



Ministry of Women and Child Development administers the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

Mission Vatsalya scheme provides services to children including child beggars for their rehabilitation and social re-integration into the mainstream of the society

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The Ministry of Women and Child Development administers the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act, 2015), which is the primary legislation for ensuring safety, security, dignity and well-being of children. The Act provides for protection of Children in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP) and Children in Conflict with Law (CCL) by catering to their basic needs through care, protection, development, treatment and social re-integration. It defines standards of care and protection to secure the best interest of the child.

Section 2(14)(ii) of the JJ Act, 2015 provides that a child who is found working in contravention of labour laws for the time being in force or is found begging, or living on the street is included as a “Child in Need of Care and Protection”. Sections 27-30 of the JJ Act, 2015 empowers the Child Welfare Committees to take decisions with regard to the CNCP category of children, keeping their best interest in mind. The primary responsibility and execution of the JJ Act, 2015 lies with the States/UTs.

The Mission Vatsalya Scheme of the Ministry of Women and Child Development, services are provided to the CNCP and CCL category of children which include both institutional care and non-institutional care services. The scheme provides services to children including child beggars for their rehabilitation and social re-integration into the mainstream of the society. The Child Care Institutions (CCIs) established under the Mission Vatsalya scheme support, *inter-alia*, age-appropriate education, access to vocational training, recreation, health care, counselling etc. Support under non-institutional care is provided by way of sponsorship, foster care and after care to children in need of care and protection.

The scheme also provides for emergency outreach services namely Child Helpline 1098 (24x7x365) for children in difficult circumstances which is integrated with Emergency Response Support System-112 (ERSS-112) Helpline of Ministry of Home Affairs.

Besides this, the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights at national level and State Commissions for Protection of Child Rights at State level are authorised to monitor the implementation of the JJ Act.

National Commission for Protection of Child Rights has developed and shared with the States and UTs, Standard Operating Procedure on “Children in Street Situations (CiSS) 2.0” in the identified districts to ensure zero tolerance on Child begging/ Child labour/ Child abuse.

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment implements a Central Sector Scheme “SMILE - Support for Marginalized Individuals for Livelihood and Enterprise”, which includes sub-scheme for the ‘Comprehensive Rehabilitation of persons engaged in the act of Begging’ including children engaged in the act of begging. The scheme provides for necessities like food, shelter homes, medical facilities, counselling, rehabilitation, basic documentation, skill development, economic linkages including education to the children/ children of persons found to be engaged in begging.

This information was given by the Union Minister for Women and Child Development Smt. Annpurna Devi in Lok Sabha in reply to a question today.

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