CHAPTER-7
FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS & CONCLUSIONS
CHAPTER VII

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CHILDLINE, initiated in 1996, is India's first 24-hour helpline for children in need of care and protection. It took telephone technology to the most marginalized groups of children. Breaking myths associated with helplines being a western concept, introducing children to telephones as a medium of communication, building partnerships across society for child protection have called for highly innovative strategies for awareness about CHILDLINE.

CHILDLINE aims to ensure that it is the service that both children and adults, see, think, feel and identify with as the service that protects children anywhere in India. Each CHILDLINE has evolved innovative strategies based on local needs.

OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS:

1. As CHILDLINE is being run by a single organization (Forum for Child Rights) as Collaborative and Nodal organization, it gives the chance to CHILDLINE to be operated smoothly.

2. As CHILDLINE, Vijayawada is being run by a NGO network, it is a unifying point for the entire member NGOs and this factor in turn, helps in the smooth functioning of CHILDLINE.

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1 Spreading the word: CHILDLINE awareness strategies, Jaroo and Nicole, P - 5

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3. As the Forum also includes Municipal Corporation, Police Department and Labour Department as its members, CHILDLINE has access and has good rapport with these departments.

4. Even CIF realized the importance of Forum and showed Forum as exemplary structure in its Directors meeting held in Goa in the year 2003.

5. The CHILDLINE Vijayawada was started in a 6 x 4 feet room in the corridor of Mahila Police Station in November 2000, and with in the four and half years of its service, it has expanded to 3 centres and could acquire its own building in the form of Rescue Shelter.

6. In India, only CHILDLINE, Vijayawada, has its own temporary shelter to keep the children rescued by it.

7. Because of its functioning in three centers and dealing with more cases, CHILDLINE Vijayawada is spending nearly 30 to 35% more than the grant in aid received from Government of India. These expenses are mainly on medical, repatriation, local travel, telephone expenses and staff salaries.

8. As Forum is running three centers, it has recruited more staff and this brings in more financial burden on the organization.

9. As per grant in aid, the salary of the team member is Rs. 4000/- only. It will not be enough to maintain their families. Hence the Forum contributes money to the grant in aid and pays team members. This is also a cause for economic burden on the Forum.
10. The team members are the real pillars for CHILDLINE. They are very hard working and dedicated people. They deserve to get more salary and other benefits like provident fund, insurance etc.

11. Because of the workload and other administrative work, the attention on children at temporary rescue shelter is not adequate. Running the administrative office and Rescue Shelter in the same premises could be one of the reasons.

12. The number of Children running away from the Rescue Shelter was very high. In the year 2004, 10% of the total children rescued, ran away from the rescue shelter. In the first six months of the year 2005, nearly 25% of the total number of children rescued, ran away from rescue shelter. But from the year 2008 onwards the number has drastically fallen down.

13. The identity cards signed and given by the Commissioner of Police of Vijayawada City are much useful for the staff, especially in dealing with rescue and repatriation cases.

14. The documentation system in the CHILDLINE is not up to the mark. The gaps in the documentation system clearly appears when the call and service rendered statistics are compared, especially when the PAH (Parents Asking Help) statistics are analyzed.

15. There is steep fall in the crank and testing calls from the year 2002 onwards.

16. As per the statistics, mainly children below 14 years are approaching CHILDLINE Vijayawada. Among them, boys are the majority.
17. Registration of the PAH cases in CHILDLINE, by the parents was increased year by year till the year 2004. It also reveals the awareness level among general public on CHILDLINE. But after 2004, PAH cases have been decreased.

18. Based on the intervention statistics, the call centers at police control room and extension booth at railway station are equally utilized by the general public. Not per the statistics, but as per the observation it has been observed that all three centers being used/accessed by the public as well as children. Hence these centers/booths should be maintained.

19. Among the missing children (PAH) cases, boys form the major number.

20. In the interview held with the children and representatives of allied systems, out of 250 respondents, 98.91% of children and 100% of allied system representatives said that they have heard about CHILDLINE. It shows the level of awareness on CHILDLINE.

1.1 Findings of study-1 conducted to assess the services at Child Rescue Shelter of CHILDLINE Vijayawada in Krishna district.

1. 96% of the respondents said that they are happy with initial response showed by CHILDLINE staff, where as 4% were not happy.

2. 98% of the respondents said that they took part in solving their problems; where as 2% said they were not part of decision making.

3. 32% of respondents said that they are happy with the solutions provided by CHILDLINE to their problems where as 68% said that they are satisfied with the solution provided by CHILDLINE.
4. 82% of the respondents said that facilities at Rescue Shelter are ‘Good’, 16% said that facilities at Rescue Shelter are ‘Very Good’ and 2% did not responded.

5. 76% of the respondents liked CHILDLINE staff the most during their stay at Rescue Shelter, 12% respondents said they were fond of the House Mother of Rescue Shelter, 8% of the respondents said they liked the premises of rescue shelter and 4% respondents said that they liked food the most during their stay at rescue shelter.

6. 70% of the respondents said that CHILDLINE and its Rescue Shelter is very useful to children, 28% of the respondents said that CHILDLINE and its rescue shelter are ‘some extent useful to children’ and 2% of the respondents have not specified.

7. 36% of respondents said that they approached CHILDLINE to get Shelter; where as 52% of respondents said that they approached CHILDLINE to get repatriated and 0.12% of the children said to be rescued from abuse.

8. 2% of respondents said that they are referred to CHILDLINE by peer group, 40% of respondents by NGO workers, 8% respondents by CHILDLINE staff, 22% respondents by police, 2% respondents by Railway authorities/workers, 22% respondents by General Public and 4% respondents by other sources which were not specified.

9. 44% of Respondents approached CHILDLINE through call center, where as 36% respondents approached CHILDLINE through CHILDLINE Extension Booth at Railway Station, 18% of children through Rescue Shelter and 2% of children through other NGO Shelters.
10.8% of the respondents stayed in rescue shelter less than a day, 56% of respondents stayed in rescue shelter 2-4 days, 18% of respondents stayed in rescue shelter between 5-7 days and 16% of the respondents stayed in rescue shelter more than a week. 2% of the respondents not specified.

11. Majority of the respondents (22%) said that they have stayed in Rescue shelter in waiting for the arrival of their parents.

1.2 Findings of study-2 conducted to assess the impact on CHILDLINE, Vijayawada Services in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh:

1. 58% of the respondents from children know about CHILDLINE where as 100% of the respondents from the allied systems said that they are aware of activities of CL.

2. 21.87% children have made calls to CL.

3. 38.8% children agreed that they have received help from CL.

4. 37% of children said that CL responded immediately when they called or concerned adult called for them.

5. Out of total respondents from children, 85.25% declared that they have faith in CHILDLINE where as 100% respondents from allied systems believe that CL is helpful for children in distress.

6. 38.89% Respondent children said that they have shared about CL their friends and others.
7. 35% children said that PCO booth owners are allowing them to make calls to 1098 toll free number of CHILDLINE.

8. 100% respondents from allied systems admitted that CHILDLINE is working properly.

9. 88.88% respondents from allied systems said that CL maintains good relationship with its allied systems.

10. 74.6% respondents from allied systems said that they took help from CL to protect rights of children.

2. SUGGESTIONS:

1. As per the calls and cases and the maintenance of three booths, CHILDLINE Vijayawada should be recognized by the Ministry as "A grade" city.

2. A counselor for counseling the children at Rescue Shelter should be appointed. The counselor, preferably a lady, should not be involved in the routine administrative work and should be exclusively for the counseling and documentation of the same.

3. Immediate attention paid to the children reaching the Rescue Shelter, speedy action in the follow-ups, maintaining touch with children as long as they are in Rescue Shelter and instilling confidence in them about the services of CHILDLINE – these are some of the suggestions for solving the problem of children running away from rescue shelter.
4. Documentation system should be improved. The timely entry of case histories and follow-ups should happen. For the better monitoring of the documentation and coordination, the center coordinator should visit the three centers every day and go through the records.

5. Or else, the center should be converted as three departments and the responsible team members can be nominated as the point persons.

6. Data should be entered in the computer, so that the report generation will become easy. A separate data entry operator may be recruited.

7. A detailed study needs to be undertaken by Forum for Child Rights/CHILDLINE Vijayawada on the missing children statistics. Because year by year these complaints are increasing. Follow-up needs to be done on PAH cases and a check on how many children are found back and how many are not tracked have to be maintained. There are chances that these children may be trafficked by anti-social elements. So a detailed study is a necessary and at that time the missing girl children also should be taken into confidence.

8. Apart from awareness programs, the CHILDLINE Vijayawada should give priority for the outreach, especially outreach in schools and telephone testing from public telephone booths.

9. Awareness about CHILDLINE among children and allied systems is good. But it should be continued and creating awareness should be a continuous process.

10. 89% of Allied Systems said that they have good relations with CHILDLINE. Rapport building is important for the functioning of
CHILDLINE. The percentage should reach a peak, 100%. All the Departments or Allied systems should be roped in.

11. The innovations in the outreach need to be increased.

12. Regular and periodical evaluation should be done on the functioning of CHILDLINE.

13. Forum, through its CHILDLINE, is striving to achieve child friendly society. This work is highly appreciable. A big applause to Forum as well as CHILDLINE, Vijayawada.

3. CONCLUSION:

A national 24-hours emergency outreach service, CHILDLINE is a free phone helpline for children in need of care and protection. The CHILDLINE number 1098 is a toll free number that is common in all cities in India. Initially started in Mumbai in June 1996, CHILDLINE is currently operational in 84 cities. CHILDLINE aims to reach out to the most marginalized children between the age group of 0-18 years, and provide interventions of shelter, medical, repatriation, rescue, death related, sponsorships and emotional support and guidance.

As discussed in norms of CHILDLINE\textsubscript{2}, the dreams of CHILDLINE is act on the voices of children and respond to their needs. Their interventions are being planned with children, based on their needs. It ensures that children are not afraid to speak. CHILDLINE is working towards a society that perceives children as having the rights to speak, to determine how they see the future, to participate in planning services for them.

\textsuperscript{2} Cross reference: Chapter-1 Introduction, Para graph 2.9 -Norms of CHILDLINE, page 17
CHILDLINE role is therefore to facilitate the process by which children’s voices are heard and acted upon. A society where children are encouraged to speak, a society that acts on the concerns of children and involves them – a society where there is no longer a need for CHILDLINE. CHILDLINE aims to ensure that it is the service that both children and adults, see, think, feel and identify with as the service that protects children anywhere in India. CHILDLINE Vijayawada in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, has proven that children’s voices are being taken seriously, that children calling CHILDLINE are asking to be heard. It has taken voices of children to policy makers, and decision makers. CHILDLINE Vijayawada has already completed nine years in the service of children. While extending the services, it received massive support from organizations of every kind. Special mention needs to be made of Municipal Corporation, Police Department, Women and Child Welfare Department, District Rehabilitation Centre and the NGOs, which are the key players in the running of CHILDLINE. Last but not the least, the common public too needs to be appreciated. Vijayawada CHILDLINE is seeking the same support from each and every one in order to extend its service even better in the years ahead.

3 Cross reference: Past under takings of Forum in Brief report on Forum for Child Rights; appendix-7