

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM


AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

2018 | Day 10

SHELTER HOMES & INVISIBLE VIOLENCE

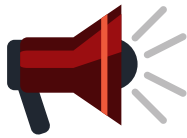


A child victim rescued from maltreatment and produced before the Child Welfare Committee set up under the Juvenile Justice Act, 2015 is often placed in a shelter facility as a Child in Need of Care and Protection (CNCP).




A shelter facility has to ensure the care and protection of the child and also to facilitate the child's recovery and rehabilitation.

However, rehabilitation remains a remote possibility if the child continues to face maltreatment instead of due care and protection.



A child rescued from violence of any kind seeks recovery and rehabilitation from her trauma at the shelter facility but imagine the horror a child feels when she realizes that her ordeal has not yet ended.

It is true that this country has seen countless instances of children being sexually abused in shelter facilities. There have been cases where children are beaten mercilessly for the smallest mistakes and sometimes even without an error on their part. At times, the children in these facilities accept the ill-treatment being meted to them to the point where it becomes so ingrained that they fail to understand their exploitation.



Here, it is pertinent to note that violence should not only be restricted to physical and/or sexual abuse, but there is a layer of violence in every insensitive and negligent act towards the child.

Instances involving blatant forms of violence like sexual or physical abuse are often strongly condemned in public, but it is important to ensure that other latent forms of violence, which are equally disturbing to the child should also be recognized. The sub-optimum standard of care and protection at these shelter facilities causes additional violence to a child who has already been a victim of violence.

The child encounters violence every time she is denied the rightful minimum standard of care and support services. It takes various forms such as **corporal punishment, verbal abuse, deprivation of food, clothing or even recreation.** This violence continues when the child is denied opportunities to pursue **education and vocational training.** Every **breach of confidentiality** against the child, **undue pressure** to make her act/perform against her will, **disrespectful behavior, misjudged counselling and therapy** are all violent acts and go against the very mandate of shelter facilities.