

CARE AND PROTECTION OF MARGINALIZED CHILDREN IN INDIA

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CHAPTER – 31

STREET CHILDREN, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

Pushpa Mishra

Street children are found in all the major cities of the urbanizing developing countries. They are usually divided into three categories, according to how they relate to their families, mainly for facilitating programme planning related to each of these categories. These are children with continuous family contact, children with occasional family contact and children without family. Street children is a term which after highlights a certain set of working and living condition rather than personal or social characteristics of the individual children themselves. The term street children should refer to all children who work in the streets of urban areas without reference to the time they spend there or the reason for being there. The concept of street children of recent origin and the description of the street children vary covering a wide range as concepts understood previously, like child laborers, juvenile delinquents, school drop outs and maladjustment children. It is extremely difficult to delimitate any common characteristics except to say that many of them spend a large part of their day in the street during their adolescence period. The UNICEF has called them "Children in difficult circumstances".

Extent of the Problems

Some estimates of the numbers of street children in both developing and industrialized countries today are as high as so millions. Migration to the cities, the effects of war and natural disaster and increasingly severe urban poverty have promoted a substantial growth of the street children.

The conditions in the modern societies, in respect of their economic achievements, are such that they have blurred the difference between the rich and poor classes, developed and the developing countries. The processes of family disintegration, breakdown in marital harmony, massive emigration decay of human values, inner decay of cities have swept all over the world producing almost similar consequences, like that of street children, though different in states of their economic, scientific and technological development.

Problems Faced By Street Children

- (a) Child slavery
- (b) Child abuse
- (c) Child prostitute
- (d) Child rape and sexual exploitation
- (e) Beggary
- (f) Domestic workers
- (g) Child labour

These are the children who are deprived from the childhood. They get hardened on the street and are exposed to the wolves of the society. They are converted into hardened adults who grow into criminal gangs. Their attitude towards society is antagonistic.

Child Rights

The declaration of the rights of child was adopted by the UN General assembly in 1959. The declaration has be the guiding frame work for children's as rights. In the thirteen year of the declaration, the UN general assemblies held a convention know as the UN convention on the rights of the child. This convention came in to force as an international low on 2 September 1990. The convention consists of 54 articles, A set of international standard and majors that intends to promote and protect the well being of children in society. The convention provides the legal basis for initiating action to ensure the rights of children in society. The draft of the Convention was prepared by the UN commission on Human Rights.

The Rights of the Child have broadly being discussed under four heads; the rights to Survival, Protection, Development and Participation.

The Right to survival ensures the right to life, the highest attainable standard of health, nutrition and adequate standards of living.

The Right to protection guarantees freedom from all forms of exploitation, abuse, inhuman or degrading treatment and neglect.

The Right to Development incorporates the right to education, support for early childhood and care, social security and right to leisure and recreations.

The Right to Participation calls for respect for the views of the child, freedom of expression, access to appropriate information and freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Social Work Intervention

Child Protection Service (CPS) – Child protection service is typically used to refer to the state systems, department or agency

responsible for the investigation of allegations of abuse or neglected, the protection of children at risk of abuse or neglected, social worker serve as CPS intake workers, case workers, supervisors and administration.

When a family cannot care for a child or is legally found to have mistreated a child, CPS workers rely to service that temporarily take the place of the family.

Poster Care – is the major social welfare programme to care for children outside of their families.

Juvenile Justice – Each state also maintains Juvenile Justice Systems that handles delinquency, Juvenile detention, probation programs, Juvenile court proceeding, and case management. Local and state government use the systems to deal with legal issues related to children, such as caring, violence and sunning away.

Case Management – Case management with street children includes assessing a child's problems and need and determining what steps are necessary to provide services for the child and his or her family. Case management is involve when a social worker tries to find low income housing for a family in need, works with a foster family to provide counseling services for a child placed in the home.

Refer - children and family are after referred to social workers by other professionals such as teachers, police officers and health care professionals.

Assessment and Engagement – Assessment involved gathering data from a client and from the systems affecting the client, such as the family and the school counselor assessment is critical because it set up the goals and intervention plays for the client. (Keyser & Lyon 2000) There for the social worker must be through to gather all relevant data and keep an open mind when analyzing the information.

Planning and Implementation - This involve working closely with clients to plan how to proceed with the intervention that have been reelected. Social worker may provide parenting, education, help a family improve communication or advocate for a child.

Termination - Termination is a process by which social workers and clients complete their work together. Most termination occurs when clients and social worker agree that their work is complete.

Values and Ethics – Social work value and ethics guide is the working with children and family, certain values are of particular interest. These include respect for the dignity and uniqueness of the individual, respect for self-determination and respect for confidentiality.

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