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# Juvenile delinquency: Lessons on the street

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A juvenile delinquent is a person who is under the age of 18 and commits an act that otherwise would have been charged as a crime if they were an adult. But juvenile delinquency includes not only juvenile crime, but all aspects of deviations from normal behaviour like habitual disobedience, interaction with immoral people and antisocial activities [1]. The incidence of juvenile crimes has gradually increased all across the globe [2,3]. As per the National Crime Record Bureau, India, incidence of juvenile delinquency has increased by 10.5% during the year 2011 over 2010 [4].

Young people who are at risk of becoming delinquent often live in difficult circumstances viz. familial dynamics (problem family, broken family, familial conflicts, lack of emotional attachment among parents and children or brother and sister, lack of discipline at home, parental alcoholism, abusive conditions in the home etc.); poor socio-economic status and absence of even basic necessities required for survival; street children; peer pressure; role of media (violence, rape and crimes depicted in media are something that goes deep into an individual's mind and influences his/her

behaviours) and the existing loopholes in child legislations [1].

It is impossible to develop effective strategies without understanding the reasons behind deviations from normal behaviour. Hence, it is imperative to convince individuals and institutions to commit the time, money, expertise and other resources needed to address this global problem.

The effective remedies to tackle the menace of juvenile delinquency can be by various means like guiding the parents regarding the principles of child rearing, family relationships and education & care of children; promotion of economic security of the family to maintain wholesome living standards; early identification of the factors that may contribute to a delinquent identity [5]; promotion of recreational & youth development activities; involvement of local communities, self-help groups and Non-Governmental Organizations; special programs for unaccompanied and homeless children, including provision of food, shelter and rehabilitation (psychological, vocational, social, and medical) services for street children;

counseling & rehabilitation services for the delinquent child and finally stringent legislative measures along with their effective implementation. Multi-sectoral prevention initiatives based on principle of community participation are the most effective, in particular those that are built on the strengths and interests of youth rather than focusing only on their problems or deficits.

Juvenile delinquency indeed demands careful attention. It simply reflects the way our society is advancing. When minors are increasingly indulged in crimes, it indicates that there is a flaw in the way the children are nurtured. If we do not handle this population properly, we will put our future progenies at risk.

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