

Situation 1:

There are some children in the Home who have come into conflict with the law 3 to 4 times now. It appears that they have ADHD. The team that provides psychosocial assistance has assessed that these children have moderate to severe ADHD and advises that they need medication for treatment of this disorder. The JJB, however, says that they cannot allow for this as: (i) the medication will affect the way the child gives evidence for the case (it may interfere with legal processes); (ii) they do not have the permission of the parents for child to be given medicine. So, they refuse permission for treatment of these children for ADHD.

Do you agree with the JJB?

How would you make a decision? And why?

Situation 2:

The visiting counsellor for the OH says that there are many cases of substance abuse...and that it becoming increasingly common amongst children even after they are admitted to the OH. A reputed child psychiatric facility offers assistance, saying that they will run a de-addiction program that involves : (i) group counselling sessions for children regarding risks of substance use; (ii) provision of nicotine gum for some children (following assessment), who may have more intensive problems; and that the OH nurse will be trained to administer the nicotine gum for the requisite children. The superintendent is doubtful about allowing such a program; she is particularly concerned because she does not want to openly acknowledge that children are continuing to use substances even within the OH.

How would you respond to this situation?

What would your advice to the superintendent be?

Situation 3:

Each week the JJB holds a meeting with the OH children. One of the JJB members often makes remarks such as:

‘You [pointing to some child]...new child...why have you come here? Stand up! What did you do?’

When are you all going to understand that you need to have some respect for your family and for society?

‘Do you not think you should be different? How do your mothers feel about your being here/ the way you have behaved?’

This member genuinely believes that this is the way to inspire children to behave differently.

What is your opinion of this type of engagement?

How do you think children will be impacted?

If you are this person’s colleague, how do you think you will handle this situation?

Situation 4:

According to the JJ laws, children should be given legal awareness sessions. The JJB, along with the superintendent, organizes a 3 hour legal awareness session for children in the OH. A government agency came to conduct this session. The agency staff/ lawyers spent all the time reading various provisions of the JJ Act. The children were silent...every so often the person reading the act/ rules would say 'are you listening, children?' and they would say 'yes'.

What is your opinion of such a legal awareness session?

How would you go about organizing such a session? (Would you do differently from this JJB?)

Situation 5:

It is brought to your notice by the children (during one of your conversations with them) that the institution staff accord certain types of 'punishments' to certain children. Those who behave 'rudely or arrogantly with the staff' or 'are aggressive and create problems in the home' are asked to clean the toilets and given extra cleaning work.

Do you agree with the institution staff's dealings with the children? Why/ why not?

What action would you take?

Situation 6:

It is brought to your notice that the lawyer appointed by the State Legal Services Authorities to provide free legal aid to children in the OH, is making money off them. It is reported that he also influences children to seek assistance from him only, telling them that he would be able to get them out of the OH soon; he has agreement with the police about children taking him on as the lawyer (the police ensure that the child is under him even before child arrives in OH!)

What would you do about such a situation?

Situation 7:

4 children in the OH run away one night. They wait until the superintendent leaves, switch off the mains, take the keys from the hook, open the door and run out. A lot of questions are then asked of the superintendent and the staff about how children knew where keys/ mains etc were. The staff are blamed as it is considered their responsibility to keep the children safe. It later comes to light that children also help in the kitchen with cutting of vegetables and other such chores.

What do you think the problem is in this Home?

What safety measures might you take?

If these measures are not taken what might the risks be (to children)?

Situation 8:

During one of your conversations, children report that one of the guards severely physically abuses them and another one inappropriately touches them in their private parts. The superintendent says that he is afraid to take any action and does not really know what to do. Other staff say that all this is not true and these children are lying ('Anyway, as we know these children are badly behaved—they are not to be trusted').

How would you respond in such a situation?

Situation 9

Two siblings, 11 and 12 years old in the OH for petty theft. They had already spent 8 months in the OH. Their parents were alcohol dependent and never came. JJB and counsellor said that once the case is lodged nothing can be done until the parents come or the case is closed. Therefore nothing can be done in such a situation, children have to wait indefinitely.

Do you agree?

What are the risks for these young children if they continue to stay in the OH?

What decision would you make?

Situation 10

There are two to three children in the OH, who has been reported with severe behavioural issues such as stealing, violence, substance use. Despite referral and intensive treatment by child psychiatric facilities there was little or no improvement in these children.

What do you think can be done for them? Why?