empowerment and fostering their understanding of democratic values and active citizenship.

These four principles serve as a foundation for the realization of children's rights and guide the implementation and interpretation of the UNCRC. They emphasize the importance of promoting children's dignity, protection, and active engagement in matters that affect their lives.

When a country ratifies a UN Convention, it becomes law within its territory. To monitor progress achieved in the realisation of children's rights, the CRC has established an international expert body, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which provides awareness and understanding of the principles and provisions of this treaty. The Government of India ratified the CRC on 11 December 1992.

The CRC is "the most complete statement of child rights ever made". It takes the ten principles of the 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child, and expands them to 54 articles, of which 41 relate specifically to the rights of children, covering almost every aspect of a child's life. It is indeed an innovative document in overall human rights theory and practice. In fact, it is the first United Nations human rights instrument since the UN Declaration on Human Right which brings together as inextricable elements of the life of an individual human being the full range of civil and political rights, and economic, social and cultural rights. It can do this because it treats children as complete individuals, rather than as elements in an economic or socio-political system.

The Convention aims to create a balance between the rights of children and those of the parents or adults responsible for their survival, development, and protection. This is achieved by ensuring children the right to participate in decisions concerning them and their future. It is, thus, a holistic document for each article is interlinked with the others.

The articles of the CRC could be seen at a glance in Box below.

UNCRC at a Glance

1. Preamble

It states the main sources and principles for agreements to follow in the convention.

2. Part I

It contains 41 articles (Article 1 to Article 41) to define responsibilities of the state parties towards the rights of the child. The implied rights of the child are as follows:

1. Definition of a child

All people under the age of 18, unless by law, majority is attained at an earlier age.

2. Non-discrimination

All rights apply to all children without exception, and the State is obliged to protect children from any form of discrimination. The State must not violate any right and must take positive action to promote all rights.

3. Best interests of the child

All actions concerning the child should take full account of his or her best interests. The State is to provide adequate care when parents or others responsible fail to do so.

4. Implementation of rights

The state is obliged to translate the rights in UNCRC into reality.

5. Parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities

The State has a duty to respect the rights and responsibilities of parents or the extended family to provide appropriate direction and guidance to children in the exercise of their rights.

6. Survival and development

The child has an inherent right to life, and the state must ensure the maximum survival and development of the child.

7. Name and nationality

Every child has the right to have a name from birth and to be granted a nationality.

8. Preservation of identity

The State is obliged to protect and, if necessary, re-establish the basics of a child's identity (name, nationality and family ties).

9. Separation from parents

Children have the right to live with their parents unless this is incompatible with their best interests; to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one or both; and the right to be informed by the State of the whereabouts of their parents if such separation is the result of action by the State.

10. Family re-unification

Children and their parents have the right to leave any country and to enter their own in order to be reunited or to maintain the child/ parent relationship.

11. Illicit transfer and non-return

The State is obliged to try to prevent and remedy the kidnapping or retention of children in another country by a parent or third party.

12. The child's opinion

The child has the right to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.

13. Freedom of expression

Children have the right to obtain and make known information and to express their views, unless this would violate the rights of others.

14. Freedom of thought, conscience, and religion

The child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance and national law.

15. Freedom of association

The child has the right to meet with others and to join or set up associations, unless doing so violates the rights of others.

16. Protection of privacy

Children have the right to protection from interference with their privacy, family, home and correspondence and from libel/ slander.

17. Access to appropriate information

The media has a duty to disseminate information to children that is of social, moral, educational and cultural benefit to them, and which respects their cultural background. The State is to take measures to encourage the publication of material of value to children and to protect children from harmful material.

18. Parental responsibilities

Both parents jointly have primary responsibility for bringing up their children and the State should support them in the task.

19. Protection from abuse and neglect

The State is obliged to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence perpetrated by parents or others responsible for their care, and to undertake preventative and treatment programmes in this regard.

20. Protection of children without families

The State is obliged to provide special protection for children deprived of their family environment and to ensure that appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement is made available to them, taking into account the child's cultural background.

21. Adoption

In countries where adoption is recognized and/ or allowed, it shall only be carried out in the best interests of the child, with all necessary safeguards for a given child and authorization by the competent authorities.

22. Refugee children

Special protection is to be granted to children who are refugees or seeking refugee status and the State is obliged to cooperate with competent organizations providing such protection and assistance.

23. Disabled children

Disabled children have the right to special care, education and training, designed to help them to achieve greatest possible self- reliance and participation to lead a full and active life.

24. Health and health services

The child has the right to the highest level of health and access to health and medical services, with special emphasis on primary and preventive health care, public health education and the reduction of infant mortality. The State is obliged to work towards the abolition of harmful traditional practices. Emphasis is laid on the need for international cooperation to ensure this right.

25. Periodic review of placement

A child placed by the State for reasons of care, protection or treatment, has the right to have all aspects of that placement evaluated regularly.

26. Social security

Children have the right to benefit from social security.

27. Standard of living

Children have the right to benefit from an adequate standard of living. It is the primary responsibility of parents to provide this and the State's duty to ensure that parents are able to fulfil that responsibility. The State may provide material support in case of need and may seek to ensure recovery of child maintenance costs from absent parents or guardians.

28. Education

The child has the right to education and the State has a duty to ensure that primary education, at least, is made free and compulsory. Administration of school discipline is to reflect the child's human dignity. Emphasis is laid on the need for international co-operation to ensure this right.

29. Aims of education

The State must recognise that education should be directed at developing the child's personality and talents, preparing the child for active life as an adult, fostering respect for basic human rights and developing respect for the child's own cultural and national values and those of others.

30. Children of minorities or indigenous people

Children of minority communities and indigenous people have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practice their own religion and language.

31. Leisure, recreation, and cultural activities

Children have the right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

32. Child labour

The State is obliged to protect children from engaging in work that constitutes a threat to their health, education or development, to set minimum age for employment, and to regulate conditions of employment.

33. Drug abuse

The child has the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs and from being involved in their production or distribution.

34. Sexual exploitation

The child has the right to protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

35. Sale, trafficking and abduction

The State is obliged to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

36. Other forms of exploitation

The child has the right to protection from all other forms of exploitation not covered in Articles 32, 33, 34 and 35.

37. Torture and deprivation of liberty

The prohibition of torture, cruel treatment or punishment, capital punishment and life imprisonment. Arrest and any form of restriction of liberty must be used only as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate time. Children have the right to appropriate treatment, separation from detained adults, contact with their family and access to legal and other assistance.

38. Armed conflicts

States are obliged to respect and ensure respect for humanitarian law as it applies to children. No child under 15 years of age should take a direct part in hostilities or be recruited into the armed forces, and all children affected by armed conflict should benefit from protection and care.

39. Rehabilitative care

The State is obliged to ensure that children damaged by armed conflict, torture, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation receive appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.

40. Administration of juvenile justice

Children alleged or recognized as having committed an offence have the right to respect for their human rights and, in particular, to benefit from all aspects of the due process of law, including legal or other assistance in preparing and presenting their defence. Recourse to judicial proceedings and institutional placements should be avoided wherever possible and appropriate.

41. Respect for existing standards

If any standards set by international law or other applicable international instruments are higher than those of this Convention, it is the higher standard that applies.

Part II

It contains 4 articles (Article 42 to Article 45) to require the state parties to establish a Committee on the Rights of the Child for monitoring and coordinating the work required by the Convention in each state party. It contains 9 articles (Article 46 to Article 54) to define the procedures and instruments for state parties to have ratifications on the Convention.

UNCRC - https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf

As can be seen from the Box, the Convention not only provides for monitoring of the performance of States Parties at the international level but also what is being done for children at the national level. Article 43 sets out the criteria for the establishment of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, which receives, and reviews reports prepared by States Parties about their progress in implementing the Convention as required by Article 44.

Classification of Child Rights as per UNCRC

Survival	**Development**
▪ Right to Life, Survival and Development (Art. 6) ▪ Standard of Living (Art 27, 18.3) ▪ Parental Guidance (Art.5) ▪ Name and Nationality (Art.7) ▪ Preservation of Identity (Art.8) ▪ Adoption (Art 21) ▪ Periodic review of placement (Art 25)	▪ Survival and Development (Art 6.2) ▪ Health and Health Services (Art. 24) ▪ Education, including vocational training and guidance (Art. 28) ▪ Leisure, Recreation and Cultural activities (Art. 31) ▪ The right to physical and psychological recovery and social integration (art 39)
Protection	**Participation**
▪ Non Discrimination (Art.2) ▪ Protection of Privacy (Art 16) ▪ Right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. (Art. 37) ▪ Abuse and Neglect (Art. 19) ▪ Prohibition of Capital Punishment and life imprisonment (Art. 37 a) ▪ Economic exploitation including child labour (Art.32) ▪ Drug Abuse (Art. 33) ▪ Sexual exploitation and Abuse (Art 34) ▪ Other forms of Exploitation (Art. 36) ▪ Sale, trafficking and abduction (Art. 35)	▪ Respect the views of Child (Art. 12) ▪ Freedom of Expression (Art. 13) ▪ Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion (Art. 14) ▪ Freedom of Association and Peaceful assembly (Art. 15) ▪ Right to Appropriate Information (Art. 17)

Definition of a child under various laws in India

In India, the definition of children varies depending on the legislation or law being referred to. Here are some common definitions of children as per different legislations in India:

Legislations	Purpose	Age	
		Boys	Girls
Right to Education Act, 2009 (http://mhrd.gov.in/rte)	To protect the Right to Education of Children	14	14
Child Labor (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 (http://labour.gov.in/content/division	To prohibit the engagement of children in certain employment‟s and to regulate the conditions of	14	14
Mines Act 1952 (http://indiacode.nic.in/fullact1.asp?t fnm=195235, http://faolex.fao.org/docs/pdf/ind132 410.pdf)	To prohibit the engagement of children from hazardous work situations	18	18
Factories Act 1948	To prevent children from being employed in factories.	14	14
Juvenile Justice Care and Protection of Children Act, 2015 (http://wcd.nic.in/childprot/jjactamed ment.pdf)	To ensure child protection and to prevent abuse of child	18	
Prohibition of Child Marriages Act 2006 https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2055?sam_handle=123456789/1362	To prohibit Child marriage	21	18
Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012 https://www.indiacode.nic.in/handle/123456789/2079?sam_handle=123456789/1362#:~:text=India%20Code%3A%20Protection%20of%20Children%20from%20Sexual%20Offences%20Act%2C%202012&text=Long%20Title%3A,connected%20therewith%20or%20incidental%20thereto.	To prevent children aged less than 18 from offences like sexual harassment, sexual assault, and child pornography.	18	18

History of Child Rights in Tamil Nadu and India

Children have not always been on the Human Rights Agenda. Child rights in Tamil Nadu and India have evolved over time, influenced by historical, social, and legal developments. Here's an overview of the history of child rights in Tamil Nadu and India:

Pre Independence:

Before independence, child rights in India were not explicitly recognized or protected.

The prevailing socio-cultural norms and economic conditions often led to the exploitation and neglect of children, including child labour, child marriage, and limited access to education and healthcare.

Before India's independence, there were several notable social reformers in who fought against social injustices and advocated for the rights and welfare of children. Here are a few prominent figures:

1. **Mahatma Gandhi**: Mahatma Gandhi, the father of the Indian nation, was a strong advocate for children's rights. He emphasized the importance of education and child welfare. Gandhi believed that children should be given freedom, love, and a nurturing environment. He advocated against child marriage, child labour, and the exploitation of children in any form.

2. **Muthulakshmi Reddy:** Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddy was a pioneering social reformer and the first female legislator in India. She played a significant role in the Women's Indian Association and fought against child marriage and the devadasi system. She also worked towards improving healthcare and education for children.

3. **Periyar E. V. Ramasamy**: Periyar was a social activist and politician who championed the cause of social justice and equality. He emphasized the importance of education and fought against child marriage and caste-based discrimination, advocating for equal rights and opportunities for children of all backgrounds.

4. **Dr.B R Ambedkar** incorporated special provisions for the rights of girl children in the Indian Constitution. He has upheld the rights of children by Right to Education.

5. **Pandit Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar:** Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a prominent social reformer and educator in the 19th century. He worked tirelessly to improve the status of women and advocated for child marriage laws. He played a key role in the passage of the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856, which aimed to abolish the practice of child marriage.

6. **Bharathiyar (Subramanya Bharathi):** Bharathiyar was a celebrated poet, writer, and freedom fighter. Through his powerful poems and writings, he highlighted the importance of education and freedom for children. He advocated for gender equality and denounced child marriage and social inequalities.

7. **Annie Besant:** Although not originally from Tamil Nadu, Annie Besant, a British activist, made significant contributions to child welfare in the region. She founded the Central Hindu School in Chennai and worked towards improving education and child rights in the area.

8. **Raja Ram Mohan Roy:** Raja Ram Mohan Roy, one of the pioneers of the Bengal Renaissance, worked towards the eradication of social evils prevalent in society, including child marriage and the practice of Sati. He believed in the importance of education and campaigned for its accessibility to all, regardless of gender or caste.

9. **Savitribai Phule**: an Indian social reformer and poet, made significant contributions to the field of child rights during the 19th century. Savitribai Phule was a strong advocate for girls' education at a time when it was widely neglected in India. She established the first school for girls in Pune in 1848, providing them with access to education that was previously denied to them. By focusing on girls' education, she aimed to empower them and break the cycle of oppression and discrimination.

These reformers played a crucial role in challenging social norms and fighting for the rights and well-being of children in Tamil Nadu during the pre-independence era. Their efforts laid the foundation for subsequent advancements in child rights and welfare in the state and continue to inspire future generations.

Independence and Constitution:

After gaining independence in 1947, India recognized the need to protect the rights of children.

The Constitution of India, adopted in 1950, included provisions for the protection and welfare of children.

i. Article 15(3) allowed the state to make special provisions for children.
ii. Article 24 prohibited the employment of children in hazardous industries.

Formation of Policies and Institutions:

In the 1970s and 1980s, several policies and programs were implemented to address child rights issues.

i. The National Policy for Children was formulated in 1974, focusing on children's rights, health, education, and welfare.
ii. The Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) was launched in 1975 to address the nutritional, health, and developmental needs of young children.
iii. The Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project (TINP) was implemented in the late 1980s to address child malnutrition and improve maternal and child health.

Legislation and Legal Reforms:

The legal framework for child rights in India was strengthened through the enactment of various laws.

i. The Juvenile Justice Act was first passed in 1986 to provide for the care, protection, and rehabilitation of neglected and delinquent children.
ii. The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act was enacted in 1986 to prohibit the employment of children in certain hazardous occupations.
iii. The Right to Education Act (RTE) was passed in 2009, making education a fundamental right for children aged 6 to 14.

iv. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act was enacted in 2015 to address the needs of children in conflict with the law.

Focus on Education and Health:

Efforts have been made to improve access to quality education and healthcare for children in Tamil Nadu and India.

i. Programs like Samagra Shiksa (formerly Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)) and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) aim to provide free and compulsory education to all children.

ii. The National Health Mission (NHM) and the Reproductive, Maternal, New-born, Child and Adolescent Health (RMNCH+A) strategy focus on improving maternal and child health.

Child Protection and Welfare:

The government and civil society organizations have been working to address child protection issues and promote the overall welfare of children.

i. Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), Juvenile justice boards (JJBs) and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCRs) were established to ensure the implementation of child protection laws.

ii. Various schemes and programs, such as the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS), aim to prevent and respond to child abuse, exploitation, and trafficking.

It is important to note that the history of child rights in Tamil Nadu and India is a dynamic and ongoing process. Efforts continue to strengthen the legal framework, improve service delivery, and address the evolving challenges faced by children to ensure their holistic development, protection, and well-being.

Reform and Social Justice movements in Tamil Nadu

Various movements, campaigns, coalitions and networks that are working for the rights of children in Tamil Nadu.

There are several movements, campaigns, coalitions, and networks actively working for the rights of children in Tamil Nadu. These initiatives aim to advocate for children's rights, address issues related to education, health, child labour, child protection, and overall well-being. Here are some prominent examples:

1. **Tamil Nadu Child Rights Watch (TNCRW):** TNCRW is a network of individuals and organizations working towards the promotion and protection of child rights in Tamil Nadu. It conducts research, advocacy, and campaigns to raise awareness about child rights issues and push for policy changes.

2. **Campaign Against Child Labour (CACL):** CACL is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to eradicating child labour in Tamil Nadu. They work towards ensuring that children are protected from exploitative labour practices and have access to education and a safe environment.

3. **Right to Education (RTE)** Forum Tamil Nadu: The RTE Forum Tamil Nadu is a network of organizations and individuals advocating for the effective implementation of the Right to Education Act in the state. They work towards ensuring free and quality education for all children, addressing issues like access, infrastructure, teacher training, and inclusive education.

4. **Children Movement for Climate Justice -CMCJ** Children from marginalized farming families of Seven States of India between the age group of 12 to 18 united with commitment to protecting the only earth we have to make it a liveable one for every human being, especially for us as well future children, and concerned about protecting the same. **Children Movement for Climate Justice – CMCJ'** stems out of the Rights Based Approach practiced by the "Palar Panchayat" under the wider support of Child Focused Community Development (CFCD) intervention initiated by Kindernothilfe (KNH), Germany and Resource Centre for Participatory Development Studies, (RCPDS) Madurai.

These movements, campaigns, coalitions, and networks play a vital role in raising awareness, advocating for policy changes, providing services, and working towards the holistic development and protection of children in Tamil Nadu. They collaborate with various stakeholders and contribute to creating an enabling environment for the fulfilment of child rights.

Non-Governmental Organisations working for Child Rights in Tamilnadu and India

Arunodhaya Centre for Street and Working Children: Arunodhaya is an NGO that works specifically for the rights of street and working children in Tamil Nadu. They provide education, vocational training, healthcare, and shelter to children living and working on the streets. Arunodhaya also advocates for the rights of these children and works towards their rehabilitation and reintegration.

Thozhamai: Thozhamai is based in Chennai that focuses on child rights and protection. They work towards preventing child abuse, child labour, child marriage, and child trafficking. Thozhamai provides rehabilitation, counseling, and educational support to vulnerable children across Tamilnadu.

Centre for Child Rights and Development (CCRD): CCRD is an NGO based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, that focuses on child rights and child development. They work towards improving access to education, healthcare, and protection for children, especially those from marginalized communities. CCRD also conducts training programs and awareness campaigns to empower children and communities.

Tulir - Centre for the Prevention and Healing of Child Sexual Abuse is an NGO based in Chennai, India. It focuses on addressing the issue of child sexual abuse and providing support to survivors. Tulir develops and implements prevention programs to create awareness about child sexual abuse and equip children, parents, caregivers, and professionals with knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to abuse. These programs aim to educate the community and empower individuals to identify and report cases of abuse.

Enfold Trust is a non-profit organization based in Bengaluru, India, dedicated to promoting child protection and creating safe spaces for children. Enfold Trust focuses on raising awareness about child sexual abuse and promoting prevention strategies. They conduct workshops, training programs, and awareness campaigns for parents, caregivers, teachers, and other stakeholders to equip them with knowledge and skills to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse. Enfold Trust provides counseling and support services to child victims of abuse and their families. They offer a safe and confidential environment for children to express themselves and heal from the trauma of abuse. Additionally, they extend support to parents and caregivers to help them navigate the challenges and support the recovery process.

Save the Children: Save the Children is a global organization committed to improving the lives of children. They work in various states across India to protect children from harm, provide access to quality education and healthcare, and advocate for their rights. Save the Children focuses on addressing issues such as child labor, child marriage, child trafficking, and malnutrition, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive.

Child Rights and You (CRY): CRY is an Indian NGO dedicated to upholding the rights of underprivileged children. They collaborate with grassroots-level organizations to provide education, healthcare, and protection to vulnerable children across India. CRY also conducts advocacy campaigns and engages in policy dialogue to create a child-friendly environment and ensure the implementation of child-friendly policies and programs.

Pratham: Pratham is one of the largest NGOs in India working to improve education outcomes for underprivileged children. They implement innovative programs to bridge learning gaps, promote foundational literacy and numeracy skills, and ensure children have access to quality education. Pratham's initiatives include remedial education, early childhood education, vocational training, and digital learning platforms.

Butterflies: Butterflies is an Indian NGO working for the rights and well-being of street and working children. They provide non-formal education, healthcare, nutrition support, and vocational training to empower children and enable them to escape the cycle of poverty and exploitation. Butterflies also engages in advocacy and awareness campaigns to address the root causes of child vulnerability.

Salaam Baalak Trust: Salaam Baalak Trust works with street and working children in urban areas, providing them with shelter, education, healthcare, and vocational training. The organization focuses on rehabilitating and reintegrating children into mainstream society and offers support for their overall development. Salaam Baalak Trust also advocates for policy changes to protect the rights of street children.

HAQ: Centre for Child Rights is an organization based in New Delhi, India, dedicated to the promotion and protection of child rights. HAQ: Centre for Child Rights has been instrumental in bringing attention to critical child rights issues in India and working towards their resolution. Through their comprehensive approach of advocacy, research, capacity building, and legal support, HAQ contributes to creating an environment where children can fully enjoy their rights and realize their potential.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are two separate frameworks established by the United Nations (UN) to guide global development efforts. Here's a brief overview of both:

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): The MDGs were a set of eight specific and time-bound goals adopted by the UN member states in the year 2000. The goals aimed to address some of the world's most pressing challenges by 2015. The MDGs were as follows:

i. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
ii. Achieve universal primary education
iii. Promote gender equality and empower women
iv. Reduce child mortality
v. Improve maternal health
vi. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
vii. Ensure environmental sustainability
viii. Develop a global partnership for development

The MDGs were primarily focused on developing countries and targeted specific areas of development. While progress was made on some fronts, the MDGs faced limitations in terms of their scope, inclusiveness, and integration of environmental concerns.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): The SDGs were adopted by the UN member states in 2015 as a successor framework to the MDGs, with a target to be achieved by 2030. The SDGs are a set of 17 interconnected goals that aim to address the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. The goals are as follows:

i. No Poverty
ii. Zero Hunger
iii. Good Health and Well-being
iv. Quality Education
v. Gender Equality
vi. Clean Water and Sanitation

vii. Affordable and Clean Energy
viii. Decent Work and Economic Growth
ix. Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
x. Reduced Inequalities
xi. Sustainable Cities and Communities
xii. Responsible Consumption and Production
xiii. Climate Action
xiv. Life Below Water
xv. Life on Land
xvi. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions
xvii. Partnerships for the Goals

The SDGs are universal, applying to all countries, and aim to integrate economic, social, and environmental aspects of development. They address a wider range of challenges than the MDGs, including poverty, health, education, gender equality, climate change, biodiversity, and more. The SDGs also emphasize the importance of partnerships, data monitoring, and accountability to achieve sustainable development.

In summary, the MDGs and SDGs are both global frameworks for development, but the SDGs represent a more comprehensive and integrated approach, encompassing a broader range of issues and emphasizing the interconnections between various aspects of sustainable development.

Children's rights and Sustainable Development Goals

Children's rights and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in India are closely intertwined, as the SDGs provide a framework to address various challenges related to child rights and promote their well-being. Here are some examples of how children's rights align with specific SDGs in India:

SDG 1: No Poverty: Child poverty is a significant issue in India. Ensuring access to necessities, such as food, healthcare, education, and social protection, is crucial for lifting children out of poverty and securing their rights.

SDG 2: Zero Hunger: Addressing child malnutrition and ensuring food security are important for children's health and development. Initiatives like the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and the Mid-Day Meal Scheme aim to provide nutritious meals and combat child hunger in India.

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being: Improving child health and reducing child mortality rates are key priorities. Enhancing access to quality healthcare services, immunization programs, nutrition interventions, and addressing sanitation and hygiene issues contribute to promoting children's health and well-being.

SDG 4: Quality Education: India has made progress in improving access to education, but challenges remain. Ensuring inclusive and equitable education, eliminating gender disparities, and enhancing the quality of education are essential for realizing children's right to education.

SDG 5: Gender Equality: Promoting gender equality and empowering girls is crucial for ensuring the fulfilment of children's rights. Addressing issues like child marriage, gender-based violence, and promoting girls' education and equal opportunities contribute to gender equality and the overall well-being of children.

SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation: Access to clean water and adequate sanitation facilities is critical for children's health and hygiene. Initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Mission) aim to provide sanitation infrastructure and promote hygiene practices, benefiting children across the country.

SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth: Protecting children from child labour, promoting decent work for adults, and ensuring equitable economic growth indirectly contribute to children's rights by providing a supportive environment for their well-being.

SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities: Addressing inequalities, including those based on caste, class, gender, or geography, is vital for the realization of children's rights. It involves ensuring equal opportunities, access to services, and protection for marginalized and vulnerable children.

SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: Protecting children from violence, abuse, exploitation, and ensuring child-friendly justice systems and institutions contribute to their well-being and safety. Strengthening child protection mechanisms and ensuring child-friendly legal processes are important in this regard.

SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals: Collaboration between the government, civil society organizations, communities, and other stakeholders is crucial for promoting and protecting children's rights. Working together to implement child-centric policies, share knowledge and resources, and advocate for child rights strengthens the overall impact.

By integrating children's rights into the implementation of the SDGs, India can make significant progress in improving the lives of children, ensuring their well-being, and creating a sustainable and inclusive future for all.

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Unit End exercises

MYTH OR REALITY ABOUT CHILDREN´S PARTICIPATION

Read carefully and select myth or reality.

What do you think?	Myth	Reality
1. Children cannot participate because they do not have enough experience.		
2. Little children are able to like or dislike anything.		
3. The right to be heard steals child´s childhood.		
4. If children participate, they will no longer respect their parents or teachers.		
5. To listen to children means to respect and help them to appreciate others.		
6. Children may have good ideas to make the lessons more interesting, they can also help other children.		
7. To listen is a way to solve conflicts, also finding solutions together and promoting mutual understanding –these aspects benefit family life.		
8. In appropriate spaces, even little children are able to be considered in decision making, i.e. about their friends, parent divorce, and conflict with their parents, also about what games should they play and negotiate the rules to follow.		
9. Children become rebel and conflictive when participate		
10. Girls have less skills to participate. To them, participation is danger.		

Unit End Questions

1. Define the age of children as per UNCRC.
2. Define the age of children as per different legislations in India.
3. Discuss the myths and perceptions about children.
4. What are the key aspects to consider when seeking to understand child rights from the perspective of affected people.
5. What is UNCRC?
6. What are the key principles of UNCRC?
7. Explain the classification of child rights as per UNCRC.
8. Explain the history of child rights in India.
9. Explain the reform and social justice movements in Tamilnadu.
10. Discuss the SDGs related to child rights.

UNIT – 2

VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Various forms of Violence Against Children (VAC) and trends in Tamil Nadu – Physical, psychological, emotional, sexual exploitation and abuse, discrimination, neglect, denial and online abuse – Intersectionality - Factors leading to vulnerability of children in Tamil Nadu and root causes.

Violence Against Children (VAC): Various forms and trends in Tamil Nadu

Physical violence

Physical violence on children refers to the intentional use of physical force that causes harm or injury to a child. Unfortunately, physical violence against children remains a serious issue in many parts of the world, including Tamil Nadu. Here are some key aspects related to physical violence on children

1. **Forms of physical violence:**[2] Physical violence can manifest in various forms, including hitting, slapping, kicking, punching, shaking, whipping, or any other act that inflicts bodily harm on a child. It can also involve the use of objects to cause physical harm.

Did you know?

3 in 4 children aged **2-4 years,** experience. violent discipline by their caregivers on a regular basis; and around **6 in 10 are punished by physical means.**

2. **Settings of physical violence:** Physical violence against children can occur within various settings, including the home, school, institutions, or in the community. It can be perpetrated by family members, caregivers, teachers, peers, or other individuals in positions of authority or trust.

3. **Consequences and impact:** Physical violence can have severe consequences for children. It can cause physical injuries, pain, and suffering, as well as emotional and psychological trauma. It can adversely affect a child's overall well-being, mental health, self-esteem, and social development. In some cases, physical violence can lead to long-term physical and mental health problems.

4. **Factors contributing to physical violence:** Several factors can contribute to physical violence against children. These may include intergenerational patterns of violence, cultural beliefs that condone corporal punishment, inadequate parenting skills, stressors within the family, substance abuse, and societal tolerance of violence.[3]

Did you know?

1 out of 2 children aged **2–17 years** suffer some form of violence each year

5. **Legal and protective measures**: In many countries, including India, laws and regulations exist to protect children from physical violence. For example, in India, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, prohibits corporal punishment and physical abuse of children. However, enforcement and awareness of these laws may vary, and there is a need for continuous efforts to strengthen child protection systems and ensure accountability for perpetrators.

2 https://data.unicef.org/resources/a-familiar-face/

3 Global status report on preventing violence against children 2020: executive summary. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2020. https://www.who.int/teams/social-determinants-of-health/violence-prevention/global-status-report-on-violence-against-children-2020

Psychological abuse

Psychological abuse on children refers to the emotional or mental mistreatment that can have severe and long-lasting effects on a child's well-being. It involves behaviours or actions by adults or caregivers that undermine a child's self-worth, confidence, and psychological development. Here are some examples of psychological abuse:

1. **Verbal or emotional degradation:** This includes consistently belittling, insulting, or humiliating a child, using derogatory language, or making negative comments about their abilities, appearance, or worth.
2. **Rejection and neglect:** When caregivers consistently ignore or dismiss a child's needs, emotions, or presence, it can lead to feelings of abandonment, worthlessness, and isolation.
3. **Constant criticism:** Frequent and unjust criticism, regardless of the child's efforts or achievements, can erode their self-esteem and make them feel inadequate or unworthy.
4. **Isolation and confinement:** Deliberately isolating a child from social interactions, friendships, or activities that are appropriate for their age can lead to feelings of loneliness, anxiety, and stunted social development.
5. **Manipulation and exploitation:** Manipulating a child's emotions or thoughts for personal gain, such as using them as a pawn in conflicts or exploiting their vulnerabilities, can cause significant psychological harm.
6. **Terrorizing or threatening:** Subjecting a child to constant fear, intimidation, or threats of harm can create an atmosphere of anxiety and make them feel unsafe and helpless.
7. **Withholding love and affection:** Denying a child love, affection, or emotional support can impede their ability to form healthy relationships, trust others, and develop a positive sense of self-worth.

Psychological abuse can have severe consequences on a child's mental health, emotional well-being, and overall development. It can lead to low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, social withdrawal, difficulty forming relationships, Behavioral problems, academic difficulties, and even long-term psychological disorders.

If you suspect a child is experiencing psychological abuse, it is crucial to report your concerns to the appropriate child protection authorities or seek professional help from a counselor, therapist, or social worker.

Emotional abuse on children

Emotional abuse on children is a form of mistreatment that affects their emotional and psychological well-being. It involves behaviours or actions by adults or caregivers that undermine a child's sense of self-worth, emotional security, and overall development. Here are some examples of emotional abuse:

1. **Constant criticism and humiliation:** Regularly criticizing, ridiculing, or demeaning a child, either privately or in front of others, can lead to feelings of shame, guilt, and worthlessness.

2. **Blaming and scapegoating:** Assigning blame to a child for things beyond their control, making them feel responsible for the problems or conflicts within the family, can cause a significant amount of emotional distress.

3. **Rejection and neglect:** Ignoring a child's emotional needs, dismissing their feelings, or withholding love and affection can lead to feelings of abandonment, loneliness, and a deep sense of unworthiness.

4. **Gaslighting:** Manipulating a child's perception of reality, distorting the truth, or denying their experiences and emotions can make them doubt their own sanity and erode their sense of self-trust.

5. **Emotional withholding:** Withholding love, affection, or emotional support as a means of punishment or control can leave a child feeling unloved, unwanted, and emotionally starved.

6. **Threats and intimidation:** Using threats, intimidation, or fear-inducing tactics to control or manipulate a child's behaviour can create an atmosphere of constant anxiety, undermining their sense of safety and security.

Isolation and social deprivation: Preventing a child from forming or maintaining social connections, isolating them from friends, or restricting their social interactions can lead to feelings of loneliness, social anxiety, and impaired social development.

Emotional abuse can have severe and long-lasting effects on a child's mental health and well-being. It can contribute to low self-esteem, depression, anxiety disorders, self-harming behaviours, difficulties in forming and maintaining relationships, and a higher risk of developing psychological problems in adulthood.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

Sexual exploitation and abuse of children is a deeply concerning and illegal act that involves using children for sexual purposes, which can cause significant harm to their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. It encompasses various forms of abuse, including but not limited to:

1. **Child pornography:** The production, distribution, or possession of explicit images or videos involving children.

2. **Child sex trafficking:** The recruitment, transportation, or receipt of children for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

3. **Child prostitution**: Involving children in commercial sex acts in exchange for money, goods, or services.

4. **Online exploitation:** Coercing, grooming, or manipulating children online for sexual purposes, including sextortion, live-streamed abuse, or engaging in sexually explicit conversations.

Did you know?

In **94.6 per cent** of cases of child sexual abuse, the **perpetrators were known** to child victims in one way or the other. **in 53.7 per cent of cases they were close family members or relatives/friends.**

5. **Child sexual abuse:** Engaging in any sexual activity with a child, including molestation, fondling, penetration, or any other form of sexual contact. Involvement of a child in a sexual activity that s/he does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent to, or is not developmentally prepared for both touching (contact) and non-touching (non-contact)

6. **Child sexual grooming:** Building an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust and manipulate them into engaging in sexual activities.

7. **Child sexual exploitation materials:** Creating, possessing, distributing, or accessing materials that depict or document the sexual abuse or exploitation of children.

It is important to understand that child sexual exploitation and abuse are crimes and violations of human rights. The consequences for victims can be severe and long-lasting, including physical injuries, psychological trauma, sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancies, social stigma, and difficulties in forming healthy relationships.

Spiritual abuse

Spiritual abuse occurs when a spiritual leader or someone in a position of spiritual power or authority (whether organisation, institution, temple, mosque, church or family) misuses their power or authority, and the trust placed in them, with the intention of controlling, coercing, manipulating or dominating a child. Spiritual abuse is always about the misuse of power within a framework of spiritual belief or practice, in order to meet the needs of the abuser (or enhance his or her position) at the expense of the needs of the child. Spiritual abuse results in spiritual harm to a child and can be linked to other abuse such as physical, sexual and emotional abuse.

Abuse of trust

A relationship of trust can be described as one in which one party is in a position of power or influence over the other by virtue of their work or the nature of their activity. An abuse of trust could be committed by, for example, a teacher, humanitarian or development worker, sports coach, scout leader, faith leader. It is important those in a position of trust have a clear understanding of the responsibilities carries and clear guidance to ensure they do not abuse their position or put themselves in a position where allegations of abuse, whether justified or unfounded, could be made. The relationship may be distorted by fear or favour. It is vital for all those in such positions of trust to understand the power this gives them over those they care for and the responsibility they must exercise as a consequence.

Bullying is now recognised as increasingly harmful to children and young people. This could take the form of physical intimidation, verbal intimidation – including caste, gender and sexist remarks – or emotional intimidation – for example isolating or excluding someone. It is difficult to define but always involves a less powerful person experiencing deliberate hostility.

Discrimination

Discrimination against children occurs when they are treated unfairly or unequally based on certain characteristics such as their race, ethnicity, gender, religion, disability, socioeconomic status, or other protected attributes. Discrimination can manifest in various forms and settings, including

education, healthcare, social interactions, and within the family unit. Here are some examples of discrimination that children may experience:

1. **Caste based discrimination**: Children may face prejudice, bias, or differential treatment based on their caste background, leading to exclusion, stereotypes, or unequal access to opportunities.
2. **Gender discrimination:** Children may encounter discrimination based on their gender, limiting their access to education, healthcare, or participation in certain activities due to societal norms or stereotypes.
3. **Discrimination based on religion or belief:** Children may face prejudice or marginalization due to their religious affiliation or beliefs, leading to exclusion, stigmatization, or restricted access to resources and services.
4. **Discrimination against children with disabilities:** Children with disabilities may experience discrimination in terms of access to education, healthcare, social participation, and employment opportunities, due to physical, attitudinal, or systemic barriers.
5. **Socioeconomic discrimination:** Children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face discrimination, such as limited access to quality education, healthcare, or opportunities for upward mobility, based on their economic status.
6. **Discrimination within the family:** Children can experience discrimination or differential treatment within their own families, such as favouritism based on gender, birth order, or other factors, which can negatively impact their self-esteem and emotional well-being.

Discrimination can have detrimental effects on children's self-esteem, educational attainment, mental health, and overall development. It is important to promote equality, inclusivity, and respect for diversity to create a safe and nurturing environment for all children. Addressing discrimination requires efforts at both individual and systemic levels, including raising awareness, promoting education, enforcing anti-discrimination laws and policies, and fostering a culture of tolerance and acceptance.

Child Neglect

Child neglect refers to a failure by caregivers to meet a child's basic needs for physical, emotional, educational, or medical care, resulting in harm or potential harm to the child's well-being. It can occur in various forms and can have serious consequences for a child's health and development. Here are some examples of child neglect:

1. **Physical neglect:** This involves a caregiver's failure to provide the necessary food, clothing, shelter, or supervision to ensure a child's physical well-being. It may include inadequate nutrition, lack of appropriate clothing, unsafe living conditions, or leaving a child unsupervised for extended periods.
2. **Emotional neglect:** Emotional neglect occurs when caregivers fail to provide the emotional support, attention, and affection that a child needs for healthy development. It can involve ignoring a child's emotional needs, dismissing their feelings, or consistently withholding love and nurturing.

3. **Medical neglect:** Medical neglect refers to a caregiver's failure to provide necessary medical care or treatment for a child's physical or mental health conditions. This can include delaying or avoiding necessary medical appointments, medication, therapies, or interventions.

4. **Educational neglect:** educational neglect occurs when caregivers fail to provide a child with access to appropriate education or educational support. This can include chronic absenteeism, not enrolling a child in school, or not addressing a child's special educational needs.

5. **Supervisory neglect:** Supervisory neglect involves a caregiver's failure to provide adequate supervision and protection for a child, putting their safety and well-being at risk. This can include leaving a child alone at an inappropriate age or leaving them in the care of someone who is not capable or responsible.

Child neglect can have significant and long-lasting effects on a child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development. It can lead to malnutrition, physical injuries, poor hygiene, impaired brain development, academic difficulties, low self-esteem, attachment disorders, mental health problems, and a higher risk of engaging in risky behaviours.

Drug Dependency among Children

Drug dependency among children in India is a serious issue that has gained attention in recent years. Children in India are vulnerable to drug abuse and dependency due to various socio-economic factors. Several factors contribute to drug dependency among children in India. These include poverty, lack of education, unemployment, peer pressure, family dysfunction, exposure to violence and trauma, and easy availability of drugs in certain areas. Children may turn to drugs as a means of escape, coping with stress or emotional difficulties, or due to curiosity.

The commonly abused substances among children in India include alcohol, tobacco, inhalants (glue, paint thinners, etc.), cannabis, and sometimes harder drugs like opioids. Substance abuse poses significant health risks and can lead to long-term physical, psychological, and social consequences for children.

1. **Alcohol:** Alcohol abuse among children is a significant concern. Underage drinking can lead to dependency, impaired judgment, physical health issues, and increased risk-taking behavior.

2. **Tobacco:** Smoking cigarettes or using other tobacco products is another form of drug dependency among children. Nicotine addiction can have severe health consequences and increase the risk of respiratory problems, cancer, and other tobacco-related diseases.

3. **Inhalants:** Inhalants are substances that are sniffed or inhaled to produce intoxication. They include volatile solvents like glue, paint thinners, gasoline, aerosol sprays, and household cleaning agents. Inhalant abuse can cause serious health problems, including damage to the brain, liver, kidneys, and other organs.

4. **Cannabis:** Cannabis, commonly known as marijuana or weed, is another drug that children may abuse. It can lead to dependency, cognitive impairments, and mental health issues.

5. **Prescription Medications:** Some children may misuse prescription medications, such as opioids (painkillers), benzodiazepines (sedatives), or stimulants (used for attention-deficit

hyperactivity disorder). Prescription drug dependency can have severe health risks and potential for overdose.

6. **Stimulants:** Stimulant drugs, such as cocaine or amphetamines, can be abused by children. These drugs can have harmful effects on physical and mental health, including cardiovascular problems and addiction.

7. **Opioids:** Opioid abuse among children is a growing concern. Children may misuse prescription opioids or turn to illicit substances like heroin. Opioid dependency can have devastating consequences and pose a high risk of overdose.

It's important to note that drug dependency among children is a complex issue influenced by various factors, including personal circumstances, peer pressure, family dynamics, and socio-economic conditions. Early intervention, prevention programs, education, counseling, and access to appropriate healthcare services are crucial in addressing drug dependency among children and providing them with support and rehabilitation.

Juvenile Delinquency

Juvenile delinquency (Child in Conflict with Law) in India refers to the involvement of individuals under the age of 18 in criminal activities or behaviours that are considered antisocial or illegal. The legal framework for dealing with juvenile delinquency in India is outlined in the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015.

Juvenile delinquency can be influenced by a variety of factors, including social, economic, family, and individual circumstances. While the causes of juvenile delinquency can be complex and multifaceted, here are some common factors that contribute to its occurrence:

1. **Family Factors:** The family environment plays a crucial role in shaping a child's behavior. Issues such as parental neglect, abuse, substance abuse within the family, parental criminal behaviour, lack of parental supervision, and inconsistent discipline can increase the risk of delinquency.

2. **Socioeconomic Factors:** Socioeconomic factors, including poverty, lack of access to quality education, unemployment, and social inequality, can contribute to delinquency. Limited opportunities, economic hardships, and a sense of hopelessness can lead some children to engage in criminal behaviour.

3. **Peer Influence**: Peer pressure and association with delinquent peers can significantly impact a child's behaviour. When children are surrounded by peers who engage in antisocial activities, they may be more likely to participate in delinquent behaviour themselves.

4. **School Environment**: Problems within the school environment, such as academic difficulties, bullying, low school attachment, and inadequate support from teachers and staff, can contribute to delinquency. Academic failure and truancy may increase the likelihood of involvement in criminal activities.

5. **Substance Abuse**: Substance abuse, including alcohol and drug use, is a significant risk factor for juvenile delinquency. Substance abuse can impair judgment, increase aggression, and lead to criminal behaviour to support addiction or obtain drugs.

6. **Media Influence**: Exposure to violence, aggression, and inappropriate content in media, including television, movies, video games, and the internet, can impact a child's behaviour and desensitize them to violence.

7. **Individual Factors**: Certain individual characteristics can contribute to delinquency, such as low self-esteem, poor impulse control, sensation-seeking behaviour, psychological disorders, and a history of prior delinquent behaviour.

It's important to note that these factors do not guarantee that a child will engage in delinquent behaviour, and many children facing these challenges do not become delinquent. Protective factors such as a strong support system, positive role models, access to education and opportunities, and pro-social activities can help mitigate the risk of delinquency.

Addressing juvenile delinquency requires a comprehensive approach that focuses on prevention, early intervention, rehabilitation, and support services. Efforts should be made to strengthen families, provide access to quality education and employment opportunities, promote positive peer relationships, and ensure a supportive community environment for children at risk of delinquency.

Online Abuse

Online abuse of children, also known as online child exploitation, refers to the harmful and illegal activities that target children through digital platforms and the internet. It encompasses a range of behaviours aimed at exploiting, manipulating, or harming children online. Here are some examples of online abuse of children:

1. **Grooming:** Online grooming involves an adult building an emotional connection with a child to gain their trust, with the intention of exploiting them sexually or for other harmful purposes.

2. **Sextortion**: Sextortion occurs when someone coerces a child into sharing explicit images, videos, or personal information and then uses it to blackmail or manipulate the child for further exploitation or financial gain.

3. **Online harassment and bullying:** Children can be subjected to various forms of harassment, cyberbullying, or online intimidation, including spreading rumors, making derogatory comments, or sending threatening messages.

4. **Distribution of child sexual abuse material:** The production, distribution, or possession of explicit images or videos of children, commonly known as child pornography, is a serious form of online abuse that perpetuates the victimization of children.

5. **Online child trafficking:** The internet can be used as a platform for facilitating child trafficking, including recruitment, advertisement, and illegal transactions involving the exploitation of children.

6. **Online enticement:** Adults may attempt to lure children into offline meetings or engage them in inappropriate activities through online platforms, exploiting their vulnerability and trust.

7. **Exposure to inappropriate content:** Children may be exposed to age-inappropriate or harmful content online, including explicit material, violent content, or content promoting self-harm or dangerous behaviours.

It is crucial to protect children from online abuse and create a safe digital environment for them. Parents, caregivers, and educators should educate children about online safety, promote responsible internet use, and encourage open communication. Internet service providers, social media platforms, and law enforcement agencies play a vital role in monitoring and reporting instances of online abuse. Reporting any suspicious or abusive activities involving children to the appropriate authorities is essential to ensure the safety and well-being of children.

Suicidal tendency among children

Suicide among children in India is a distressing issue that requires attention and intervention. India has seen a concerning rise in suicide rates among children and adolescents in recent years. Suicide is one of the leading causes of death in the age group of 15-29 years, with a significant number of cases involving children. Suicide is a complex phenomenon influenced by a combination of factors. Children may face various challenges and stressors, including academic pressure, parental expectations, bullying, relationship problems, substance abuse, mental health issues, family conflicts, poverty, and societal factors.

Mental Health Issues: Undiagnosed or untreated mental health conditions, such as depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, or substance abuse disorders, can increase the risk of suicidal ideation and behaviour among children. Limited awareness, stigma, and lack of access to mental health services exacerbate this issue.

Academic Pressure: The intense academic pressure faced by children in India, driven by a highly competitive education system and societal expectations, can contribute to stress, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy. Academic performance-related stress, fear of failure, and excessive parental expectations can be overwhelming for some children.

Bullying and Peer Pressure: Bullying, both offline and online, is a significant risk factor for suicide among children. Being subjected to constant harassment, humiliation, or cyberbullying can severely impact a child's mental well-being. Peer pressure to conform, fit in, or engage in risky behaviours can also contribute to their vulnerability.

Relationship Issues: Children may experience relationship difficulties, such as conflicts with peers, romantic partners, or family members, which can contribute to emotional distress and a sense of isolation. Breakups, family conflicts, or a lack of supportive relationships can significantly impact their mental health.

Family Issues: Family conflicts, dysfunction, or unstable home environments can contribute to a child's emotional turmoil. Factors such as parental divorce, domestic violence, substance abuse within the family, neglect, or a lack of emotional support can increase the risk of suicide.

Socioeconomic Factors: Socioeconomic factors, such as poverty, financial stress, lack of access to quality education or healthcare, and limited opportunities, can contribute to the risk of suicide among children. Economic hardships and a sense of hopelessness about the future can further exacerbate their vulnerability.

Cultural and Social Factors: Cultural and social factors, including societal expectations, gender discrimination, early marriage, and restrictive norms, can play a role in increasing the risk of

suicide among children in India. Pressure to conform to societal norms and restrictions on autonomy can contribute to their distress.

Media Influence: Exposure to media, including social media, television, movies, or news, that depicts self-harm, suicide, or glamorizes risky behaviours can influence vulnerable children and contribute to suicidal ideation.

It's important to address these factors through a comprehensive approach that includes mental health awareness, accessible mental health services, education, early intervention, anti-bullying measures, strengthening support systems, and promoting a positive and inclusive environment for children. Suicide prevention requires collaboration between families, schools, communities, and mental health professionals to identify and support at-risk children.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a concept that was coined by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. It refers to the interconnected nature of social categories such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and other forms of identity, and how they overlap and intersect to shape an individual's experiences and social position. Intersectionality recognizes that individuals can simultaneously experience multiple forms of oppression and discrimination based on these intersecting identities.

Rather than treating various social categories as separate and distinct, intersectionality acknowledges that people's experiences are shaped by the interactions and intersections of multiple aspects of their identity. For example, a woman of colour may face unique challenges and forms of discrimination that are distinct from those experienced by a white woman or a man of colour. Intersectionality highlights the ways in which different forms of privilege and oppression interact and compound to shape a person's social, economic, and political realities.

The concept of intersectionality is commonly used within the fields of critical race theory, feminist theory, and social justice activism. It emphasizes the need to consider the complex and interconnected nature of individuals' identities and experiences to address systemic inequalities and work towards social justice. Intersectionality encourages a more inclusive and comprehensive analysis of power dynamics and social structures, recognizing that multiple systems of oppression can operate simultaneously and in mutually reinforcing ways.

Consequences or impact of violence on children

Violence can have profound and long-lasting consequences on children, affecting their physical, emotional, cognitive, and social well-being. The impact of violence on children can vary depending on factors such as the severity, frequency, and duration of the violence, as well as the child's age, resilience, and support network. Here are some common consequences:

1. **Physical health:** Children who experience violence may sustain physical injuries, ranging from bruises and cuts to more severe forms of trauma. The immediate physical harm can have lasting effects on their health and development.

2. **Emotional and psychological effects**: Violence can lead to a range of emotional and psychological difficulties, including anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder

(PTSD), low self-esteem, and feelings of guilt or shame. Children may experience nightmares, sleep disturbances, and have difficulties concentrating or regulating their emotions.

3. **Behavioral problems:** Children exposed to violence may exhibit Behavioral issues such as aggression, impulsivity, disobedience, or withdrawal. They may have difficulty managing their emotions and may resort to unhealthy coping mechanisms or engage in self-destructive behaviours.

4. **Cognitive and academic impact**: Violence can interfere with a child's cognitive development and academic performance. They may have difficulties w+ith attention, memory, and problem-solving skills. This can result in lower academic achievement and educational attainment.

5. **Social difficulties:** Children who have experienced violence may struggle with forming healthy relationships and trust. They may have difficulties with social interactions, struggle with empathy, and exhibit difficulties in peer relationships. These challenges can persist into adulthood, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships and maintain social connections.

6. **Long-term consequences:** The impact of violence on children can extend into adulthood, leading to a higher risk of mental health disorders, substance abuse, involvement in criminal behaviour, and revictimization.

It is important to note that not all children who experience violence will necessarily experience all these consequences, as individual factors, and protective factors such as a supportive environment, access to mental health services, and resilience can play a role in mitigating the effects. Early intervention, trauma-informed care, and providing safe and nurturing environments are crucial in helping children recover from the impact of violence and promoting their overall well-being.

Factors leading to vulnerability of children in Tamil Nadu and root causes

Children in Tamil Nadu, like children elsewhere, can face various vulnerabilities due to a range of factors. Here are some factors that can contribute to the vulnerability of children in Tamil Nadu, along with their root causes:

1. **Poverty:** Economic deprivation and lack of access to basic necessities such as food, healthcare, and education can make children more vulnerable. Root causes include unequal distribution of resources, limited job opportunities, and social inequalities.

2. **Child labour**: Many children in Tamil Nadu are engaged in child labour, particularly in industries such as textiles, agriculture, and domestic work. Poverty, lack of education, and weak enforcement of child labour laws contribute to this issue.

3. **Lack of education**: Limited access to quality education, especially in rural areas, can leave children vulnerable to exploitation and limit their opportunities. Factors such as inadequate infrastructure, teacher shortages, and social norms that prioritize child labor or early marriage can hinder access to education.

4. **Child marriage**: Child marriage remains a concern in Tamil Nadu, particularly in certain communities and rural areas. Factors contributing to child marriage include poverty, lack of

education, traditional and cultural practices, and limited awareness about child rights and the negative consequences of early marriage.

5. **Gender inequality and discrimination**: Gender-based discrimination and societal norms can put girls at a higher risk of vulnerability. Discrimination, limited opportunities for girls, and harmful practices such as female foeticide, child marriage, and gender-based violence contribute to their vulnerability.

6. **Trafficking and exploitation**: Tamil Nadu has been identified as a source, transit, and destination for human trafficking. Factors such as poverty, lack of education, social instability, and weak law enforcement contribute to the vulnerability of children to trafficking and exploitation.

7. **Child abuse and neglect**: Children in Tamil Nadu can be subjected to various forms of abuse, including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, as well as neglect. Factors such as poverty, lack of awareness, social stigma, and weak child protection systems can contribute to these issues.

Addressing the root causes of these vulnerabilities requires a multi-faceted approach that includes poverty alleviation, improving access to education, empowering girls and women, raising awareness about child rights, strengthening child protection mechanisms, and enforcing laws related to child labour, child marriage, and trafficking. It also involves creating a supportive environment that values and prioritizes the well-being and rights of children.

Reference and Suggested Readings

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Unit End Questions

1. What are the different types of violence against children occur in India?
2. What is psychological abuse? Explain in detail.
3. What is child abuse? Discuss the types of child abuse.
4. What are the types of discrimination faced by children in India?
5. What is online abuse?
6. Discuss the different types of online abuse.
7. Explain the impact of violence on children.
8. What is intersectionality?
9. Explain the factors leading to vulnerability of children in Tamil Nadu.
10. What is suicide? Explain the factors leading to suicide among children.

UNIT – 3

CHILD RIGHTS – POLICIES, LAWS AND INSTITUTIONS

Tamil Nadu State Policy for Children - Laws related to children – Constitutional safeguards -Importance of Child Safeguarding Policy - Child protection institutions at village, urban, district, state, national and international levels-.

Constitutional provisions for Child Rights in India

In India, the constitutional provisions for child rights primarily stem from the Constitution of India, which was adopted in 1950. Several articles in the Constitution explicitly address the rights and protections of children. In India, the childcare and protection framework comprise various laws, policies, and programs aimed at ensuring the well-being, development, and protection of children. Here are some key provisions in the Constitution of India:

Right to Equality: Article 14 ensures that all children are equal before the law and have equal protection of the law.

Right to Freedom: Article 19 guarantees the freedom of speech and expression, which also applies to children.

Right against Exploitation: Article 23 prohibits trafficking of children, forced labor, and any form of exploitation.

Right to Education: Article 21A provides for free and compulsory education for children aged 6 to 14 years as a fundamental right.

Right to Protection: Article 24 prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in hazardous occupations.

Right to Health and Nutrition: Article 39 mandates the state to ensure that children are provided with opportunities and facilities to develop in a healthy manner.

Right to Protection of Cultural and Educational Rights: Article 29 safeguards the interests of minority children by granting them the right to protect their language, script, and culture.

Right to Protection of Juvenile Justice: Article 15(3), Article 39(e), and Article 39(f) ensure protection and welfare of children in conflict with the law, promoting their rehabilitation.

Apart from the Constitution, India has also enacted specific legislation to safeguard child rights, such as:

National legislations for protection of child rights in the country are the:

- Guardian and Wards Act, 1890
- Factories Act, 1954
- Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956
- Probation of Offenders Act, 1958
- Bombay Prevention of Begging Act, 1959
- Orphanages and Other Charitable Homes (Supervision and Control) Act, 1960
- Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976
- Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1986
- Child and Adolescent Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986
- Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1987
- Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994
- Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016
- Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015
- Commission for Protection of the Rights of the Child Act, 2005
- Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006
- Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Act
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012

i. **The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015**: This act provides for the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection, as well as the treatment of children in conflict with the law.

ii. **The Right to Education Act, 2009:** This act guarantees free and compulsory education to children aged 6 to 14 years.

iii. **The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act, 2012:** This act deals with sexual offenses against children and provides for their protection, care, and support.

iv. **The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006** specifically addresses the issue of child marriages. Child marriage refers to the marriage of a girl below the age of 18 years or a boy below the age of 21 years.

v. **The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986** addresses the issue of child labour. The act aims to prohibit the engagement of children in certain hazardous occupations and to regulate the working conditions of children in non-hazardous occupations.

These constitutional provisions and laws are aimed at promoting and protecting the rights and well-being of children in India.

Juvenile Justice Care and Protection of Children Act 2015

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 is a comprehensive legislation that provides for proper care, protection and treatment of children in conflict with law and children in need of care and protection by catering to their development needs, and by adopting a child-friendly approach in the adjudication and disposition of matters in the best interest of children and for their ultimate rehabilitation through various institutions established under the Act. It conforms to UNCRC, the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) 1985, the UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and all other relevant national and international instruments.

History of Legislation concerning Children in Conflict with the Law

1. The Apprentices Act, 1850, was the first law enacted in India dealing with children in conflict with the law. This law allowed the courts to treat children who had committed petty crimes as apprentices instead of sending them to prisons.

2. The second law that dealt with juvenile offenders was the Reformatory Schools Act, 1876.

3. The Indian Jails Committee (1919-20) also made some recommendations with regard to children in conflict with the law.

4. In 1960, the Children Act was passed to provide for the care, maintenance, protection, welfare, education, training, trial and rehabilitation of neglected and delinquent children.

5. The Juvenile Justice Act, 1986: This was the first central law on juvenile justice that provided a uniform law for the whole country in this respect.

6. In 1992, the government of India ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which made it expedient to have a law that conformed to the standards of the Convention.

7. Hence, the JJA, 1986 was repealed and the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 was enacted.

Definition of a Child: The Act defines a child as a person who has not completed 18 years of age. It recognizes that children require special care and protection.

Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs): The Act establishes Juvenile Justice Boards at the district level, consisting of a magistrate and two social workers. JJBs are responsible for determining the nature of offenses committed by children and deciding appropriate measures for their rehabilitation.

Child Welfare Committees (CWCs): The Act sets up Child Welfare Committees at the district level to deal with children in need of care and protection. CWCs are responsible for ensuring the well-being, care, and rehabilitation of such children.

Differentiated Approach: The Act adopts a differentiated approach in dealing with children in conflict with the law, taking into consideration their age, maturity, and the gravity of the offense committed. It promotes their rehabilitation and reintegration into society.

Child-friendly Procedures: The Act emphasizes child-friendly procedures during the entire process, including investigation, inquiry, and trial. It ensures that children are provided a safe and supportive environment while their rights are protected.

Rehabilitation and Social Integration: The Act lays emphasis on the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children in conflict with the law. It provides for various measures, such as counselling, education, vocational training, and skill development programs to facilitate their reintegration into society.

Foster Care and Adoption: The Act recognizes foster care as an alternative form of care for children in need of care and protection. It also provides guidelines for adoption, ensuring the best interests of the child are upheld.

Special Provisions for Heinous Offenses: The Act includes provisions for dealing with children involved in heinous offenses, such as murder and rape, who are between the ages of 16 and 18. It allows for their trial as adults under certain circumstances.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 aims to protect the rights of children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection. It focuses on their care, rehabilitation, and reintegration into society, with a strong emphasis on their best interests and well-being.

Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009

The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act, also known as the Right to Education (RTE) Act, was enacted by the Parliament of India in 2009. The Act came into force on April 1, 2010, and it is aimed at providing free and compulsory education to all children between the ages of 6 and 14 in India.

The RTE Act is a landmark legislation that emerged as a result of several years of advocacy and efforts by civil society organizations, educationists, and policymakers. It aims to address the issue of

low enrollment, high dropout rates, and the lack of access to quality education for a significant section of the Indian population.

Constitutional Amendment: To make education a fundamental right, the Constitution of India was amended in 2002 to include Article 21A, which guarantees the right to education for all children aged 6-14.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, officially known as the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act, is a significant legislation in India that guarantees free and compulsory education for children between the ages of 6 and 14 years. The Act aims to provide quality education and promote universal access to education for all children. Here are the key features of the Right to Education Act, 2009:

Free and Compulsory Education: The Act establishes the right of every child to receive free and compulsory education in a neighbourhood school from the age of 6 to 14 years. It makes it mandatory for the government to provide free education to all children in this age group.

Non-Discrimination: The Act prohibits discrimination on various grounds, including gender, caste, religion, and socio-economic background. It ensures that all children have equal opportunities and access to education.

Quality Standards: The Act sets minimum norms and standards for schools, including infrastructure, teacher-student ratio, and basic facilities such as drinking water, toilets, and playgrounds. It emphasizes the importance of quality education and the improvement of learning outcomes.

Neighbourhood Schools: The Act promotes the concept of neighbourhood schools, ensuring that every child has a school within a specified distance from their residence. It discourages long travel distances and aims to make education accessible to all.

School Management Committees (SMCs): The Act mandates the formation of School Management Committees at the school level, comprising parents and teachers. SMCs play a vital role in monitoring school activities, ensuring transparency, and enhancing community participation in the education system.

Reservation of Seats: The Act provides for the reservation of seats for children from disadvantaged groups, including Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and economically weaker sections. It aims to bridge educational gaps and promote social inclusion.

Financial Provisions: The Act establishes a framework for sharing financial responsibilities between the central and state governments to support the implementation of free and compulsory education.

Monitoring and Accountability: The Act sets up mechanisms for monitoring the implementation of the Act and establishes authorities responsible for addressing grievances and ensuring compliance.

The Right to Education Act, 2009, plays a crucial role in advancing the right to education and improving educational opportunities for children in India. It strives to eliminate barriers to education, promote inclusivity, and enhance the overall quality of education.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act) 2012

The need for the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (POCSO) Act in India arose due to the urgent requirement for a dedicated legal framework to address the increasing cases of child sexual abuse and exploitation in the country.

Child sexual abuse is a grave violation of a child's fundamental rights, including their right to life, survival, and protection against violence. The POCSO Act recognizes the importance of safeguarding children from sexual offenses and upholds their right to live a safe and secure life. India has witnessed a significant increase in reported cases of child sexual abuse over the years. The need for a specialized law became evident to address the unique vulnerabilities and sensitivities associated with such offenses committed against children. Prior to the enactment of the POCSO Act, child sexual abuse cases were primarily dealt with under the Indian Penal Code (IPC), which did not specifically address the unique aspects of child sexual offenses. The POCSO Act fills this gap by providing a comprehensive legal framework specifically tailored to address child sexual abuse and exploitation.

The POCSO Act not only criminalizes various forms of sexual offenses against children but also focuses on their rehabilitation and support. It emphasizes the need for child-friendly procedures, counseling, and access to justice for victims, along with the establishment of special courts to expedite the trial process.

India is a signatory to various international conventions and treaties, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The enactment of the POCSO Act aligns with these international commitments to protect children from all forms of abuse, including sexual offenses.

The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO Act), 2012 is a crucial legislation in India that focuses on addressing and preventing sexual offenses against children. The Act provides for the protection, care, and support of children who are victims of sexual abuse and exploitation. Here are the key features of the POCSO Act, 2012:

Definition of Sexual Offenses: The Act defines various sexual offenses against children, including but not limited to, child sexual abuse, sexual harassment, and child pornography. It also includes offenses committed online or through digital platform.

1. **Penetrative Sexual Assault**: Any form of sexual penetration or attempt to penetrate a child's body with or without consent is considered a penetrative sexual assault. This includes rape, sodomy, and oral sex.

2. **Aggravated Penetrative Sexual Assault:** When a child undergoes penetrative sexual assault resulting in severe physical or mental trauma, it is classified as aggravated penetrative sexual assault. It may involve use of weapons, involvement of multiple perpetrators, or repeated offenses.

3. **Sexual Assault**: The Act defines sexual assault as any non-penetrative sexual contact or act involving a child. It includes touching, groping, or any form of sexual contact without consent.

4. **Sexual Harassment**: Making sexually explicit remarks, gestures, or advances, or showing pornography to a child with the intention to harass or abuse them is categorized as sexual harassment under the POCSO Act.
5. **Child Pornography**: The Act prohibits the creation, possession, distribution, or consumption of child pornography, which includes explicit material involving a child.
6. **Use of Child for Pornographic Purposes**: Using a child for any form of pornographic performance, including live shows or online platforms, is considered an offense under the POCSO Act.
7. **Abetment and Attempt**: The Act also covers offenses related to abetment and attempts to commit the above-mentioned sexual offenses against children.

Special Courts: The Act establishes special courts dedicated to the speedy and effective trial of offenses under the POCSO Act. These courts ensure the privacy and protection of child victims throughout the legal proceedings.

Child-Friendly Procedures: The Act emphasizes child-friendly procedures during investigations, medical examinations, and court proceedings. It aims to minimize the trauma and stress experienced by child victims, providing a safe and supportive environment for them.

Mandatory Reporting: The Act imposes a legal duty on individuals who come across instances of child sexual abuse to report it to the appropriate authorities. Failure to report such incidents can lead to punishment.

Section 19 of the POCSO Act imposes a legal duty on certain individuals or "mandatory reporters" to report any information they have regarding the commission of a sexual offense against a child. The law places the responsibility of reporting on the person who has first-hand knowledge or a reasonable belief that an offense has been committed.

The Act specifies different categories of individuals who are considered mandatory reporters. This includes any person who is in a professional capacity or occupation dealing with children, such as doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, police officers, and members of the media.

Protection of Identity: The Act ensures the protection of the identity of child victims and prohibits the disclosure of their personal information during the investigation and trial. This provision helps safeguard the privacy and dignity of child victims.

Rehabilitation and Support: The Act prioritizes the rehabilitation and support of child victims. It mandates the establishment of special care homes, counseling services, and other support mechanisms to aid in their recovery and well-being.

Prevention Measures: The Act emphasizes the importance of prevention and awareness programs to educate children, parents, and the public about child sexual abuse and its prevention. It encourages the implementation of measures to ensure the safety of children.

Penalties: The Act imposes stringent punishments for offenders, including imprisonment and fines, based on the severity of the offense. It also provides for enhanced penalties for repeat offenders.

The POCSO Act, 2012 is a significant legislation that aims to protect children from sexual offenses, provide justice to victims, and create a safer environment for children in India. It acknowledges the vulnerability of children and ensures their rights and well-being are safeguarded.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006

Child marriage legislations have evolved over time to address the issue of early and forced marriages, protect the rights of children, and promote their well-being.

Child Marriage Restraint Act (CMRA) of 1929: The first significant legislation related to child marriage in India was the Child Marriage Restraint Act, also known as the Sarda Act, enacted in 1929. This Act aimed to curb the practice of child marriage by setting a legal age for marriage. It prohibited the marriage of girls below the age of 14 and boys below the age of 18.

Prohibition of Child Marriage Act (PCMA) of 2006: The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act replaced and repealed the outdated CMRA of 1929. Enacted in 2006, the PCMA introduced several improvements to the legal framework. It increased the age of marriage for girls to 18 and for boys to 21, aligning it with the legal age of majority. The Act also included stronger provisions, penalties, and protection mechanisms to prevent child marriages and safeguard the rights of children.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 specifically addresses the issue of child marriages. Child marriage refers to the marriage of a girl below the age of 18 years or a boy below the age of 21 years.

Here are the key features of the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006:

Definition and Punishment: The Act defines child marriage and declares it as voidable. It prescribes punishment for anyone who performs, conducts, or promotes child marriages, including parents or guardians. The punishment can include imprisonment and/or a fine.

Offenses and Cognizance: The Act identifies various offenses related to child marriage, such as solemnizing, permitting, or promoting child marriages. It also provides for the cognizance of such offenses by designated courts.

Child Marriage Prohibition Officers (CMPOs): The Act empowers the government to appoint Child Marriage Prohibition Officers at various levels to prevent, investigate, and take action against child marriages. These officers have the authority to intervene and stop child marriages. The designated child marriage prohibition officers differ from state to state. In the case of Tamilnadu's, it is the District Social Welfare Officers (DSWOs)

Protection and Support: The Act focuses on the protection and support of child brides and grooms. It provides for the appointment of Child Marriage Protection Officers, who are responsible for providing assistance, counseling, and support to the victims of child marriages.

Child Marriage Prohibition Fund: The Act establishes a Child Marriage Prohibition Fund, which is utilized for various purposes, including the welfare and rehabilitation of victims of child marriages.

Awareness and Education: The Act emphasizes the importance of creating awareness and educating the public about the issue of child marriage. It encourages the government, NGOs, and other organizations to undertake programs and campaigns to prevent child marriages.

The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006 is a crucial legislation aimed at combating the practice of child marriage in India. Its provisions are designed to deter child marriages, protect the rights of children, and provide support to those affected by child marriages.

Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986 addresses the issue of child labour. The act aims to prohibit the engagement of children in certain hazardous occupations and to regulate the working conditions of children in non-hazardous occupations. The Act was amended in 2016 to strengthen the provisions and enhance the protection of child rights. Here are the key features of the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986:

Prohibition of Child Labour: The Act prohibits the employment of children below the age of 14 years in any occupation, except for certain specified non-hazardous family-based work and the entertainment industry.

Regulation of Adolescent Labour: The Act sets regulations for the employment of adolescents aged 14 to 18 years. It defines the conditions under which adolescents can be employed, ensuring their safety, health, and welfare.

Hazardous Occupations and Processes: The Act specifies a list of hazardous occupations and processes where the employment of children is strictly prohibited. These include work in mines, factories, construction sites, and occupations involving exposure to harmful substances or dangerous machinery.

Right to Education: The Act emphasizes the importance of education for children and makes it a fundamental right. It mandates that every child between the ages of 6 and 14 years must be provided with free and compulsory education.

Enforcement and Penalties: The Act assigns responsibilities to the government and various authorities for the enforcement of its provisions. It outlines penalties for violations, including imprisonment and fines, depending on the nature and severity of the offense.

Rehabilitation and Welfare: The Act includes provisions for the rehabilitation and welfare of rescued child laborers. It mandates the establishment of special rehabilitation centers and the provision of education, vocational training, and other support services for their physical, psychological, and social development.

The Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, along with subsequent amendments, is aimed at eradicating child labour and ensuring the protection and welfare of children. It focuses on creating a safe and conducive environment for children to grow, learn, and develop, while prohibiting their engagement in hazardous and exploitative work

National and State Policies for Child rights

The National Policy for Children - 2013

The National Policy for children was indeed adopted in 2013. It is a comprehensive policy framework aimed at promoting and safeguarding the rights of children in India. The policy is based on the principles and provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and aims to ensure the protection, survival, development, and participation of children. The policy focuses on holistic development across various dimensions, including health, nutrition, education, protection, and participation of children. The policy emphasizes the need to address the disparities and inequalities

affecting children, especially those from marginalized and vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, street children, child laborers, and children in difficult circumstances.

The major policies to ensure child rights and improvement in their status include:

- National Policy for Children, 1974
- National Policy on Education, 1986
- National Policy on Child Labour, 1987
- National Nutrition Policy, 1993
- Report of the Committee on Prostitution, Child Prostitutes and Children of Prostitutes, and Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children, 1998
- National Health Policy, 2002
- National Charter for Children, 2004
- National Plan of Action for Children, 2005
- National Policy for Children, 2013
- National Youth Policy, 2014

The policy advocates for the enactment and enforcement of child-friendly legislation and policies at both national and state levels. It emphasizes the need for the integration and convergence of services across sectors like health, education, social welfare, justice, and law enforcement to ensure comprehensive child development. The policy recognizes the importance of children's participation in decision-making processes that affect their lives and encourages their involvement in matters that concern them. It calls for the establishment of appropriate institutional mechanisms and structures at the national, state, and local levels to coordinate and monitor the implementation of child-related policies and programs. The policy focuses on preventing and addressing child abuse, exploitation, violence, and trafficking, and emphasizes the need for a child-friendly justice system.

It's important to note that the National Policy for Children provides a broad framework, and the specific implementation and actions may vary across states and regions within the country. For detailed information on the policy's implementation and initiatives, it is recommended to refer to official government sources or the Ministry of Women and Child Development in India.

Tamilnadu State Policy for Children 2021

Tamilnadu State Policy for Children was launched in 2021. Even though Tamil Nadu fares better on many of the indices compared to the national average, the following are some issues that are preventable and needs the attention of the Government of Tamil Nadu: malnutrition, anaemia, infant mortality rate, under 5 mortality rate, child sex ratio, full immunization, body mass index, gross enrolment ratio at high and higher secondary level, open defecation, etc.

The Government of Tamil Nadu takes these issues seriously and affirms that addressing these issues are of paramount importance for achieving its 10 year-roadmap for the state. This State Policy for Children is intended to significantly improve the overall wellbeing of children and set benchmarks on all indicators on par with international standards. The aim of TNSPC is to address the issues which challenge the safety and well-being of the State's children with special focus on adolescents, adolescent health and their vulnerability. All aspects affecting children, either directly or indirectly have been deliberated upon or articulated while drafting the policy. This policy also emphasizes the need for protection of children in humanitarian situations.

The overarching objective of this policy is to ensure prevention and protection of children from all/any form of violence particularly from vulnerable sections by

1. Strengthening the existing systems
2. Establishing proper systems to monitor the implementation of the policy measures
3. Convergence of action between all relevant departments
4. Creating awareness among children and all stakeholders about this policy and the Government of Tamil Nadu's commitment to the cause of children.
5. Allocating adequate budget in proportion to the child population of the State and that enables to fulfil the promises of the Government of Tamil Nadu to all children particularly from vulnerable communities and girls.
6. Harnessing technological advancements to the optimum level to realize its commitments to all children of the state.

Chief Minister's Girl Child Protection Scheme

The Chief Minister's Girl Child Protection Scheme, introduced by the then Hon'ble Chief Minister of TamilNadu in 1992, is a pioneering and path-breaking scheme for the welfare of girl child. The Girl Child Protection Scheme is aimed at preventing gender discrimination by empowering and protecting rights of girl Children through direct investment from Government.

The scheme aims to:

- Promote enrollment and retention of the girl child in school and to ensure her education at least up to intermediate level.
- Encourage girls to get married only after the age of 18 years.
- Encourage parents to adopt family planning norm with two girl children.
- Protect the rights of the girl child and provide social and financial empowerment to girl child.
- Strengthen the role of the family in improving the status of the girl child.

Scheme-I

An amount of Rs. 50,000 is deposited in the name of the girl child born on or after 01/08/2011, in the form of fixed deposit with the Tamil Nadu Power Finance and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited, for a family with one girl child only. The copy of the fixed deposit receipt is given to the family of the girl child.

Scheme-II

An amount of Rs. 25,000 is deposited in the names of two girl children born on or after 01/08/2011 in the form of fixed deposit with Tamil Nadu Power Finance and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited, for a family with two girl children only. The copy of the fixed deposit receipt is given to the family of the girl children.

The above deposit is renewed at the end of every 5 years and on completion of 18 years of age the amount deposited along with interest will be given to the girl child. To get this benefit, the girl

child should appear for 10th standard public examination. Thus, the matured amount will help the girl child to pursue her higher education. The new scheme implemented from 01.08.2011 has maturity benefits as detailed below.

Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Scheme

The Government of TamilNadu has launched Moovalur Ramamirtham Ammaiyar Higher Education Assurance Scheme to enhance the enrolment ratio of girls from Government schools to Higher Education Institutions. Through this scheme, the financial assistance of Rs. 1000/month will be provided to the girls till their completion of UG degree/Diploma/ITI/any other recognized course. The incentive amount under this scheme will be disbursed directly into the student's Bank Account.

The initiative includes focusing on girl students who need financial help in learning. This indicates that this program is also aimed at educating female residents. This program, known as the Pudhumai Penn plan, is intended to be of assistance to economically disadvantaged families who, because of financial restraints, are unable to send their daughters to college. The Pudhumai Penn Scheme helps student girls in their crucial career periods of life to excel by providing them with basic money of Rs 1000 to support their education.

The following is a list of the advantages of the Pudhumai Penn Scheme:

i. The Pudhumai Penn Scheme is different from other schemes since it focuses on providing financial assistance, encouraging female students to continue their education, and discouraging parents and guardians from allowing their daughters to be married at a young age.

ii. Because of the foresight to focus on contemporary circumstances, the Puthumai Penn Scheme is going to usher in a new era of innovation within the next several years.

iii. A monetary award of Rs 1,000 per month will be provided to female students who are pursuing an education till they have either graduated or earned a certificate or diploma, irrespective of the field.

iv. Because it is common knowledge that female students in our country are discouraged from pursuing an education, this program offers a boost to the confidence of young women.

Ennum Ezhuthum

The Ennum Ezhuthum Mission has been envisioned to improve the quality of teaching and learning in primary classes in Tamil Nadu. The goal of the Ennum Ezhuthum mission is to ensure that all students of classes 1,2, and 3 in government schools in Tamil Nadu can read with comprehension and possess basic arithmetic skills by 2025. The mission also aims to tackle the learning gap caused due to school closures during the COVID-19 lockdown. Towards this, under the academic leadership of the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), the Ennum Ezhuthum Mission shall commence from the academic year 2022-23 across all districts of Tamil Nadu.

Naan Mudhalvan

Naan Mudhalvan platform aims to provide dynamic information for college students on courses and relevant information about industry specific skill offerings. This will enable the students of Tamil Nadu to get training in their chosen field of interest that will help them in achieving their career goals.

The objective of this scheme is to identify potential training providers, to impart various skill trainings based on current industry gaps. Through this flagship program the students to get trained and ensure they get jobs according to their skill sets. We will also offer career and academic guidance to students in state educational institutions.

Illam Thedi Kalvi

School Education Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu has launched a new scheme namely Illam Thedi Kalvi Scheme in 2021. This scheme aims to reduce the learning gap for children from classes 1 to 8. As part of Tamilnadu Illam Thedi Kalvi Scheme, volunteers will take classes near the houses of students after school hours from 5 pm to 7 pm every day. Volunteer student ratio is 1:20 and over one lakh volunteers are expected to join Tamil Nadu Illam Thedi Kalvi Scheme.

Child Protection Policy

A child protection policy is a set of guidelines and procedures aimed at ensuring the safety, well-being, and protection of children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of harm. It is implemented by organizations, institutions, and communities that work with or have responsibility for children. The main objectives of a child protection policy are:

Prevention: The policy outlines measures to prevent abuse and harm to children by promoting awareness, education, and training for staff, volunteers, and stakeholders. It establishes clear expectations and standards of behaviour to create a safe environment for children.

Reporting and Response: The policy provides procedures for reporting and responding to suspected or disclosed cases of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. It ensures that incidents are handled promptly, confidentially, and in accordance with the law.

Code of Conduct: The policy includes a code of conduct for staff, volunteers, and individuals who interact with children. It sets expectations for appropriate behaviour, boundaries, and ethical conduct, emphasizing the importance of respecting the rights and dignity of children.

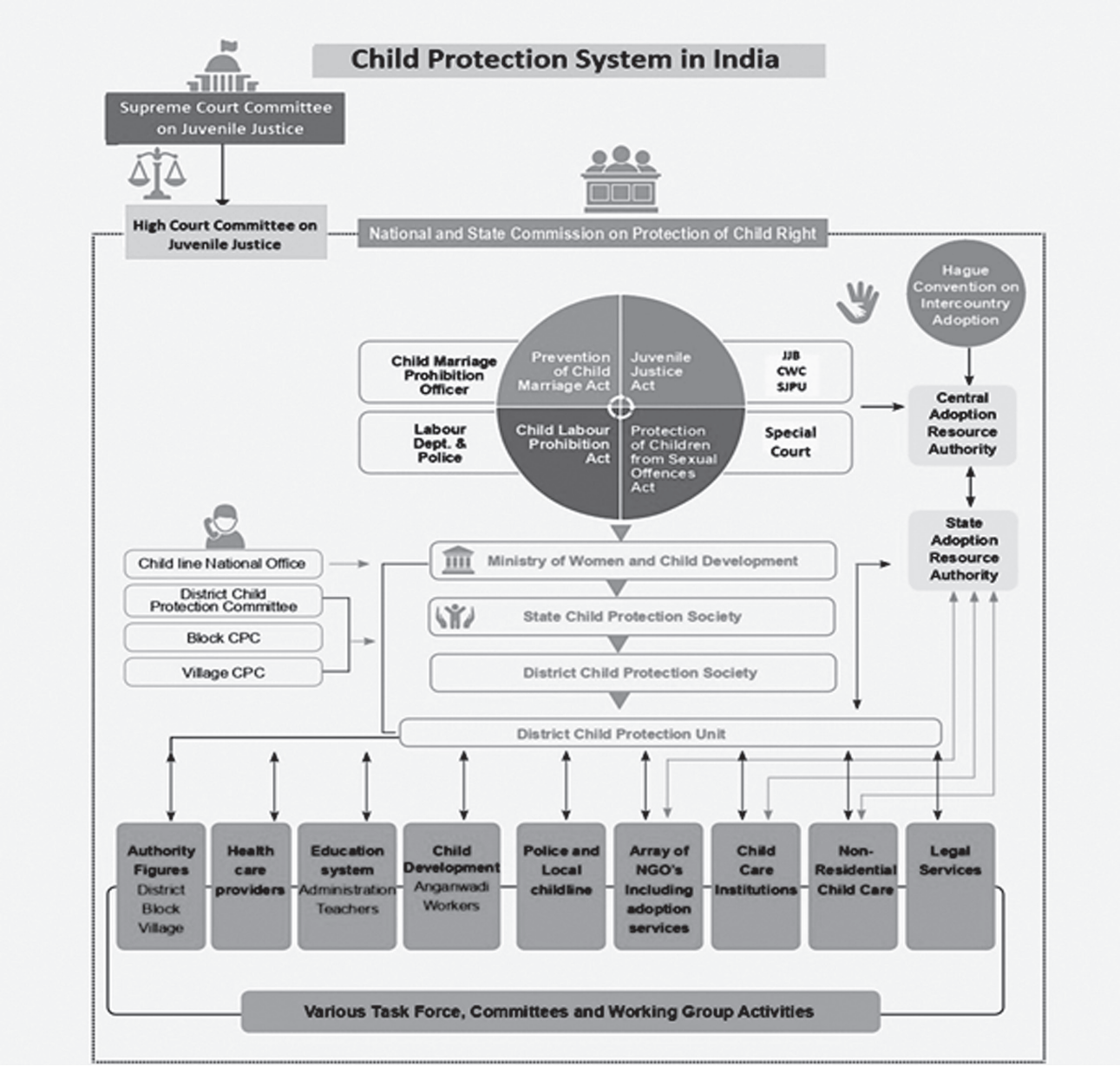
Recruitment and Screening: The policy establishes guidelines for the recruitment, selection, and screening of individuals who will have access to children. It may include background checks, reference verifications, and screening procedures to minimize the risk of potential abusers working with children.

Training and Capacity Building: The policy emphasizes the importance of providing training and capacity building programs for staff, volunteers, and other relevant individuals. This includes training on child protection policies and procedures, recognizing signs of abuse, and appropriate responses.

Collaboration and Coordination: The policy promotes collaboration and coordination with relevant authorities, agencies, and organizations to ensure effective child protection. It may include partnerships with local child protection agencies, sharing information, and participating in collective efforts to safeguard children.

Monitoring and Review: The policy outlines mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing its implementation, effectiveness, and compliance. It ensures that the policy is regularly updated and adapted to changing needs and best practices.

A child protection policy is a proactive and preventive approach to safeguarding children, ensuring their safety, and promoting their well-being. It establishes a framework for responsible and accountable practices, fostering an environment where children can thrive, grow, and develop without fear of harm or exploitation.



Child Line 1098

Childline is the national 24-hour toll-free helpline number for children in distress. It is a crucial helpline service that provides immediate assistance, support, and protection to children in need of care and protection. Childline can be reached by dialing 1098 from any mobile or landline phone.

Village Level Child Protection Committee (VLCPC) is a local-level committee established to address child protection issues within a village or community. VLCPCs play a vital role in identifying and responding to cases of child abuse, exploitation, neglect, and other forms of harm.

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VLCPCs & WLCPCs are typically composed of local community members, including representatives from different sections of society such as Panchayat Raj Institutions, parents, teachers, community leaders, youth organizations, local government officials, and representatives from NGOs working on child protection.

Ward Level Child Protection Committee (WLCPC) is a committee established at the ward level within a city or urban area. WLCPCs play a crucial role in addressing child protection issues and ensuring the well-being of children within their respective wards.

Functions and Responsibilities: The functions and responsibilities of VLCPCs and WLCPCs include:

- Identifying and reporting cases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or any form of harm within the village or ward.
- Responding to child protection issues by taking appropriate actions, including immediate support, intervention, or referral to relevant authorities or service providers.
- Raising awareness and conducting community-level campaigns on child rights, child protection, and prevention of child abuse and exploitation.
- Promoting and facilitating the participation of children in decision-making processes related to their well-being and development.
- Collaborating with government departments, NGOs, and other stakeholders to strengthen child protection services and initiatives at the local level.
- Monitoring and evaluating child protection activities within the village or ward and advocating for necessary interventions or improvements.

District Child Protection Unit

The District Child Protection Unit (DCPU) is a key component of the child protection system in India. It operates at the district level and is responsible for coordinating and implementing child protection services and programs within the district.

The DCPU consists of a team of professionals and staff dedicated to child protection. This may include a District Child Protection Officer, Protection office Institutional Care, Protection office Non-Institutional Care, Counsellor, Legal cum Probation officer, Two Social workers, outreach workers, Data analyst, Data Entry operator and Accountant. The District Collector is the chairperson of DCPU.

The DCPU performs a range of functions to fulfil its child protection mandate, including:

- Identifying and addressing cases of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of harm within the district.
- Coordinating and implementing child protection programs and services, such as adoption, foster care, Sponsorship, management & monitoring of childcare institutions, rehabilitation, and counseling.
- Collaborating with other government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and stakeholders to strengthen child protection efforts.

- Conducting awareness campaigns, training sessions, and capacity-building programs for various stakeholders involved in child protection.
- Monitoring and evaluating the implementation of child protection laws, policies, and programs within the district.
- Providing support and assistance to Child Welfare Committee (CWC), Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) and other child protection bodies operating within the district.
- Facilitating the rehabilitation and reintegration of children in need of care and protection.
- Reporting and Data Management: The DCPU is responsible for maintaining a database of child protection cases within the district, as well as generating reports and statistics related to child protection issues. This information helps in planning and implementing effective interventions and policies.
- Referral Mechanism: The DCPU serves as a referral point for child protection cases. It collaborates with different agencies and service providers to ensure timely and appropriate assistance to children in need.

Child Welfare Committee (CWC)

The Child Welfare Committee (CWC) is a key institution in India's child protection system. It is a statutory body established under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. The primary purpose of the Child Welfare Committee is to ensure the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in need of care and protection. It serves as the primary authority for decision-making in matters concerning children in difficult circumstances. Each Child Welfare Committee consists of a chairperson and four members, including at least one woman member. The members are appointed by the respective state government based on their knowledge, expertise, and experience in matters related to child welfare.

The Child Welfare Committee performs various functions to safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of children, including:

i. Receiving and processing cases of children in need of care and protection referred to it by the police, Childline, or any other concerned person or organization.

ii. Conducting inquiries and investigations to determine the best interests of the child and making decisions regarding care, protection, and rehabilitation.

iii. Granting interim and long-term care orders for children, including placement in children's homes, foster care, or adoption.

iv. Monitoring the well-being of children placed under its care and ensuring their protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and other forms of harm.

v. Facilitating the restoration, repatriation, or adoption of children based on their best interests.

vi. Conducting follow-up reviews and assessments to ensure the effectiveness of interventions and services provided to children.

The Child Welfare Committee has the power to summon and examine witnesses, demand the production of documents, and issue orders for the protection and welfare of children. Its decisions and orders are legally binding. The Child Welfare Committee works in close collaboration with other stakeholders, including government departments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), police, and the judiciary, to coordinate child protection efforts and ensure the effective implementation of child welfare policies and programs.

The Child Welfare Committee plays a crucial role in the child protection system of India. It acts as a quasi-judicial body, making decisions in the best interests of children in need of care and protection. By providing care, support, and rehabilitation, the committee strives to ensure that children grow up in a safe and nurturing environment.

Juvenile Justice Board (JJBs)

The Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) is a specialized judicial body established under the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 in India. The primary role of the Juvenile Justice Board is to ensure the proper implementation of juvenile justice laws and the protection of the rights and interests of children in conflict with the law. The Juvenile Justice Board is responsible for dealing with cases involving children in conflict with the law, who are individuals under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged offense. Each Juvenile Justice Board consists of a Metropolitan Magistrate or Judicial Magistrate of the First Class and two social workers, one of whom should be a woman. The Magistrate presides over the board, and the social workers provide their expertise and perspectives in the decision-making process.

The Juvenile Justice Board performs various functions related to the welfare and justice for children in conflict with the law, including:

i. Conducting inquiries into cases involving juveniles accused of committing offenses.

ii. Determining the age of the juvenile through age verification procedures if there is a dispute regarding the age.

iii. Deciding whether the child should be sent for rehabilitation, released on probation, or subjected to any other appropriate measures.

iv. Ensuring that the child receives a fair trial, in accordance with the principles of natural justice and child-friendly procedures.

v. Maintaining records and providing periodic reports on the progress and outcome of cases involving juveniles.

The Juvenile Justice Board follows child-friendly procedures, with a focus on the rehabilitation and reformation of the child. The board considers the best interests of the child while making decisions and ensures that the child's rights are protected throughout the proceedings.

The Juvenile Justice Act emphasizes the confidentiality of proceedings involving juveniles. It restricts the disclosure of the identity of the child, as well as the proceedings and any information that may lead to the identification of the child. The Juvenile Justice Board plays a vital role in ensuring that children in conflict with the law receive proper care, support, and rehabilitation. It aims to prevent the criminalization of juveniles and promote their reintegration into society as law-abiding citizens.

One Stop Centres

One Stop Centres (OSC), also known as Sakhi Centres, are an initiative by the Government of India under the Ministry of Women and Child Development to provide integrated support services to women affected by violence. The primary purpose of One Stop Centres is to provide holistic support and assistance to women who have experienced various forms of violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, dowry harassment, acid attacks, and more.

Services Provided: One Stop Centres offer a range of services to survivors of violence, including:

i. Emergency and immediate support: Providing a safe and secure environment for survivors, medical assistance, counseling, and crisis intervention.

ii. Legal Aid and Counseling: Offering legal support, assistance in filing complaints, access to legal aid lawyers, and guidance through the legal process.

iii. Psycho-social support: Providing counseling, emotional support, and rehabilitation services to help survivors cope with the trauma and regain their confidence.

iv. Shelter and Protection: Arranging temporary shelter and protection for survivors who need a safe place to stay.

v. Medical Assistance: Coordinating with hospitals and healthcare providers to provide medical examination, treatment, and support for survivors.

vi. Police Assistance: Assisting survivors in reporting crimes, filing complaints, and coordinating with law enforcement agencies.

One Stop Centres are established in all districts across India to ensure accessibility for women in need. They are typically located in close proximity to police stations, hospitals, and other relevant facilities. One Stop Centres work in collaboration with various stakeholders, including government departments, police, healthcare providers, NGOs, and civil society organizations. They aim to create a coordinated response to address the needs of survivors effectively. One Stop Centres often operate helpline services, such as the Women Helpline (181), to provide immediate assistance and support to women in distress. The establishment of One Stop Centres is a significant step towards addressing violence against women in India. They provide a comprehensive range of support services under one roof, ensuring that survivors have easy access to the necessary assistance and resources. These centres play a crucial role in empowering women, promoting their rights, and facilitating their recovery from the impact of violence.

Tamil Nadu State Commission for Protection of Children's Rights (TNSCPCR) is a statutory body established to safeguard and promote the rights and well-being of children in the state of Tamil Nadu, India. The TNSCPCR was established under the provisions of the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005, which is a central legislation. It was constituted to ensure the effective implementation of child rights in Tamil Nadu.

The commission consists of a chairperson and six members who are appointed by the state government. The chairperson and members of the commission are selected based on their expertise and experience in child rights, child welfare, and related fields.

The TNSCPCR performs various functions to protect and promote the rights of children in Tamil Nadu, including:

i. Inquiring into complaints related to the violation of child rights and taking appropriate actions to address them.

ii. Monitoring the implementation of laws, policies, and programs concerning children's rights in the state.

iii. Conducting investigations, fact-finding missions, and research studies on child-related issues.

iv. Advising the state government on matters related to child rights, policies, and legislation.

v. Spreading awareness and promoting public education on child rights and child protection.

vi. Cooperating and coordinating with other government departments, NGOs, and stakeholders working in the field of child welfare.

vii. Recommending measures for the rehabilitation and social integration of children in need of care and protection.

The TNSCPCR has the power of a civil court while investigating complaints. It can summon and enforce the attendance of witnesses, examine them under oath, receive evidence, and demand the production of documents.

The commission prepares annual reports highlighting the state's progress in implementing child rights and identifies areas that need attention. It also provides recommendations to the state government and other stakeholders for the effective protection and promotion of children's rights.

The National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) is a statutory body established under the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights (CPCR) Act, 2005. It serves as the apex body at the national level for the protection and promotion of child rights in India.

Supreme Court/High Court Committee on Juvenile Justice

The Supreme Court of India has constituted various committees and bodies to address issues related to Juvenile Justice in the country. One notable committee is the Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Justice.

The Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Justice is established to monitor and ensure the effective implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, and related guidelines.

i. The committee consists of members (serving supreme court judge) appointed by the Supreme Court.

ii. The committee performs various functions to promote and protect the rights of children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection, including:

iii. Monitoring the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act and guidelines by states and Union Territories.

iv. Conducting visits and inspections of juvenile homes, observation homes, and other institutions.

v. Reviewing cases of children in conflict with the law and ensuring adherence to due process and child rights.

vi. Recommending improvements and reforms in the juvenile justice system.

vii. Providing guidance and directives to states and Union Territories for the effective functioning of Juvenile Justice Boards and Child Welfare Committees.

viii. Addressing issues and challenges related to the rehabilitation and reintegration of children in conflict with the law.

ix. Assisting the Supreme Court in matters related to juvenile justice as and when required.

x. Reporting and Recommendations: The committee submits periodic reports to the Supreme Court, highlighting the status of juvenile justice in the country, identifying areas of concern, and providing recommendations for improvements.

The Supreme Court Committee on Juvenile Justice plays a crucial role in ensuring the protection, care, and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law and children in need of care and protection. Through monitoring, guidance, and recommendations, the committee strives to strengthen the juvenile justice system and ensure the rights and well-being of children in India. Similarly, every high courts in respective states of India has a committee on juvenile justice for their respective jurisdiction. Serving high court judges are appointed for high court committee on juvenile justice.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (OHCHR)

The United Nations Human Rights Council (OHCHR) is an intergovernmental body within the United Nations system responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights worldwide. The UNHRC was established on March 15, 2006, by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 60/251. It replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights. The UNHRC consists of 47 member states elected by the UN General Assembly. Member states serve for a term of three years and are eligible for immediate re-election once their term ends. The distribution of seats among the regions is based on equitable geographical representation.

Promoting and protecting human rights: The council addresses human rights violations globally and takes measures to prevent human rights abuses. It promotes dialogue, cooperation, and technical assistance to support the improvement of human rights situations around the world.

Universal Periodic Review (UPR): The UNHRC conducts a review of the human rights records of all UN member states through the UPR process. It assesses the human rights situation in each country and makes recommendations for improvement.

Special Procedures: The UNHRC appoints independent experts, known as Special Procedures mandate holders, to investigate and report on specific human rights issues or country situations. These experts report to the council and provide recommendations for action.

Thematic and country-specific resolutions: The council adopts resolutions on specific human rights issues, such as the rights of women, children, indigenous peoples, and other vulnerable groups. It also addresses country-specific situations of concern and adopts resolutions to highlight human rights violations and seek remedial actions.

Interactive dialogue: The UNHRC conducts interactive dialogues with states, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders to discuss human rights issues and promote dialogue on human rights-related matters.

Subsidiary Bodies: The UNHRC has several subsidiary bodies, including the Universal Periodic Review Working Group, the Advisory Committee, and thematic and country-specific working groups. These bodies assist the council in its work and provide expertise and recommendations.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR): The UNHRC is supported by the OHCHR, which provides technical assistance, research, and capacity-building support in the field of human rights. The OHCHR also facilitates the work of the council and its subsidiary bodies.

UN Committee on the Rights of Children and Special Rapporteurs on issues related to children

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) by its member states. Additionally, the UN appoints Special Rapporteurs who focus on specific issues related to children. Here are some details about the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Special Rapporteurs:

Special Rapporteurs on issues related to children:

The United Nations appoints Special Rapporteurs to focus on specific thematic areas related to children's rights. These experts conduct research, report on violations, and provide recommendations to address specific issues affecting children.

Special Rapporteurs are appointed by the UN Human Rights Council or other relevant UN bodies. They are mandated to examine and report on various aspects of children's rights, such as child trafficking, child labour, child soldiers, violence against children, and the right to education. Special Rapporteurs conduct country visits, engage with governments, civil society organizations, and other stakeholders, and issue reports with recommendations to address the specific issues they are mandated to focus on. They aim to raise awareness, advocate for policy changes, and promote the protection and promotion of children's rights in their respective areas of expertise.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child and the Special Rapporteurs play crucial roles in monitoring, advocating for, and promoting children's rights globally. They assess the progress made by states in fulfilling their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and highlight specific issues that require attention and action. Their work contributes to shaping policies, raising awareness, and advancing the rights and well-being of children worldwide.

Reference and Suggested Readings

- *UNICEF End violence Against Children Strategy 2020* . Available at: https://www.unicef.org/india/media/4151/file/End%20Violence%20Against%20Children%20Strategy%20India.pdf.
- *Mission Vatsalya Guidelines* (2022) *Ministry of women and child development* . Available at: https://wcd.nic.in/sites/default/files/GUIDELINES%20OF%20MISSION%20VATSALYA%20DATED%2005%20JULY%202022_0.pdf.
- *Tamilnadu State Child Policy 2021*. Available at: http://languageinindia.com/dec2021/TNStateChildPolicy2021_English.pdf.

Unit end questions

1. Enumerate the provisions enriched in the Constitution of India to ensure the rights of the children.
2. Explain the types of children classified under juvenile justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015.
3. What are the non-institutional care services provided under district child protection unit?
4. Explain the Child Protection system in India in detail.
5. Differentiate Child welfare Committee and Juvenile Justice Board.
6. What are the roles and functions of State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights.
7. Explain the services provided under One Stop Centre.
8. What are the types of offences classified under POCSO Act 2012.
9. Explain the highlights of Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006
10. Explain the welfare schemes initiated by Government of Tamilnadu for the welfare of Children.

Unit – 4

CHILD FRIENDLY SCHOOLS AND ROLE OF TEACHERS

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers in safeguarding the rights of children in schools– Child friendly schools - Rights respecting pedagogy and evaluation, creating spaces and opportunities for children to participate and express their voices/ opinions – Importance of Child Rights Clubs in Schools – Role of School Management Committees (SMCs) – Challenges of teachers as child rights practitioners.

Child friendly schools and Learning Environment – Concept and importance

A child-friendly school and learning environment refers to an educational setting that prioritizes the well-being, safety, and holistic development of children. It encompasses various elements, including physical infrastructure, teaching methods, curriculum design, and supportive policies. The concept emphasizes creating a positive, inclusive, and engaging atmosphere where children feel valued, respected, and motivated to learn. The importance of child-friendly schools and learning environments can be understood through the following key points:

Holistic development: Focus on nurturing all aspects of a child's development, including cognitive, emotional, social, and physical growth. They provide a well-rounded education that goes beyond academics, encouraging creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and life skills.

Inclusivity and diversity: Embrace diversity and ensure that every child, regardless of their background, abilities, or characteristics, has equal opportunities to learn and thrive. They create an inclusive environment that celebrates differences, promotes tolerance, and discourages discrimination.

Safe and secure environment: Prioritize the safety and security of students. They maintain appropriate infrastructure, implement safety protocols, and ensure proper supervision to protect children from physical and psychological harm. This includes safeguarding measures against bullying, violence, and abuse.

Engaging and participatory learning: Employ innovative and child-centered teaching methods to make learning enjoyable and meaningful. They encourage active participation, hands-on activities, group work, and interactive discussions to foster curiosity, exploration, and independent thinking. Such approaches help children develop a love for learning and enhance their retention and understanding of concepts.

Supportive relationships: Foster positive and supportive relationships among students, teachers, parents, and the wider community. They encourage open communication, collaboration, and mutual respect. Teachers act as mentors and facilitators, guiding students' learning journeys and providing emotional support when needed.

Health and well-being: Prioritize the health and well-being of students. They promote healthy habits, provide nutritious meals, offer access to clean water and sanitation facilities, and ensure physical activities are integrated into the daily routine. Mental health support and counseling services may also be provided to address emotional challenges.

Child participation and empowerment: Involve children in decision-making processes that affect their education and well-being. They encourage student-led initiatives, provide platforms for expressing opinions and ideas, and promote student councils or similar mechanisms for active participation. This fosters a sense of ownership, empowerment, and responsibility among students.

Parent and community involvement: Child-friendly schools recognize the importance of engaging parents and the local community in the educational process. They establish strong partnerships, encourage parental involvement in school activities, and seek community support to enrich the learning experiences of children.

Overall, child-friendly schools and learning environments are crucial for creating optimal conditions for children's growth, development, and learning. They lay the foundation for lifelong learning, help build positive attitudes towards education, and equip children with the skills, knowledge, and values necessary to become responsible and productive members of society.

Checklist to consider when designing a child-friendly classroom:

Safety:
Clear and unobstructed pathways.
Childproofing measures for younger students.
Adequate lighting and ventilation.

Comfort:
Ergonomic and appropriately sized furniture.
Soft seating areas for reading or relaxation.

Organization:
Clearly labeled storage areas for materials and supplies.
Easy access to learning resources.
Visual aids and signage for classroom routines and procedures.

Flexibility:
Configurable seating arrangements for different activities.
Mobile furniture or tables that can be rearranged.
Space for group collaboration
Designated areas for different learning modalities (e.g., reading corner, art lab).

Engagement:
Display of student work and achievements.
Age-appropriate decorations and visual stimuli.
Interactive learning centers.
Bulletin boards for displaying learning objectives, vocabulary, and student contributions.

Technology:
Accessible and functioning technology tools (computers, tablets, etc.).
Interactive whiteboard or projector for multimedia presentations.
Safe and filtered internet access for educational purposes.

Sensory Considerations:
Varied and stimulating textures, colors, and materials.
Calming or sensory areas for students who need a break.
Use of natural light and plants to create a soothing environment.
Consideration of students with sensory processing disorders.

Inclusivity:
Representation of diverse cultures and backgrounds in classroom materials.
Facilities for students with disabilities or special needs.
Accessible furniture, learning materials, and resources.
Sensitivity to students' cultural practices and beliefs.

Classroom Management:
Clear expectations and behaviour guidelines posted visibly.
Student-friendly rules and consequences.
Positive reinforcement systems
Supportive and respectful communication strategies.

Personalization:
Opportunities for students to personalize their learning space.
Flexibility to incorporate student interests and choices into activities.

Remember, this checklist serves as a general guide, and you can adapt it to suit the specific needs and age group of your students.

Child-friendly schools are designed to create a nurturing and supportive environment that promotes the holistic development of children. Here are some indicators to assess if a school is child-friendly:

Safe and Secure Environment:
Adequate safety measures and emergency procedures in place.
Well-maintained infrastructure and facilities.
Regular maintenance of equipment and facilities to ensure student safety.

Inclusive and Accessible Education:
Equal opportunities for all children, regardless of their background, abilities, or socio-economic status.
Accessible infrastructure and facilities for students with disabilities.
Inclusive curriculum that caters to diverse learning styles and abilities.
Provision of support services for students with special educational needs.

Health and Well-being:
Clean and hygienic environment, including proper sanitation facilities.
Availability of clean drinking water and healthy meals.
Promoting physical activity and sports facilities.

Child Participation:

Opportunities for students to actively participate in decision-making processes within the school.
Child rights clubs to voice their opinions and ideas.
Encouraging student involvement in planning and organizing school activities and events.

Positive and Supportive Relationships:

Caring and nurturing relationships between teachers, students, and staff.
Encouraging open communication and active listening.
Establishing partnerships with parents and involving them in the school community.

Quality Teaching and Learning:

Competent and qualified teachers who use child-centered teaching methodologies.
Providing a balanced and age-appropriate curriculum.
Promoting active and experiential learning opportunities.

Child Protection:

Implementation of child protection policies and procedures.
Training staff and teachers on child protection and safeguarding.
Creating a safe reporting system for any concerns or incidents.
Regular monitoring and evaluation of child protection measures.

Emotional and Social Support:

Providing counseling services or access to mental health support.
Teaching social-emotional skills and promoting positive peer relationships.
Creating a supportive and inclusive environment for students to express their emotions.

Community Engagement:

Engaging parents, guardians, and the wider community in school activities.
Collaborating with local organizations and stakeholders for student development.
Promoting community service and social responsibility among students.

Continuous Improvement:

Regular assessment and evaluation of school practices and policies.
Collecting feedback from students, parents, and staff to identify areas for improvement.
Professional development opportunities for teachers and staff.
Incorporating innovative approaches and best practices in education.

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers in safeguarding the rights of children in schools

Teachers play a critical role in safeguarding the rights of children in schools. Their responsibilities encompass various aspects related to the well-being, safety, and protection of students.

Creating a safe and inclusive environment:

Teachers are responsible for establishing a safe, welcoming, and inclusive classroom environment where every child feels respected, valued, and protected. They promote an atmosphere of mutual respect, empathy, and tolerance, ensuring that all students are treated equally regardless of their background, abilities, or characteristics.

Identifying and reporting concerns:

Teachers should be vigilant in recognizing signs of abuse, neglect, bullying, or any other form of harm. They should undergo appropriate training to understand the indicators of potential issues and be knowledgeable about their duty to report suspicions or disclosures of abuse or neglect to the designated authorities within the school or relevant child protection agencies.

Building positive relationships:

Teachers are responsible for establishing positive and trusting relationships with their students. By developing strong connections, they create a safe space for children to confide in them and seek support when needed. Building rapport also allows teachers to better understand and address any challenges or concerns that students may face.

Teaching personal safety skills:

Teachers should educate students about personal safety skills and empower them to protect themselves. This includes teaching children about appropriate boundaries, personal space, assertiveness, and understanding the difference between safe and unsafe situations. Teachers can also educate students about online safety, responsible use of technology, and cyberbullying prevention.

Providing emotional support:

Teachers need to be attuned to the emotional well-being of their students. They should create an environment where children feel comfortable expressing their emotions and concerns. Teachers can offer support, guidance, and counseling if needed, and ensure that appropriate referral systems are in place for accessing further professional help when required.

Implementing preventive measures:

Teachers play a crucial role in implementing preventive measures to safeguard children's rights. This includes addressing bullying through anti-bullying policies, promoting positive behaviour management strategies, and fostering a culture of respect and empathy among students. Teachers should also ensure that classrooms and school premises are physically secure and that appropriate safety measures are in place.

Collaborating with colleagues and stakeholders:

Teachers should collaborate with their colleagues, school staff, and external stakeholders such as parents, guardians, and community members to create a comprehensive network of support for students. This may involve participating in child protection committees, attending training sessions, and actively communicating and sharing information regarding the welfare and rights of children.

Continuing professional development:

Teachers should continuously update their knowledge and skills related to child protection and safeguarding. Participating in professional development opportunities, attending workshops, and staying informed about best practices and legal requirements help ensure that teachers are equipped to fulfil their responsibilities effectively.

Importance of Child Safeguarding Policy in schools

Child safeguarding policies are essential in schools to ensure the safety, well-being, and protection of children. A child safeguarding policy establishes clear guidelines and procedures to prevent and respond to incidents of abuse, neglect, or any form of harm towards children. It outlines the school's commitment to providing a safe and secure environment for all students. Many countries have laws and regulations in place that require schools to have child safeguarding policies. Adhering to these legal obligations helps schools avoid legal repercussions and demonstrates their commitment to upholding children's rights.

Preventing and addressing abuse: Child safeguarding policies provide a framework for preventing abuse within the school community. They establish procedures for identifying and reporting concerns, ensuring timely intervention, and cooperating with relevant child protection agencies. By having clear protocols in place, schools can take immediate action to protect children and hold offenders accountable.

Creating a culture of safety: A child safeguarding policy promotes a culture of safety within the school environment. It raises awareness among staff, students, and parents about their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. It encourages open communication, trust, and vigilance, fostering an atmosphere where everyone feels empowered to report concerns and work together to protect children.

Supporting staff training and awareness: Child safeguarding policies provide a framework for staff training and development in recognizing signs of abuse, responding appropriately, and maintaining professional boundaries. By ensuring that staff members are well-informed and equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills, schools can effectively safeguard children's rights.

Building trust with parents and the community: Having a child safeguarding policy in place demonstrates a school's commitment to the well-being of its students. It instils confidence in parents and the wider community that the school takes child protection seriously. This helps build trust and positive relationships, enhancing the overall reputation and credibility of the institution.

Promoting a child-centered approach: A child safeguarding policy emphasizes the importance of putting children at the centre of all decision-making processes. It promotes child participation,

ensuring that their voices are heard, and their opinions and concerns are taken into account. This child-centered approach creates a sense of ownership, empowerment, and accountability among students.

Continual improvement and accountability: Child safeguarding policies are not static documents. They should be regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changing circumstances, emerging risks, and best practices. This process of continual improvement ensures that the school remains responsive and proactive in protecting children's rights. It also promotes accountability by establishing mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding measures.

In summary, child safeguarding policies are crucial for creating a safe, supportive, and protective environment for children in schools. They provide a comprehensive framework for preventing and responding to abuse, promoting awareness and training, and fostering a culture of safety and respect. By implementing and adhering to such policies, schools can fulfill their responsibility to safeguard children's rights and well-being.

Pedagogy and Evaluation:
Rights respecting pedagogy and evaluation

Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy: Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy refers to an approach to teaching and learning that integrates the principles and values of child rights into the educational process. It recognizes children as active participants in their education and respects their rights to participation, non-discrimination, protection, and provision. Here are some key elements of Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy:

i. **Child participation:** The pedagogy prioritizes meaningful and active participation of children in their learning. It involves involving children in decision-making, allowing them to express their opinions, and engaging them in collaborative activities that promote critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity.

ii. **Inclusive and equitable practices:** Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy ensures that all children have equal opportunities to learn and thrive. It embraces diversity and inclusion, accommodating the needs and abilities of every child, regardless of their background, gender, disability, or any other characteristic. It promotes a supportive and respectful learning environment that values and celebrates differences.

iii. **Holistic development:** The pedagogy emphasizes the holistic development of children, including their cognitive, emotional, social, and physical well-being. It goes beyond academic achievements and incorporates the development of life skills, values, and attitudes that are essential for children to become active and responsible citizens.

iv. **Child-Centered learning:** Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy places the child at the center of the learning process. It recognizes the individuality and unique potential of each child and tailors teaching methods and learning experiences to their needs, interests, and strengths. It encourages inquiry-based learning, hands-on activities, and student-led initiatives that promote engagement and ownership of learning.

v. **Rights-based curriculum:** The pedagogy ensures that the curriculum reflects the principles and values of child rights. It includes content and activities that promote

understanding and respect for human rights, social justice, and sustainability. It helps children develop a critical awareness of their rights and responsibilities, empowering them to advocate for their own rights and the rights of others.

Evaluation for Children in Schools: When evaluating children in schools, it is essential to adopt an approach that aligns with child rights and promotes their overall well-being and development. Here are some considerations for evaluation in line with child rights:

i. **Holistic assessment:** Evaluation should consider multiple aspects of a child's development, including their cognitive abilities, social skills, emotional well-being, and physical capabilities. It should go beyond traditional tests and examinations and incorporate methods that assess the child's overall progress and growth.

ii. **Formative assessment:** Formative assessment focuses on providing feedback and guidance to support a child's learning and development. It involves ongoing observations, conversations, and reflective discussions that help identify strengths, areas for improvement, and individual learning needs. Formative assessment supports personalized learning and enables teachers to tailor their instruction to meet the specific needs of each child.

iii. **Child participation:** Evaluation should involve children in the process. Children should have the opportunity to reflect on their own progress, set goals, and engage in self-assessment. They can also contribute to evaluating the learning environment, teaching methods, and their own learning experiences, providing valuable insights for improvement.

iv. **Authentic assessment:** Authentic assessment involves evaluating children's learning in real-life contexts and meaningful tasks. It focuses on practical application, problem-solving, and critical thinking skills rather than rote memorization. Authentic assessment methods may include projects, portfolios, presentations, group work, and performance-based tasks that align with real-world situations.

v. **Non-discriminatory practices**: Evaluation should be conducted in a fair and non-discriminatory manner. It should consider diverse learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and individual abilities. Assessment tasks and criteria should be inclusive and avoid bias, ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and skills.

vi. **Growth mindset approach:** Evaluation should promote a growth mindset, emphasizing effort, improvement, and resilience over grades or fixed abilities. It should encourage children to view mistakes and challenges as learning opportunities and foster a positive attitude towards learning and self-development.

By adopting a Child Rights-Respecting Pedagogy and aligning evaluation practices with child rights principles, schools can create an inclusive, supportive, and empowering learning environment that respects and promotes the rights of every child.

Creating spaces and opportunities for children to participate and express their voices/opinions.

Importance of Child Rights Clubs in Schools

Child Rights Clubs in schools play a crucial role in promoting awareness, advocacy, and the realization of children's rights. Here are some key reasons highlighting the importance of Child Rights Clubs:

- **Awareness and Education**: Child Rights Clubs provide a platform for raising awareness about children's rights among students, teachers, and the wider school community. They educate members about the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and help children understand their rights, as well as the rights of others. This knowledge empowers children to be informed advocates for themselves and their peers.
- **Empowerment and Participation:** Child Rights Clubs foster active participation and empowerment among students. They provide opportunities for children to express their opinions, engage in decision-making processes, and have their voices heard. By participating in club activities, children develop important skills such as leadership, critical thinking, communication, and teamwork.
- **Advocacy and Social Change:** Child Rights Clubs serve as platforms for advocating for the rights of children within and beyond the school. They encourage students to take action on issues that affect children's rights, such as bullying, discrimination, child labor, or lack of access to education. Through awareness campaigns, events, and initiatives, Child Rights Clubs contribute to positive social change and promote a culture of respect for children's rights.
- **Peer Support and Solidarity**: Child Rights Clubs provide a supportive environment where children can connect with like-minded peers who are passionate about promoting children's rights. It offers a sense of belonging, friendship, and solidarity among club members. This support network can be particularly valuable for children facing challenges or seeking guidance, fostering their emotional well-being.
- **Learning and Skill Development:** Child Rights Clubs offer opportunities for learning beyond the classroom. They organize workshops, seminars, and training sessions on child rights, leadership, advocacy, and related topics. Club members gain knowledge, develop new skills, and enhance their understanding of social issues, contributing to their personal growth and development.
- **Community Engagement**: Child Rights Clubs extend their activities beyond the school premises and engage with the local community. They collaborate with other organizations, NGOs, and community leaders to raise awareness about children's rights, undertake social initiatives, and contribute to community development. This involvement strengthens the connection between the school and the community, fostering a collective responsibility towards children's rights.

- **Long-lasting Impact**: Child Rights Clubs have the potential to create a lasting impact on students' lives. The knowledge, skills, and values gained through club activities can shape their attitudes, behaviours, and actions even beyond their school years. Club members can become advocates for children's rights in their future endeavours, contributing to a more just and inclusive society.

- By establishing Child Rights Clubs in schools, educators provide a platform for children to become active participants in promoting and protecting their rights. These clubs empower children, foster a sense of belonging and solidarity, and create a generation that is aware, compassionate, and committed to upholding the rights of all children.

Role of School Management Committees (SMCs)

School Management Committees (SMCs) play a vital role in the effective governance and management of schools. SMCs are representative bodies consisting of various stakeholders, including parents, teachers, community members, and school administrators. Here are some key roles and responsibilities of School Management Committees:

1. **Participatory Decision-Making**: SMCs facilitate participatory decision-making processes in the school. They provide a platform for stakeholders to contribute their perspectives, ideas, and concerns regarding various aspects of school management, including curriculum, policies, infrastructure, and student welfare. SMCs ensure that decisions are made collectively, taking into account the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders.

2. **School Development Planning**: SMCs are responsible for developing and implementing school development plans. They assess the school's strengths, weaknesses, and priorities, and identify strategies for improvement. SMCs collaborate with school administrators, teachers, and other stakeholders to set goals, allocate resources, and monitor the progress of the school's development initiatives.

3. **Resource Mobilization and Management**: SMCs play a crucial role in resource mobilization for the school. They work towards securing adequate financial resources, infrastructure, and learning materials to support the educational needs of students. SMCs may engage in fundraising activities, seek partnerships with local organizations, and advocate for sufficient government funding. They also oversee the effective utilization and management of available resources.

4. **Monitoring and Evaluation**: SMCs monitor and evaluate the overall performance of the school. They review academic progress, student attendance, teaching quality, and the implementation of policies and programs. SMCs may conduct regular school visits, interact with students and teachers, and analyze data to assess the school's effectiveness. Based on the findings, they provide feedback and recommendations to improve the quality of education.

5. **Community Engagement and Communication:** SMCs serve as a link between the school and the community. They promote community engagement and encourage active involvement of parents and community members in school activities. SMCs facilitate effective communication by disseminating information about school events, policies, and achievements. They also gather feedback from the community and relay it to the school administration for consideration.

6. **Advocacy for Quality Education**: SMCs advocate for quality education within the school and at the policy level. They raise awareness about the importance of education, child rights, and the specific needs of the school and its students. SMCs may engage in advocacy campaigns, participate in education-related forums, and collaborate with other stakeholders to influence policies that support improved educational outcomes.

7. **Conflict Resolution and Grievance Handling**: SMCs play a role in addressing conflicts and grievances within the school community. They provide a platform for stakeholders to express their concerns and seek resolutions. SMCs may mediate disputes, facilitate dialogue, and ensure that fair and transparent processes are in place for resolving conflicts.

8. **Oversight and Accountability:** SMCs ensure transparency and accountability in school management. They monitor the implementation of policies, adherence to regulations, and the efficient utilization of resources. SMCs hold the school administration accountable for delivering quality education and maintaining a safe and inclusive learning environment for students.

9. By actively fulfilling their roles and responsibilities, School Management Committees contribute to effective governance, stakeholder engagement, and the overall improvement of the educational experience for students. They play a vital role in fostering collaboration, promoting transparency, and ensuring that the school functions in the best interests of its students and the wider community.

Challenges of teachers as child rights practitioners

As child rights practitioners, teachers face various challenges in ensuring the protection and promotion of children's rights within the educational context. Some of these challenges include:

1. **Limited awareness and understanding:**

   Teachers may have limited awareness and understanding of child rights and their implications in the educational setting. They may not be familiar with the specific rights enshrined in international conventions or national legislation. This lack of knowledge can hinder their ability to effectively advocate for and protect children's rights.

2. **Balancing competing priorities:**

   Teachers often face multiple demands and priorities in their roles, including academic achievement, classroom management, and meeting curriculum requirements. Balancing these responsibilities with addressing child rights issues can be challenging, especially when there are limited resources, time constraints, and pressure to meet performance targets.

3. **Inadequate training and professional development:**

   Teachers may not receive sufficient training and professional development on child rights issues. They may lack the necessary skills and knowledge to address specific rights-related challenges, such as addressing diverse learning needs, promoting inclusive education, or addressing child protection issues. Without adequate training, teachers may struggle to effectively integrate child rights principles into their teaching practices.

4. **Lack of supportive policies and resources:**

   The absence of supportive policies, guidelines, and resources at the school and system levels can pose challenges for teachers as child rights practitioners. Without clear policies and resources, teachers may struggle to address child rights issues consistently and effectively. Limited access to support services, such as counseling or special education resources, can also hinder teachers' ability to meet the diverse needs of their students.

5. **Resistance to change and traditional practices**:

   Traditional teaching methods, disciplinary practices, and cultural norms may not align with child rights principles. Teachers may encounter resistance when attempting to challenge these traditional practices and promote child-centered and rights-based approaches. Overcoming resistance and fostering a shift in mindset and practices can be a significant challenge.

6. **Lack of collaboration and coordination:**

   Addressing child rights issues requires collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders, including teachers, administrators, parents, and community members. However, the lack of effective coordination and collaboration can hinder the implementation of child rights practices in schools. Limited communication and cooperation among stakeholders may impede efforts to create a supportive and rights-respecting environment for children.

7. **Limited parental and community involvement:** Engaging parents and the wider community in promoting and protecting children's rights is crucial. However, limited parental involvement, disengagement, or lack of understanding about child rights can pose challenges for teachers. In some cases, cultural or socioeconomic factors may inhibit parental participation and support in addressing child rights issues.

To address these challenges, it is important to prioritize ongoing teacher training and professional development on child rights issues, provide supportive policies and resources, foster collaboration among stakeholders, and promote a rights-based culture within schools. Additionally, raising awareness among teachers, parents, and the wider community about child rights can help create a shared understanding and commitment to protecting and promoting the rights of all children.

Reference and Suggested Readings

1. Jerome L. and Starkey H. (2023) *Children's rights education in diverse classrooms: Pedagogy, principles and practice*. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

2. *UNESCO Embracing diversity: toolkit for creating inclusive, learning-friendly environments*. Unesdoc.unesco.org. (n.d.). https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000137522

Unit End Questions

1. Explain the concept of Child Friendly School?
2. Why it is important to have a Child Friendly Environment in Schools?
3. What is the checklist to consider when designing a child-friendly classroom.
4. Explain the roles and responsibilities of teachers in safeguarding the rights of the children in Schools.
5. Why it is important to have a child safeguarding policy in schools?
6. What is right based pedagogy?
7. Explain the different types of evaluations in Schools.
8. What is Child Rights club? Why is it important to have a Child Rights Club in Schools?
9. Explain the role of School Management Committee?
10. What are the challenges of teachers as child rights practitioners?

UNIT – 5

SKILLS IN PROMOTION OF CHILD PROTECTION AND PARTICIPATION

Identification of children in vulnerable situations – Skills to deal with the children affected by violence – Psycho-social support and referral services for the vulnerable needy children – Teachers as mentors of children for ensuring their participation and protection – Skills for celebrating child rights.

Identification of children in vulnerable situations

Identifying children in vulnerable situations is crucial for ensuring their safety and well-being. Here are some steps you can take to identify children in vulnerable situations:

Understand the concept of vulnerability: Familiarize yourself with the various factors that can contribute to a child's vulnerability, such as abuse, neglect, poverty, homelessness, substance abuse in the family, disabilities, mental health issues, and others. This understanding will help you recognize signs of vulnerability more effectively.

a. **Child Abuse and Neglect**: Children who experience physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, as well as those who suffer from neglect or inadequate care, are considered vulnerable. Signs of abuse or neglect may include unexplained injuries, changes in behaviour, fearfulness, withdrawal, or a pattern of poor hygiene or malnutrition.

b. **Poverty and Homelessness:** Children living in poverty or experiencing homelessness are vulnerable to various risks, including lack of access to basic necessities, educational opportunities, and healthcare. They may exhibit signs such as inconsistent school attendance, poor nutrition, inadequate clothing, or unstable housing situations.

c. **Refugee or Displaced Children**: Children who have been forcibly displaced due to conflict, war, or natural disasters are especially vulnerable. They may face challenges such as separation from family, limited access to education and healthcare, and exposure to violence or exploitation.

d. **Children with Disabilities:** Children with physical, sensory, intellectual, or developmental disabilities are more vulnerable due to potential discrimination, exclusion, and difficulties in accessing necessary support services. Signs may include delays in development, limited communication skills, or lack of appropriate accommodations.

e. **Child Labour and Exploitation:** Children engaged in hazardous or exploitative labour, including child trafficking, commercial sexual exploitation, or forced begging, are in highly vulnerable situations. They may exhibit signs of physical exhaustion, poor health, withdrawal, or being accompanied by exploitative individuals.

f. **Substance Abuse and Mental Health**: Children living in households with substance abuse issues or struggling with mental health problems may face neglect, instability, or exposure to harmful environments. Signs can include erratic behaviour, poor academic performance, or self-harm.

g. **Orphans and Unaccompanied Minors:** Children who have lost their parents or are separated from their families due to various circumstances are vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, and lack of support. They may show signs of loneliness, disorientation, or difficulties in forming attachments.

Educate yourself on indicators: Learn about the common indicators or signs that may suggest a child is in a vulnerable situation. These indicators can include physical signs of abuse or neglect (e.g., unexplained bruises or injuries, malnutrition), changes in behaviour (e.g., withdrawal, aggression, fearfulness), poor school attendance or performance, lack of appropriate clothing or hygiene, and emotional distress. Recognizing these indicators can help you identify children who may need help.

Create a safe and supportive environment: Provide an environment where children feel comfortable and safe to share their concerns or experiences. Build trust and rapport with children through active listening, empathy, and non-judgmental communication. Encourage open dialogue and create opportunities for children to express themselves freely.

Train and educate professionals: Professionals who interact with children, such as teachers, healthcare providers, social workers, and community workers, should receive appropriate training on recognizing and responding to child vulnerability. This training can enhance their ability to identify signs of vulnerability and take appropriate action.

Encourage reporting: Create awareness about the importance of reporting any concerns or suspicions regarding child vulnerability. Encourage professionals, parents, caregivers, and members of the community to report any signs of child abuse, neglect, or other forms of vulnerability to the relevant authorities, such as child protective services or law enforcement.

Collaborate with relevant agencies: Establish partnerships and collaborations with child protection agencies/ Government departments, Police, and civil society organizations working with children. Share information, coordinate efforts, and develop protocols to ensure a comprehensive response to children in vulnerable situations.

Follow legal and ethical guidelines: Understand the legal and ethical obligations when it comes to reporting child vulnerability. Familiarize yourself with the laws and policies in your jurisdiction regarding child protection and reporting procedures. Adhere to these guidelines while respecting the privacy and confidentiality of the children involved.

Remember, identifying children in vulnerable situations is just the first step. It is equally important to take appropriate action to ensure their safety and provide the necessary support. If you suspect a child is in immediate danger or at risk of harm, contact your local child protection agency or emergency services right away.

Identifying and recognizing the warning signs and factors of varying types of child abuse and neglect

Identifying and recognizing the warning signs and factors of child abuse and neglect is crucial for early intervention and ensuring the safety and well-being of children. Here are some common types of child abuse and neglect, along with their warning signs and contributing factors:

Physical Abuse: Warning signs:

i. Unexplained bruises, welts, or injuries in various stages of healing

ii. Frequent injuries or injuries inconsistent with the explanation given

iii. Fear of going home or being around a particular person

iv. Aggression, withdrawal, or fearfulness

Contributing factors:

i. High-stress family environment

ii. History of violence in the family

iii. Substance abuse or mental health issues in the caregiver

iv. Emotional Abuse: Warning signs:

v. Excessive fearfulness, withdrawal, or aggression

vi. Low self-esteem, depression, or anxiety

vii. Extreme behaviour or emotional outbursts

viii. Delayed emotional development.

ix. Contributing factors:

x. Caregiver's constant criticism, rejection, or humiliation

xi. Witnessing domestic violence or experiencing family conflict

xii. Isolation from social support networks

Sexual Abuse: Warning signs:

i. Difficulty walking or sitting, or sudden refusal to participate in activities involving changing clothes.

ii. Unexplained genital or anal pain, bleeding, or infections

iii. Age-inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviours

iv. Avoidance of specific individuals or places

Contributing factors:

i. Access to the child by an abuser

ii. Lack of awareness or education about sexual abuse

iii. Familial or societal norms that perpetuate silence and secrecy around sexual abuse.

Neglect: Warning signs:

i. Poor hygiene, inadequate clothing, or malnourishment

ii. Frequent absences from school or untreated medical conditions

iii. Lack of supervision or leaving a child alone at an inappropriate age

iv. Inconsistent or absent parental care

Contributing factors:

i. Parental substance abuse, mental health issues, or intellectual limitations

ii. Poverty and lack of resources

iii. Domestic violence or unstable living conditions

Child Exploitation: Warning signs:

i. Engaging in commercial sexual activities or involvement in child pornography

ii. Frequent unexplained absences from home or school

iii. Sudden acquisition of expensive items or money

iv. Exhibiting behaviours associated with substance abuse or emotional distress.

Contributing factors:

i. Poverty and lack of economic opportunities

ii. Family dysfunction or neglect

iii. Trafficking networks and organized criminal activities.

It is important to note that these warning signs are not definitive proof of abuse or neglect, but they serve as red flags that should prompt further investigation and intervention by trained professionals. If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, report your concerns to the appropriate authorities, such as police, District Child Protection Unit, Child helpline, CWC who can conduct a thorough investigation and provide the necessary support and protection for the child.

Skills to deal with the children affected by violence

Dealing with children affected by violence requires a compassionate and supportive approach. Here are some essential skills to help you effectively support and interact with these children:

Active Listening: Practice active listening skills to create a safe and supportive space for children to express their feelings and experiences. Give them your full attention, maintain eye contact, and show empathy. Avoid interrupting or judging and validate their emotions and experiences.

Empathy and Sensitivity: Show empathy towards the child's experiences and emotions. Try to understand their perspective and validate their feelings. Be sensitive to their individual needs, triggers, and boundaries, and respond accordingly.

Establish Trust and Rapport: Building a trusting relationship is crucial for children affected by violence. Be reliable, consistent, and respectful in your interactions. Demonstrate that you are a safe person to confide in and that you will support them without judgment.

Trauma-Informed Approach: Understand the impact of trauma on children's behaviour and emotions. Educate yourself about trauma-informed care principles, such as providing safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration, and empowerment. Adapt your approach to create a trauma-sensitive environment.

Safety Planning: Collaborate with the child to develop safety plans tailored to their specific situation. Help them identify safe spaces, trusted adults, and coping strategies they can rely on when faced with violence or danger.

Emotional Regulation: Teach children coping strategies to manage their emotions in healthy ways. Help them identify and express their feelings, and provide tools such as deep breathing exercises, mindfulness techniques, or creative outlets like art or writing.

Age-Appropriate Communication: Adapt your communication style and language to the child's age and developmental level. Use age-appropriate explanations and vocabulary to discuss violence and its effects. Ensure that they understand the information while not overwhelming them with graphic details.

Collaborate with Professionals: Work collaboratively with other professionals involved in the child's care, such as therapists, counsellors, social workers, or doctors, psychologist. Share relevant information, coordinate efforts, and follow their guidance to ensure a holistic approach to support the child.

Boundaries and Self-Care: Maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries while providing support. Recognize your own limitations and practice self-care to prevent burnout. Seek supervision or support from professionals when needed.

Cultural Sensitivity: Be aware of cultural considerations and respect the child's cultural background. Understand how cultural beliefs, values, and practices may influence their experiences and responses to violence.

Remember, each child's experience is unique, and it's important to tailor your approach to their individual needs. If you believe a child is in immediate danger or at risk, report your concerns to the appropriate child protection authorities.

Role of Teachers and other professionals in diagnosing and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect

Teachers a crucial role in diagnosing and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Here's an overview of their responsibilities in diagnosing and reporting suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.

Observation and Recognition: Teachers who work closely with children are often in a position to observe and recognize signs of child abuse and neglect. They should be knowledgeable about the indicators and warning signs associated with different types of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm.

Documentation: When teachers suspect that a child may be experiencing abuse or neglect, it is important to document their observations accurately and in a timely manner. This documentation may include detailed descriptions of physical injuries, Behavioral changes, or conversations with the child that raise concerns.

Communication and Collaboration: Teachers should communicate their concerns to the appropriate individuals within their organization or institution. This may involve discussing the suspicions with a designated child protection officer, school counsellor, principal, or supervisor. Collaboration is crucial to ensure a comprehensive response and appropriate follow-up actions.

Reporting: If there is reasonable suspicion or belief that a child is being abused or neglected, professionals have a legal and ethical obligation to report the suspected abuse to the relevant child protection agency or authorities. Reporting procedures may vary depending on the jurisdiction, but teachers should follow the established protocols and guidelines.

Confidentiality and Privacy: Teachers should respect the confidentiality and privacy of the child and the family involved. Information should only be shared on a need-to-know basis with individuals directly involved in the child protection process. It's important to maintain sensitivity and ensure that the child's rights and dignity are protected throughout the reporting and investigation process.

Supportive Role: Teachers can play a supportive role for the child by creating a safe and nurturing environment, offering emotional support, and helping connect the child and family with appropriate resources and services. This may involve collaborating with school counsellors, therapists, or other professionals to ensure the child's well-being.

Psycho-Social support and referral services for the vulnerable children

Psycho-social support refers to a range of interventions and services that aim to promote the psychological and social well-being of individuals who have experienced or are experiencing significant psychological, social, or emotional challenges. It recognizes the interconnectedness of psychological and social factors and focuses on addressing the impact of these factors on a person's overall well-being. Psycho-social support takes into account the complex interaction between a person's thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and social environment. It aims to strengthen individuals' abilities to cope with stress, manage emotions, build resilience, and maintain healthy relationships.

Here are key elements and components of psycho-social support:

Emotional Support: Providing a safe and empathetic environment where individuals can express their feelings, fears, and concerns without judgment.

Psychological Counselling and Therapy: Engaging in individual, group, or family therapy sessions to address and process emotional distress, trauma, or mental health issues.

Skill-Building and Coping Strategies: Equipping individuals with practical skills, techniques, and strategies to manage stress, regulate emotions, problem-solve, and improve overall well-being.

Information and Psychoeducation: Providing accurate and relevant information about psychological and social issues, promoting self-awareness, and helping individuals understand their experiences and the available support resources.

Social Support Networks: Facilitating connections with supportive relationships, such as family, friends, peer groups, or community networks, to foster a sense of belonging and provide social support.

Community Integration and Participation: Encouraging individuals to engage in social activities, community programs, or support groups to combat isolation, build social skills, and foster a sense of empowerment and inclusion.

Advocacy and Empowerment: Supporting individuals in accessing their rights, promoting self-advocacy, and empowering them to make informed decisions about their own lives.

Psycho-social support can be provided by various professionals, including psychologists, counsellors, and social workers. It is often integrated into humanitarian and development programs, healthcare settings, schools, and other community-based initiatives.

The goal of psycho-social support is to enhance individuals' ability to cope with challenges, improve their resilience, and promote their overall psychological and social well-being. By addressing both psychological and social aspects, it recognizes the importance of holistic care and support for individuals facing difficult circumstances.

It is important for professionals and caregivers to work collaboratively, ensuring that children receive the appropriate psycho-social support and access to referral services based on their unique needs. Coordination and ongoing communication among professionals from various disciplines are essential to providing comprehensive care and support to vulnerable children.

Teachers as mentors of children for ensuring their participation and protection

Teachers play a vital role as mentors in ensuring the participation and protection of children. Ensuring children's participation and protection requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach. Here are some ways in which teachers can fulfil this role:

Building Trust and Creating a Safe Environment: Teachers can establish trusting relationships with their students by creating a safe and inclusive classroom environment. This includes treating all students with respect, actively listening to their concerns, and fostering a sense of belonging.

Encouraging Active Participation: Teachers can promote children's participation by providing opportunities for them to engage in classroom discussions, express their opinions, and contribute to decision-making processes. This helps children develop a sense of agency and ownership over their education.

Promoting Inclusion and Equality: Teachers should create a classroom environment that celebrates diversity, respects different perspectives, and ensures that all students feel valued and included. They can address biases, challenge stereotypes, and encourage empathy and understanding among students.

Recognizing and Responding to Individual Needs: Teachers should be attentive to the unique needs of each student. They can adapt their teaching strategies, materials, and assessments to accommodate diverse learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds. By providing personalized support, teachers help ensure that all children can participate fully in the learning process.

Teaching Life Skills and Protective Behaviours: Teachers can incorporate lessons on life skills, such as personal safety, self-advocacy, and boundary-setting, into their curriculum. These skills help empower children to protect themselves and make informed decisions, promoting their overall well-being and safety.

Identifying and Reporting Concerns: Teachers are often the first to notice signs of abuse, neglect, or other forms of harm in children's lives. It is essential that teachers receive training on recognizing and responding to these concerns. They should know the appropriate channels for reporting suspicions to child protection agencies or relevant authorities.

Collaboration with Parents and Guardians: Teachers can collaborate with parents and guardians to ensure the participation and protection of children. Open communication channels can be established to share information, discuss concerns, and work together to create a supportive environment that meets the child's needs.

Continuing Professional Development: Teachers should engage in ongoing professional development to enhance their knowledge and skills in child protection, inclusion, and fostering children's participation. This helps them stay updated on best practices and approaches to support and protect children effectively.

By assuming the role of mentors, teachers can empower children, promote their active participation, and create a protective and nurturing environment that supports their overall development and well-being.

Positive discipline Technique for Teachers

Positive discipline is an approach to parenting and behaviour management that focuses on teaching and guiding children using positive and respectful techniques, rather than relying on punishment or coercion. It is based on the principles of mutual respect, clear communication, empathy, and teaching self-discipline. The goal of positive discipline is to foster healthy development, build strong relationships, and promote positive behaviour in children. Here are some key principles and techniques used in positive discipline:

Mutual Respect: Positive discipline emphasizes treating children with respect, acknowledging their feelings, thoughts, and opinions. It recognizes that respectful communication and interactions are essential for building a healthy parent-child relationship.

Clear Expectations and Boundaries: Setting clear expectations and boundaries helps children understand what is expected of them. Clear rules and guidelines are communicated in a positive and constructive manner, ensuring that children know the limits and consequences of their actions.

What is classroom democracy?

Classroom democracy refers to an educational approach that promotes student participation, shared decision-making, and a sense of ownership in the classroom. It aims to create a democratic learning environment where students have a voice, contribute to decision-making processes, and collaborate with their peers and teachers.

Positive Reinforcement: Positive discipline focuses on reinforcing and praising positive behaviour. By acknowledging and rewarding desirable actions, children are encouraged to continue engaging in those behaviours. Verbal praise, encouragement, rewards, or privileges can be used to reinforce positive behaviour.

Natural Consequences: Allowing children to experience the natural consequences of their actions can be a valuable learning opportunity. Rather than imposing arbitrary punishments, positive discipline encourages children to understand the consequences of their choices and learn from them.

Redirection and Distraction: When children engage in undesirable behaviour, positive discipline techniques often involve redirecting their attention or providing alternative activities. This helps shift their focus away from negative behaviour and encourages more positive choices.

Problem-Solving and Collaboration: Positive discipline emphasizes involving children in problem-solving and decision-making processes. Encouraging them to participate actively in finding solutions fosters their critical thinking skills, autonomy, and responsibility.

Time-In: Time-in is a technique where a caregiver provides a calm and supportive environment for a child to reflect on their behaviour and emotions. It involves sitting together, discussing the issue, and helping the child understand and express their feelings.

Effective Communication: Positive discipline emphasizes open and effective communication. It involves active listening, using age-appropriate language, and validating children's emotions. This promotes understanding, empathy, and stronger connections between parents or caregivers and children.

Modeling Positive Behaviour: Parents and caregivers play a crucial role in modelling positive behaviour for children. By demonstrating respectful and considerate behaviour, children learn and emulate these qualities.

Consistency and Predictability: Consistency is important in positive discipline. Clear expectations, consequences, and boundaries should be consistently applied. Predictability helps children understand the consequences of their actions and builds a sense of security.

Positive discipline techniques aim to create a nurturing and respectful environment that fosters children's emotional well-being, self-esteem, and self-discipline. It promotes a collaborative and supportive approach to guiding children's behaviour and helps them develop essential life skills for their future.

Skills for celebrating child rights

Celebrating child rights requires a range of skills and competencies to ensure that children's rights are upheld and promoted. Here are some key skills that are valuable for celebrating child rights:

Knowledge of Child Rights:

Acquire a solid understanding of child rights as outlined in international conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Familiarize yourself with the specific rights and principles that apply to children and their implications for their well-being and development.

Advocacy and Communication:

Develop strong advocacy and communication skills to effectively promote and defend children's rights. This includes the ability to articulate the importance of child rights, raise awareness, and engage with stakeholders at different levels to advocate for policies and practices that uphold children's rights.

Empathy and Active Listening:

Cultivate empathy and active listening skills to understand and respond to children's needs, concerns, and experiences. Demonstrate genuine interest and respect when interacting with children, creating a safe space for them to express themselves and participate in decision-making processes.

Child Participation:

Encourage and facilitate meaningful child participation in matters that affect them. Foster environments where children are encouraged to express their opinions, contribute to decision-making processes, and actively participate in activities that promote their rights. Ensure that their voices are heard and valued.

Cultural Sensitivity and Inclusion:

Recognize and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds and identities of children. Develop cultural sensitivity to address any cultural biases or barriers that may affect the realization of child rights. Promote inclusive practices that ensure equal opportunities and respect for all children, regardless of their background.

Collaboration and Networking:

Build effective partnerships and collaborations with various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, community organizations, parents, and children themselves. Engage in networking and coordination to maximize the impact of efforts to uphold and celebrate child rights.

Education and Training:

Continuously update your knowledge and skills through education and training opportunities related to child rights. Stay informed about current research, best practices, and emerging issues in the field of child rights to ensure your approach remains relevant and effective.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Develop skills in monitoring and evaluating programs and initiatives related to child rights. This involves setting clear objectives, collecting and analyzing data, and using the findings to make informed decisions and improve strategies for celebrating child rights.

By developing these skills, teachers can effectively promote, protect, and celebrate child rights, contributing to the well-being and development of children worldwide.

Reference and Suggested Readings

1. Daelman, S. (2022). *Listening to children in Vulnerable situations: Rethinking voice through intra-active pedagogical encounters*. Gompel & Svacina.

2. Basarab-Horwath, J. A., & Platt, D. (2018). *The child's World: The essential guide to assessing vulnerable children, young people and their families*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Unit End Questions

1. How to identify children in vulnerable situations.
2. How to identify early warning signs among children on abuse and neglect.
3. What are the warning signs for Child Neglect.
4. What are the skills required for teachers to deal with children affected by violence.
5. Explain the role of teachers in diagnosing and reporting suspected case of child abuse and neglect.
6. Explain the role of teachers in ensuring the child protection and participation.
7. What is Positive Discipline Technique?
8. What is classroom democracy?
9. How will you ensure democracy in your classroom?
10. Explain the skills required for celebrating child rights.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES TO ENHANCE THE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THIS COURSE

Activities

1. Conduct awareness programs/ debates and discussions on child rights and child protection in school.
2. Visit to Child Helpline/ District Child Protection Unit/ Child Welfare Committee/ Juvenile Justice Board, etc.
3. Producing audio-visual materials/ documentary videos/ short videos/ YouTube videos/ songs/ cartoon/comic books/performing arts on child rights
4. Screening and discussion on educational feature films, documentary and short films:
    i. Iranian films like "Birds of Paradise," "Where is my friend's Home?" for students to view collectively.
    ii. Not One Less is a 1999 drama film by Chinese director Zhang Yimou, adapted from Shi Xiangsheng's 1997 story A Sun in the Sky
    iii. Red leaves Falling – A story of sex Trafficking and child pornography, Stairway Foundation
    iv. A Good Boy – Story of Pideophilia produced by Stairway Foundation

Short Film

Online Predators in Tamil (https://youtu.be/xzYmoe5NDNQ)

Cyber Safety https://youtu.be/IF7ignIGkNw

Child Sexual Abuse https://youtu.be/hCehDOJ1vWI

Freedom from Fear https://youtu.be/Ntz0__hQ7tw

5. Writing research articles on the role of cultural, socio-political environment in the development of children.

CASE STUDIES ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Case Study 1 - Child Marriage

Name: Meena (Name changed for confidentiality)

Age: 15 years Location:

Rural village in Tamilnadu

Meena was born into a poor family in a remote village in Tamilnadu. Despite her ambitions to pursue an education and become an IAS officer, Meena's dreams were shattered when her parents decided to marry her off to a man in his forties.

Factors Influencing Child Marriage:

Tradition and Social Norms: In Meena's community, child marriage was considered a customary practice, deeply rooted in tradition and perpetuated by societal norms.

Poverty and Dowry: Meena's family faced financial difficulties, and they believed that marrying her off would alleviate their economic burdens. Additionally, the tradition of dowry played a role in influencing their decision.

Limited Education Opportunities: Lack of access to quality education and awareness about the harmful effects of child marriage contributed to the perpetuation of the practice.

Consequences and Impact:

Limited Opportunities: Meena's marriage abruptly ended her education and shattered her dreams of becoming an IAS officer, limiting her prospects and potential.

Health Risks: Early marriage often leads to early pregnancies, posing significant health risks for young girls who are not physically and emotionally prepared for childbirth.

Gender Inequality: Child marriage reinforces gender inequalities, perpetuating a cycle of subordination and denying girls the opportunity to participate fully in society.

As a teacher what will be your role?

Case study 2 – Physical Violence

Name: Mani (Name changed for confidentiality)

Age: 10 years

Location: Urban slum in Chennai, India

Mani hails from an impoverished family living in an urban slum in Chennai. Despite his young age, he frequently experienced physical violence, both at home and within his community.

Factors Influencing Physical Violence:

Familial Stress and Domestic Violence: Mani's family faced numerous challenges, including financial struggles, unemployment, and domestic violence. These stressors often translated into the venting of frustration through physical abuse.

Influence of Peer Groups: Mani's exposure to a peer group where physical aggression was normalized contributed to his own engagement in violent behaviour, perpetuating the cycle of violence among children.

Lack of Protective Systems: Absence of adequate child protection mechanisms and limited access to support services left Rahul vulnerable to ongoing physical violence without intervention.

Consequences and Impact:

Physical and Emotional Trauma: Mani suffered from physical injuries, including bruises and scars, which caused pain and distress. The constant fear of violence also led to emotional trauma, affecting his mental well-being.

Academic Performance: The exposure to violence negatively impacted Mani's concentration, motivation, and academic performance, hindering his educational progress.

Interpersonal Relationships: Mani's experience with physical violence influenced his ability to form healthy relationships, contributing to a cycle of aggression and social isolation.

As a teacher what will be your role?

Case study 3 – Child Sexual Abuse

Name: Priya (Name Changed for confidentiality)

Age: 12 years

Location: Suburban area in Coimbatore, India

Priya lived with her family in a suburban neighbourhood in Coimbatore. Unbeknownst to her parents, she experienced sexual abuse at the hands of a close family friend who had gained her trust.

Factors Influencing Child Sexual Abuse:

Trusted Perpetrator: The abuser was a family friend, someone whom Priya and her parents trusted, making it easier for him to exploit the situation and gain access to the vulnerable child.

Lack of Awareness: Priya's parents, like many others in the community, were unaware of the signs of child sexual abuse and the importance of open communication with their child about such issues.

Fear and Stigma: Priya feared the consequences of disclosing the abuse, worried about being blamed or ostracized by her community.

Consequences and Impact:

Emotional Trauma: Priya endured profound emotional trauma, experiencing feelings of shame, guilt, and fear, which adversely affected her mental well-being.

Physical Health: The abuse took a toll on Priya's physical health.

As a teacher what will be your role?

Case study 4 – Child in Conflict with Law

Background: Ravi (name changed for confidentiality) is a 16-year-old boy from a lower-income family living in a slum area in Chennai. Due to poverty and lack of access to quality education, Ravi dropped out of school at an early age and became involved in a local street gang. The gang engaged in petty theft and drug abuse, leading to Ravi's gradual descent into criminal activities.

Incident: One evening, Ravi and his gang members attempted to steal a mobile phone from a pedestrian. During the process, they assaulted the victim, causing injuries. The police apprehended Ravi based on a complaint filed by the victim and identified him as the main perpetrator.

Legal Proceedings: As Ravi was below the age of 18, he fell under the jurisdiction of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, which addresses issues concerning children in conflict with the law. After his arrest, Ravi was produced before the Juvenile Justice Board (JJB) within 24 hours, as mandated by the law.

Intervention and Assessment: The JJB, comprising a magistrate and social workers, conducted an initial assessment of Ravi's background, living conditions, and his involvement in the offense. They found that Ravi had a history of neglect, abuse, and lack of proper guidance, which contributed to his delinquent behaviour. Recognizing the importance of addressing the root causes, the JJB ordered a comprehensive social investigation report to further understand Ravi's circumstances.

Rehabilitation and Support: While awaiting the social investigation report, Ravi was placed in a Observation Home, which provides a secure and rehabilitative environment for children in conflict with the law. During his stay, he received counseling, educational support, skill-building programs, and vocational training to facilitate his reintegration into society.

Social Investigation Report and Disposition: The social investigation report revealed the challenging circumstances Ravi faced, including poverty, family instability, and exposure to criminal activities. It also highlighted the absence of positive role models and opportunities for personal growth. Taking these factors into consideration, the JJB determined that Ravi's best interests would be served through a combination of rehabilitation measures.

The JJB passed an order for Ravi's reformation and rehabilitation, specifying individualized programs that included counseling, vocational training, and access to education. Ravi's progress was regularly monitored by the JJB and social workers. They collaborated with NGOs, community organizations, and Ravi's family to ensure a comprehensive support system for his successful reintegration.

As a teacher what will be your role?

Case study 5 – School Drop Out

Case Background: The case revolves around a 12-year-old boy from a low-income family in a rural area of Madurai. The boy, Rajesh, belonged to a marginalized community and faced several socio-economic challenges. He attended a local government school but discontinued his education after completing the fifth grade.

Factors Contributing to Dropout: Several factors played a role in Rajesh's decision to drop out of school. Firstly, his family faced financial difficulties, and he was required to work to support household expenses. Additionally, the lack of access to quality education and limited resources in his community made it difficult for him to engage effectively in learning. Social and cultural norms, such as early marriage or family expectations, also influenced his decision to leave school.

Consequences of Dropout: The consequences of Rajesh's dropout were far-reaching. Without completing his education, he faced limited employment opportunities and a higher likelihood of remaining trapped in the cycle of poverty. His lack of education also hindered his personal and intellectual development, impacting his overall well-being and potential for upward mobility.

Interventions and Support: Recognizing the critical need to address the issue of school dropout, several stakeholders implemented interventions to support children like Rajesh. NGOs, community organizations, and government initiatives collaborated to provide access to quality education, address socio-economic challenges, and promote inclusivity. Scholarships, mid-day meal programs, and vocational training opportunities were implemented to reduce financial barriers and enhance the relevance of education.

Alternative Learning Models: In response to the high dropout rates, alternative learning models were introduced to cater to the needs of children who could not attend traditional schools. Non-formal education centers, open schooling, and distance learning programs were established to provide flexible and inclusive education options. These initiatives aimed to reach out to marginalized communities and ensure that children like Rajesh could continue their education.

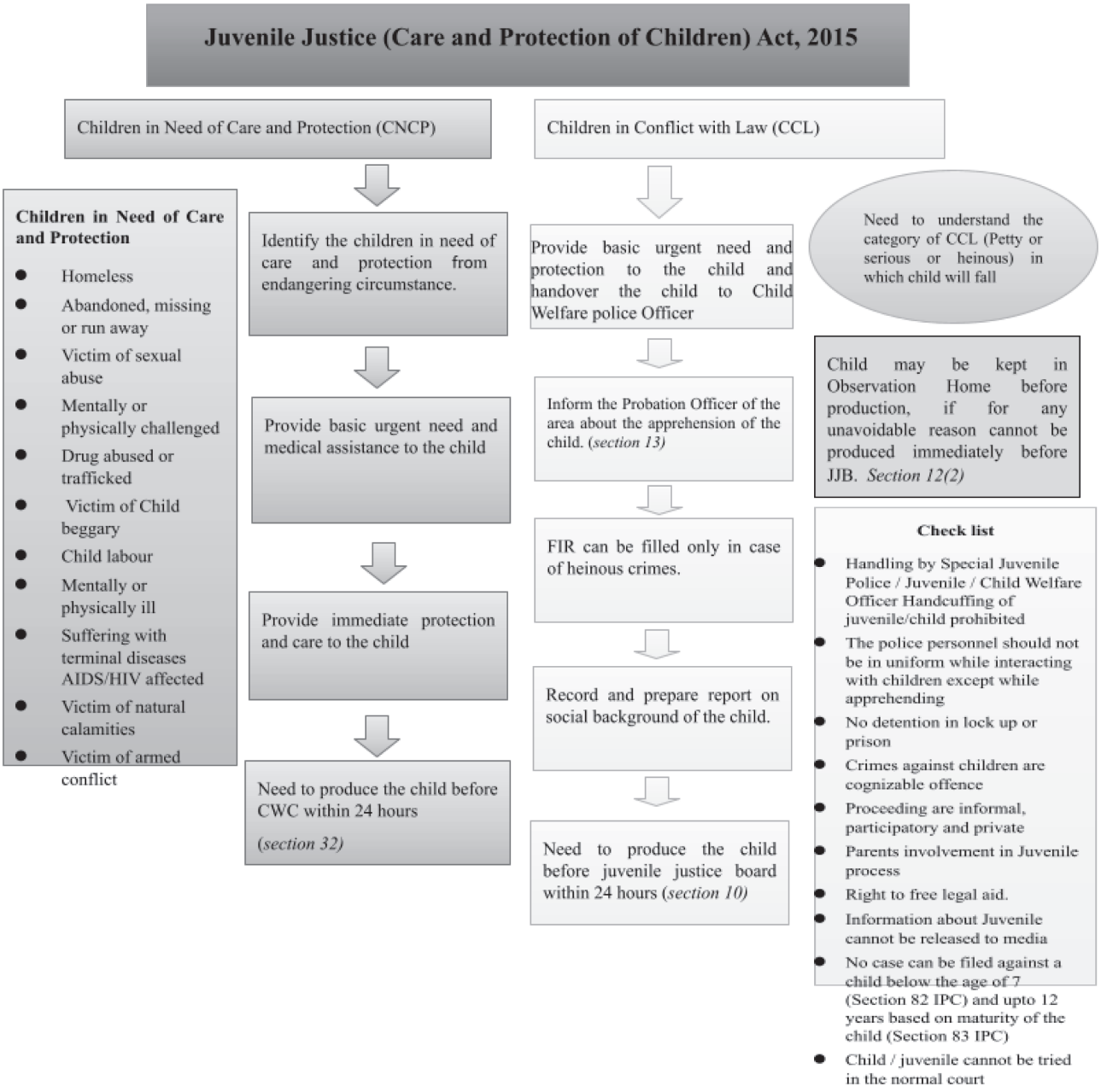
Counseling and Community Engagement: Counseling and community engagement played a vital role in addressing school dropout. Trained counselors worked closely with students and their families to create awareness about the importance of education, dispel myths, and address specific concerns. Parental involvement and community mobilization were emphasized to create a supportive environment that prioritized education.

As a teacher what will be your role?

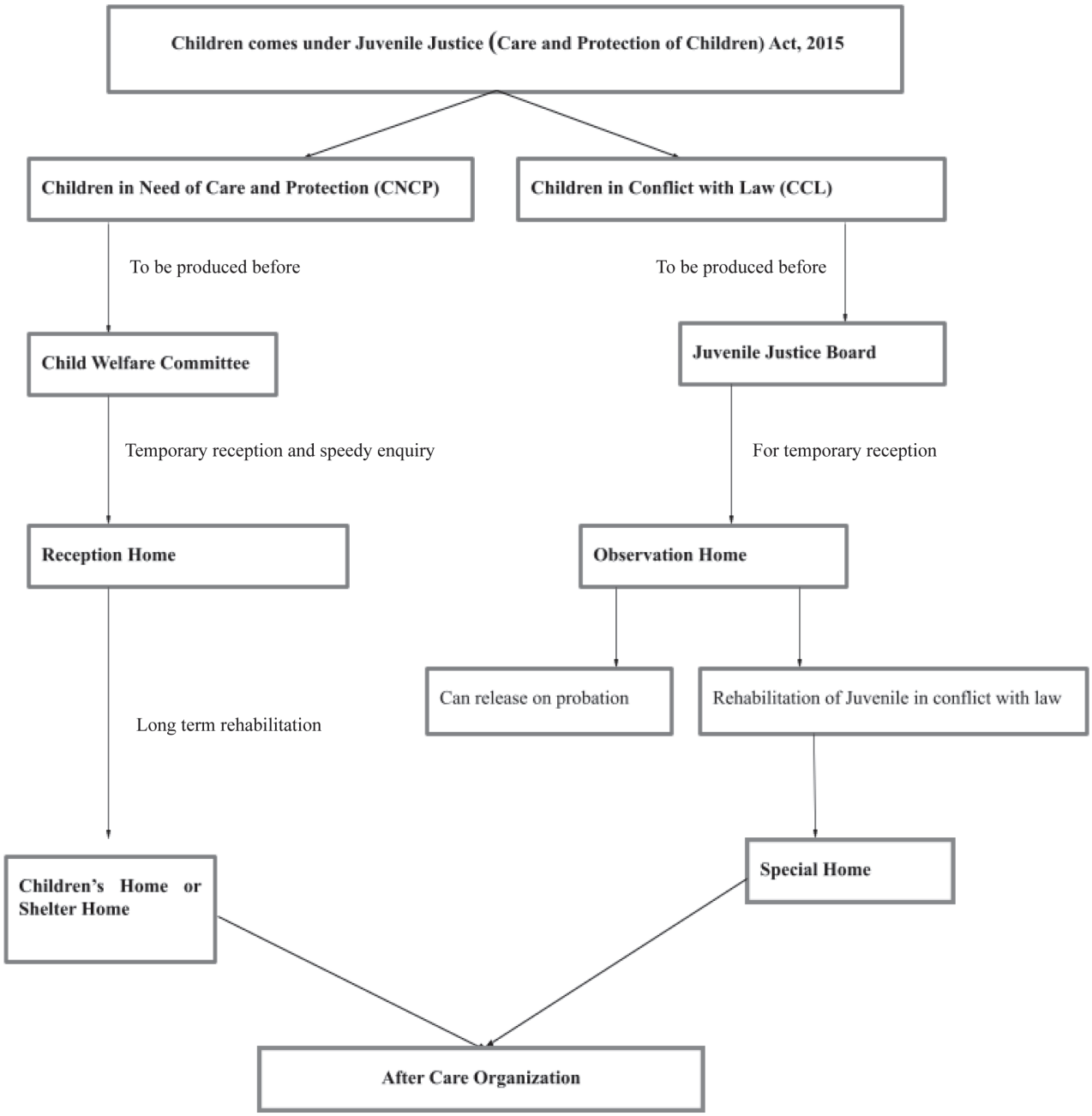
FLOW CHARTS OF CHILD PROTECTION LEGISLATIONS INDIA

FLOW CHART

THE JUVENILE JUSTICE (CARE AND PROTECTION OF CHILDREN) ACT 2015



Outline of Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children), Act 2015



Role of Teachers

Teachers play a crucial role in the implementation of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015. Their roles are pivotal in several aspects of the Act:

1. **Identification and Reporting:** Teachers often interact closely with students and can sometimes identify signs of abuse, neglect, or children who might be in conflict with the law. They are mandated to report such cases to the appropriate authorities or Child Welfare Committees.
2. **Prevention and Education:** Teachers are essential in educating children about their rights, responsibilities, and consequences of their actions. They can impart values and knowledge that prevent children from engaging in activities that could lead to conflict with the law.
3. **Rehabilitation and Reintegration:** Teachers play a significant role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of children who come into conflict with the law. They can provide education, vocational training, and emotional support to help these children reintegrate into society after serving their sentences.
4. **Support and Counseling:** Teachers often act as mentors and guides to students. They can provide emotional support, counseling, and guidance to children who might be experiencing difficult situations at home or in society.
5. **Collaboration with Authorities:** Teachers can collaborate with the Juvenile Justice Board, Special Juvenile Police Units, and Child Welfare Committees to ensure the best interests of children in need of care and protection are met.
6. **Advocacy and Awareness:** Teachers can advocate for the rights of children and raise awareness about the Juvenile Justice Act among students, parents, and the community. They can contribute to creating a safe and nurturing environment for children.
7. **Facilitating Rehabilitation Programs:** In cases where children are reintegrating into the educational system after conflict with the law, teachers can create a supportive environment to help these children catch up on their education and feel included in the school community.

Teachers are vital stakeholders in the implementation of the Juvenile Justice Act. They have a significant role in preventing juvenile delinquency, identifying cases that require intervention, and supporting the rehabilitation and reintegration of children who come into contact with the juvenile justice system.

HELPLINE NUMBERS

To Report a Crime Control Room	100
Ambulance	108
Child Line	1098
Women help Line	181
Railway Police Help Line	182
Cyber Crime	1930

தமிழ்நாடு ஆசிரியர் கல்வியியல்
TAMIL NADU TEACHERS
EDUCATION UNIVERSITY
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