
JUVENILE JUSTICE IN INDIA: CHALLENGES, REFORMS, AND THE WAY AHEAD

Shweta Mittal, Geeta University

ABSTRACT

Juvenile delinquency is a growing concern worldwide, as it has profound and long-lasting effects on both individuals and society. Addressing this issue requires a well-structured legal and rehabilitative framework that prioritizes the upliftment and sustainability of children. In India, the **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015** serves as the cornerstone of the Juvenile legal framework, providing a comprehensive legal mechanism to safeguard and rehabilitate juvenile in conflict with the law or require special care and protection. This system is embedded in the principles of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** and emphasizes a **holistic, a** child-focused rehabilitative approach over punitive intervention. The Indian juvenile justice system is founded on key principles such as restorative justice, non-stigmatization, and the best interests of the child, with a focus on providing young offenders opportunities for rehabilitation and societal reintegration rather than subjecting them to punitive measures. It focuses on diversion programs, counseling, skill development, and educational initiatives aimed at transforming juvenile offenders into responsible and law-abiding citizens. By adopting a rehabilitative and reformatory stance, the system acknowledges the vulnerabilities of children and acknowledges the significance of offering them a second chance. Despite its progressive approach, The juvenile justice framework in India is confronted with several issues, including delays in case resolution, inadequate rehabilitation facilities, and the societal stigma associated with juvenile delinquency. Addressing these issues requires continuous policy reforms, effective implementation, and increased public awareness regarding child rights and juvenile rehabilitation. The Indian juvenile justice framework reflects a blend of **traditional wisdom and modern legal principles**, reinforcing the belief that every child deserves protection, guidance, and the opportunity to build a better future.

Keywords: Juvenile justice system, India, Juvenile Justice Act, rehabilitation, UNCRC, restorative justice, child rights, societal reintegration, legal framework, reformatory justice

Introduction

Juvenile delinquency poses a significant challenge to society, threatening both social stability and the future of a nation. Addressing this issue requires a well-structured juvenile justice system supported by effective legislation to ensure the protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration of young offenders. The phrase "*Nil Novi Spectrum*," meaning "*nothing new under the sun*," aptly describes India's approach to juvenile justice, as it integrates traditional values with modern legal frameworks to address the evolving challenges of juvenile delinquency. In India, the juvenile justice system serves as a specialized legal framework designed to provide care, protection, and rehabilitation for children who come into conflict with the law, as well as those in need of care and protection. The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 (JJ Act) is the principal legislation governing this system, formulated in alignment with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and subsequent amendments. The Act aims to create a comprehensive and child-centric legal mechanism that prioritizes the unique developmental needs and vulnerabilities of juveniles, ensuring that they are treated fairly and given a chance at reformation rather than being subjected to punitive justice.

The Indian system of juvenile adjudication operates on the foundational belief that children, due to their age, mental development, and emotional immaturity, should not be treated in the same manner as adult offenders. Instead, the system acknowledges that juveniles may commit offenses due to various socio-economic, psychological, or environmental factors rather than inherent criminal intent. Therefore, a strong emphasis is placed on providing them with protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration, ensuring that their future prospects are not permanently damaged by early involvement with the criminal justice framework. The JJ Act outlines a structured approach to handling juvenile offenders, incorporating child welfare measures that focus on rehabilitation instead of punishment. By distinguishing children from adults in terms of legal treatment, the system seeks to reform young offenders through counseling, skill development programs, vocational training, and education, rather than subjecting them to conventional punitive measures such as incarceration.

The core principles of the Indian juvenile justice system include best interest of child, non-stigmatization, reintegration, the right to participation, and proportionality in legal response. The doctrine of prioritizing the child's well-being ensures that all decisions and actions taken within the juvenile justice framework prioritize the child's well-being and future development

over punitive actions. Non-stigmatization ensures that juvenile offenders are not labeled as criminals, thereby reducing the chances of social exclusion and allowing them to reintegrate into society without prejudice. Reintegration efforts focus on creating a secure framework that promotes child welfare return to mainstream society through educational and employment opportunities. The right to participation ensures that juveniles have a voice in legal proceedings and decision-making processes that impact their lives, allowing them to share their concerns and perspectives. Proportionality in legal response ensures that interventions are age-appropriate and customized to the child's needs, focusing on restorative justice rather than retributive justice.

Following a restorative justice model, the system emphasizes rehabilitation and diversion programs rather than harsh punitive measures. Diversion programs, such as community service, counseling, mentorship, and probation, help young offenders reform their behavior while avoiding the negative consequences of institutionalization. These measures prevent children from being exposed to hardened criminals in adult correctional facilities, thereby reducing the likelihood of recidivism. The system also includes structures such as Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs) to ensure that children are provided with proper legal and rehabilitative support. JJBs assess cases involving juveniles in conflict with the law, while CWCs focus on children in need of care and protection, ensuring that both categories receive the appropriate intervention suited to their needs.

Additionally, the juvenile justice system in India aligns itself with international human rights standards, particularly the UNCRC, which emphasizes that children in conflict with the law should be addressed with dignity, compassion, and fairness. The system prohibits life imprisonment and capital punishment for juveniles, reinforcing the belief that every child has the potential for reformation and reintegration into society. The JJ Act also incorporates provisions for the prevention of juvenile offenses through awareness campaigns, community involvement, and family-based interventions. By strengthening social support systems and addressing the root causes of juvenile delinquency—such as poverty, lack of education, and exposure to violence—the system aims to reduce juvenile crime rates over time.

Despite its progressive framework, the juvenile justice system in India faces several challenges, such as inadequate rehabilitation programs, limited resources, societal stigma, and delays in the judicial process. There is a requirement for greater investment in juvenile justice institutions, improved rehabilitation centers, and better-trained personnel, including

counselors, social workers, and legal professionals, to ensure that the system operates effectively. Additionally, sensitizing society about the importance of rehabilitation over punishment is crucial in changing public perception and fostering an environment that supports juvenile offenders' reintegration into society.

By adopting this child-centric approach, India strives to create an inclusive and progressive A system of juvenile justice that ensures the protection of rights and dignity of every child. Moving forward, a greater emphasis on early intervention strategies, community-based rehabilitation, and effective reintegration programs will be essential in ensuring that juvenile offenders are given the opportunity to reform and contribute positively to society. Strengthening collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and civil society will further enhance the system's ability to protect and rehabilitate children in conflict with the law. Through continuous reform, policy improvements, and a commitment to child welfare, India can affirm that its juvenile justice system remains just, fair, and effective in addressing the needs of its young population.

Historical Development of Juvenile Justice in India

The origins of juvenile justice in India can be traced back to the *Apprentices Act of 1850*, which was one of the earliest legislations aimed at ensuring the welfare of minors engaged as apprentices. This Act laid the foundation for protecting young individuals in the workforce by making provisions for their care, training, and rehabilitation. It sought to prevent the exploitation of children in labor-intensive industries by setting basic legal safeguards for their employment conditions. However, the Act lacked a comprehensive approach to juvenile justice, as it primarily focused on employment-related aspects rather than addressing broader concerns regarding juvenile delinquency, rehabilitation, and legal protections. At the time, the legal framework in India made no distinction between children and adults with respect to criminal responsibility, leading to the absence of specialized mechanisms for handling juvenile offenders. As societal awareness regarding child welfare and juvenile delinquency grew, there was a gradual recognition of the necessity for a separate legal framework that would address the unique needs and vulnerabilities of minors who came into conflict with the law. A more structured and inclusive framework for the protection and welfare of children, including juvenile offenders, was introduced with the *Children Act of 1960*. This legislation marked a significant milestone in India's juvenile justice system, as it established the groundwork for juvenile courts, special institutions, and rehabilitation programs. The Act ensured that minor in

conflict with the law were treated differently from adult offenders, with an emphasis on reform, education, and reintegration rather than punishment. It provided clear guidelines for the creation of *juvenile observation homes, special homes, and shelters* for minor in need of care and protection, recognizing that young offenders should not be subjected to the same punitive treatment as adults. This law reflected a growing international consensus on the requirement for a child-centric approach in juvenile justice and was modeled after best practices in juvenile rehabilitation. The *Children Act of 1960* was a progressive step in recognizing that juveniles require a separate legal framework that caters to their unique psychological, emotional, and social needs, ensuring that they were given an opportunity to reform and reintegrate into society. However, the Act had limitations in its implementation due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of awareness, and inconsistencies in how juvenile justice institutions operated across different states in India. The next major development in India's juvenile justice framework came with the enactment of the *Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2000 (JJ Act, 2000)*. This legislation introduced a more rehabilitative and reformatory approach to dealing with juvenile offenders, shifting away from the limited provisions of previous laws. It acknowledged that children who commit crimes should not be treated as hardened criminals but rather as individuals in need of guidance, care, and protection. The Act emphasized the principles of *restorative justice, social reintegration, and diversion programs*, ensuring that juveniles were given opportunities for rehabilitation instead of being subjected to harsh punitive measures. This law aimed to provide a more uniform and structured juvenile justice system across India, ensuring that juveniles were handled with sensitivity and care while safeguarding their rights. One of the most important aspects of the *JJ Act, 2000* was its alignment with the fundamentals outlined in the *UNCRC*—an international treaty emphasizing child protection, rehabilitation, and welfare. India, as a signatory to the *UNCRC*, was obligated to align its juvenile justice policies with global child rights standards, ensuring that young offenders were treated with dignity and fairness.

Over time, various amendments and legal developments have shaped the juvenile justice system in India. The most significant reform came with the enactment of the *Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015*, which introduced several new provisions aimed at addressing contemporary challenges in juvenile crime and rehabilitation. One of the most debated provisions of this law was the possibility of *trying juveniles aged 16–18 as adults* for heinous crimes such as rape, murder, and other serious offenses under specific circumstances. This amendment was introduced in response to public outcry following high-profile cases

involving juvenile offenders, particularly the 2012 Delhi gang-rape case, where one of the accused was a juvenile. The amendment intended to find a middle ground between the need for a stricter legal response to violent crimes committed by minors and the importance of reform and rehabilitation. While some legal experts and child rights activists opposed this change, arguing that juveniles should always be treated within a rehabilitative framework regardless of the crime committed, others supported it, emphasizing the growing concern over serious offenses by minors. Despite the introduction of these stricter provisions, the Indian juvenile justice system continues to focus on *rehabilitation, social reintegration, and child welfare*, ensuring that young offenders receive fair treatment and a second chance at a better future. The 2015 Act reaffirmed the importance of non-institutional care by promoting *adoption, foster care, and sponsorship* as alternatives to institutionalization for children in need of care and protection. It also strengthened mechanisms for *monitoring juvenile justice institutions, ensuring better implementation of child protection policies, and establishing clearer roles for Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs) and Child Welfare Committees (CWCs)*. Additionally, the Act introduced stricter regulations on the operation of observation homes and shelter facilities, ensuring that children housed in these institutions received proper care, education, and psychological support. The evolution of juvenile justice in India reflects a progressive shift from a *punitive to a reformative approach*, emphasizing the importance of child rights, psychological well-being, and rehabilitation. While earlier laws were more focused on welfare and protection, modern juvenile justice policies incorporate a more nuanced understanding of child psychology, crime prevention, and social reintegration. The system now recognizes that preventing juvenile crime requires a multi-dimensional approach, including *family support, community intervention, education, vocational training, and mental health services*. However, despite these legal advancements, several challenges remain, including *inadequate rehabilitation programs, lack of trained professionals, overcrowding in juvenile homes, delays in legal proceedings, and persistent societal stigma against juvenile offenders*. To further strengthen the juvenile justice system, it is essential to *increase investments in rehabilitation programs, expand diversionary initiatives, and improve juvenile justice infrastructure*. Greater emphasis must be placed on *psychological counseling, vocational training, and education* to ensure that young offenders have a genuine chance at reformation. Additionally, *awareness campaigns and community outreach programs* should be promoted to reduce social stigma and encourage a more inclusive approach toward juvenile reintegration. The government, along with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and child welfare agencies, must work collaboratively to develop comprehensive policies that address the root causes of juvenile

delinquency, such as *poverty, lack of education, broken families, and exposure to violence*. Furthermore, the judicial system must *streamline legal processes, reduce delays in handling juvenile cases, and ensure that children receive timely legal aid and support*. Training programs for law enforcement officials, judges, and social workers must be expanded to ensure that they are equipped to handle juvenile cases sensitively and in compliance with child rights laws. By continuing to refine and improve juvenile justice policies, India can create a more effective system that balances *accountability with compassion*, ensuring that every child—regardless of their past actions—is given the opportunity to reintegrate into society as a responsible citizen. While India's juvenile justice system has undergone significant legal transformations, continuous reform is necessary to ensure its effectiveness. Strengthening child welfare policies, improving rehabilitation programs, and fostering societal acceptance of reformed juveniles will be critical in shaping a *just, fair, and rehabilitative juvenile justice system*. By addressing these challenges and embracing a holistic approach, India can continue to uphold its commitment to child rights and create a future where juvenile offenders are rehabilitated and empowered to contribute positively to society.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 replaced the Juvenile Justice Act of 2000, driven by the need for a stronger, more effective legal framework that could address challenges in implementing reformative approaches. The Act was introduced following concerns that juveniles should not be treated as adults but rather given an opportunity to reform within a system that prioritizes rehabilitation over punishment. During parliamentary discussions, there was a strong emphasis on ensuring that young offenders were given the freedom to change, rebuild, and reintegrate into society. The 2015 Act reflected this shift, incorporating mediation-based resolutions and a more youth-centered approach to justice.

Key Advantages of the Juvenile Justice System

1. Emphasis on Rehabilitation and Reintegration

One of the primary advantages of the Indian juvenile justice system is its strong focus on rehabilitation rather than punitive measures. Recognizing that young offenders are more likely to benefit from guidance, education, and counseling, the system includes vocational training, counseling, and education programs to help juveniles develop essential skills for their

reintegration into society. By offering corrective and preventive interventions, the system ensures that juveniles have a chance to reform and contribute positively to society.

2. Protection of Child Rights

The Indian juvenile justice system is aligned with international treaties and conventions, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which upholds the rights and dignity of children. The system ensures that juvenile offenders are treated with respect, their privacy is protected, and they have access to legal aid and representation. Additionally, inhumane and punitive practices, such as physical punishment or harsh detention conditions, are strictly prohibited under the framework, ensuring that young offenders are treated in a manner that respects their rights and fosters their development.

3. Age-Appropriate Justice System

The juvenile justice system recognizes that children and adolescents differ from adults in terms of psychological, emotional, and cognitive development. This principle is reflected in the way offenses are assessed, interventions are designed, and sentencing is determined. The system considers factors such as the nature of the crime, the offender's age, and their level of understanding, ensuring that rehabilitation efforts are tailored to their specific developmental needs. This approach acknowledges that juveniles may not fully comprehend the outcomes of their conduct and should therefore be given an opportunity to reform and reintegrate rather than be submitted to severe punishment.

Key Components of the Juvenile Justice System in India

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 establishes a structured system for handling cases involving children in conflict with the law. Some of its key components include:

Juvenile Justice Boards (JJBs): Functioning at the district level, JJBs are responsible for adjudicating cases involving juveniles in conflict with the law while ensuring that they provide with necessary care and rehabilitation.

Child Welfare Committees (CWCs): Operating at both district and state levels, CWCs deal with cases of children in need of care and protection, ensuring their well-being and rehabilitation.

Observation Homes and Special Homes: These are temporary residential facilities where juveniles are housed during case proceedings, with provisions for education, counseling, and vocational training.

Aftercare Institutions: Designed for juveniles who have completed their rehabilitation programs, these institutions assist in their smooth transition back into society by providing continued support in education, employment, and social reintegration.

The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 represents a significant step toward Guaranteeing that young offenders are not simply punished but are given the opportunity to transform their lives. By focusing on rehabilitation, protection of rights, and age-appropriate interventions, the Indian juvenile justice system continues to evolve toward a more progressive and child-friendly approach to justice.

Challenges in India's Juvenile Justice System

Despite significant advancements, India's juvenile justice system continues to face numerous challenges that hinder its effectiveness in rehabilitating and reintegrating young offenders. These challenges include inadequate rehabilitation programs, lack of resources, social stigma, and procedural delays, among others. Addressing these issues is crucial for ensuring that the juvenile justice system remains child-centric and effective.

1. Inadequate Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs

One of the most pressing concerns is the lack of comprehensive and effective rehabilitation programs for young offenders. Although the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 emphasizes rehabilitation and reintegration, implementation on the ground remains weak. Many juveniles do not have access to essential services such as education, vocational training, mental health support, and employment opportunities, which are critical for their reintegration into society. The absence of structured rehabilitation increases the likelihood of recidivism, trapping juveniles in a cycle of crime rather than offering them a fresh start.

2. Overburdened and Under-Resourced Juvenile Facilities

Juvenile justice institutions, including observation homes, special homes, and rehabilitation centers, often suffer from overcrowding, inadequate infrastructure, and limited funding. Many facilities lack essential amenities such as sanitation, nutritious food, and healthcare, which can have a severe Effect on the physical and psychological health of juveniles. Additionally, there

is a Deficiency of trained professionals, including social workers, counselors, and psychologists, who play a vital role in providing proper guidance, support, and therapy to young offenders. Without adequate resources and trained staff, the ability of these institutions to successfully rehabilitate and reintegrate juveniles is significantly compromised.

3. Absence of Effective Diversion Programs

A critical gap in India's juvenile justice system is the lack of effective diversion programs, which are designed to redirect young offenders away from the formal court system and toward community-based rehabilitation programs. In many cases, juveniles are automatically subjected to the legal process, exposing them to courtroom proceedings and detention facilities, which can have long-term negative psychological and social effects. Diversion programs, such as counseling, skill-building workshops, and community service, can provide alternative paths to rehabilitation, but their availability and accessibility in India remain limited.

4. Legal Rights Violations and Lack of Safeguards

Although the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 guarantees various legal protections to juveniles, there have been several instances of rights violations. Many young offenders face barriers in accessing legal counsel, fair trials, and protection from mistreatment in detention facilities. Reports of abuse, harassment, and exploitation within juvenile justice institutions highlight the urgent need for stronger oversight mechanisms. A lack of monitoring and accountability increases the risk of juveniles being mistreated, denied their rights, or subjected to prolonged detention without appropriate legal representation.

5. Social Stigma and Discrimination

Juvenile offenders in India often face significant social stigma and discrimination due to their criminal records. The label of "offender" follows them even after completing rehabilitation, hindering their ability to reintegrate into society, secure employment, or pursue education. This stigma can lead to isolation, low self-esteem, and mental health issues, further reducing their chances of reform and increasing their likelihood of reoffending. To successfully reintegrate juvenile offenders into society, public attitudes need to shift towards greater acceptance, understanding, and support for second chances.

6. Lack of Adequate Infrastructure in Juvenile Homes

Many juvenile observation homes and rehabilitation centers lack proper infrastructure,

affecting the quality of care and rehabilitation provided. Poor sanitation, inadequate food, lack of recreational facilities, and limited access to healthcare services create an environment that is not conducive to rehabilitation. These substandard living conditions can lead to mental and physical health issues among juveniles, turning it into harder allowing them to engage in positive reformative activities. Investment in improving infrastructure and ensuring basic facilities is crucial for creating a supportive and rehabilitative environment.

7. Delayed Justice and Procedural Inefficiencies

Delays in the juvenile justice process remain a major challenge in India. Due to overburdened courts, a shortage of trained juvenile justice professionals, and lengthy procedural requirements, cases involving juveniles often take a long time to be resolved. As a result, many juveniles are held in observation homes or detention centers for extended periods without proper intervention or rehabilitation. Delays in case resolution can negatively impact the mental health of young offenders and reduce the effectiveness of the rehabilitation process. Streamlining legal procedures and increasing the efficiency of juvenile courts is necessary to ensure swift justice and timely intervention.

8. Overrepresentation of Marginalized Groups in the Juvenile Justice System

A disproportionate number of juvenile offenders come from marginalized and disadvantaged backgrounds, including low-income communities, ethnic minorities, and street children. These groups are more vulnerable to being drawn into The criminal justice framework due to poverty, lack of education, broken families, and social exclusion. Many of these children face victimization, abuse, or exploitation, making them more likely to engage in unlawful activities for survival. Addressing the root causes of juvenile delinquency, such as poverty, lack of education, and social inequality, is crucial to preventing children from entering the juvenile justice system in the first place.

While India has made remarkable strides in improving its juvenile justice system, several challenges continue to hinder its effectiveness. The lack of rehabilitation programs, inadequate resources, delays in justice, rights violations, and social stigma prevent many young offenders from receiving the care, guidance, and opportunities they need to reintegrate into society successfully. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including strengthening infrastructure, increasing legal protections, expanding diversion programs, reducing stigma, and providing more support for marginalized youth. Only by ensuring that

the system remains child-centric, rehabilitative, and rights-based can India effectively address juvenile delinquency and support young offenders in leading reformed, productive lives.

Conclusion and Suggestions

India's juvenile justice system has undergone significant transformation in the course of the years, with Emphasis on rehabilitation, care, and reintegration rather than punitive measures. The introduction of The JJ (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, aligned with international conventions like the UNCRC, has laid the Framework for a more child-friendly justice system. However, despite the legal framework and progressive reforms, the system still struggles with Various challenges, including a lack of rehabilitation programs, overburdened institutions, delayed justice, lack of diversion programs, social stigma, and insufficient resources. Meeting these challenges is imperative to ensure that juvenile offenders receive proper care and guidance, preventing them from falling into cycles of crime and recidivism. To create a more effective and rehabilitative juvenile justice system, India must adopt a multi-dimensional approach that focuses on policy reforms, institutional strengthening, community engagement, and capacity-building initiatives.

Key Recommendations for Strengthening the Juvenile Justice System

Strengthening Rehabilitation and Reintegration Programs

There is a pressing need to enhance rehabilitation programs by providing structured education, vocational training, psychological counseling, and mentorship initiatives for juveniles. Government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private institutions should collaborate to create skill development programs that equip juveniles with practical job-oriented skills, allowing them to reintegrate into society successfully. Post-release support mechanisms should be developed, ensuring that rehabilitated juveniles have access to employment opportunities, financial assistance, and social inclusion programs.

Expanding Diversion Programs and Alternative Justice Mechanisms

The juvenile justice system should focus on diversion programs that keep children away from formal court proceedings and instead offer community-based interventions such as counseling, peer mentoring, and restorative justice circles. Restorative justice mechanisms, including mediation between the victim and offender, can help juveniles understand the consequences of their actions and encourage positive behavioral change. Encouraging the use of non-custodial

measures, such as community service, supervised release, and behavioral therapy, can significantly reduce the number of juveniles in institutional care.

Improving Infrastructure and Resource Allocation

Many juvenile homes, observation centers, and special homes suffer from poor infrastructure, overcrowding, and lack of basic amenities. The government must allocate more funds and resources to upgrade these facilities, ensuring that juveniles have access to hygienic living conditions, nutritious food, proper healthcare, and recreational activities. Hiring trained professionals, including counselors, child psychologists, legal aid providers, and social workers, should be prioritized to provide better guidance and support to juveniles.

Ensuring Legal Safeguards and Protecting Juvenile Rights

Juveniles in violation with the law must be provided with timely and free legal representation to ensure they receive fair trials and due process. There should be strict monitoring and accountability mechanisms to prevent rights violations, mistreatment, or abuse within juvenile institutions. Fast-track juvenile courts should be established to ensure speedy resolution of cases, preventing prolonged detention and unnecessary trauma for children awaiting trial.

Tackling Social Stigma and Encouraging Community Engagement

Society often views juvenile offenders through a lens of prejudice and criminality, making reintegration difficult. Awareness campaigns and sensitization programs should be conducted to change public perceptions. Community-based reintegration programs should be encouraged, where schools, local businesses, and NGOs work together to accept and support rehabilitated juveniles. Promoting positive role models and mentorship programs can help juveniles build confidence and develop a sense of belonging in society.

Capacity Building and Training for Law Enforcement and Judiciary

Police officers, judicial authorities, and Juvenile Justice Board members ought to receive specialised training on child-friendly approaches, trauma-informed care, and restorative justice practices. Establishing specialized juvenile justice units within police stations and courts can improve sensitive handling of juvenile cases and ensure that due process is followed. Regular workshops and policy reviews should be conducted to keep stakeholders updated on best practices in juvenile justice administration.

Encouraging Multi-Agency Collaboration

Effective collaboration between government agencies, child protection organizations, educational institutions, and rehabilitation centers is crucial for a holistic juvenile justice system. A national database and tracking system should be implemented to track the development of juveniles, ensuring that they receive continuous support even after release from institutional care. Public-private partnerships can help bridge the resource gap, providing funding, training, and career opportunities for rehabilitated juveniles.