
ORGANISATIONS FIGHTING JUVENILE CRIME ACROSS THE GLOBE

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ABSTRACT

This research paper provides an analysis of major organisations combating juvenile crime across the globe, emphasizing prevention, rehabilitation, advocacy, and legal reform. It explores key agencies and NGOs in North America, such as the OJJDP, Coalition for Juvenile Justice, and Youth First Justice Collaborative, whose evidence-based programs, legal advocacy, and youth-driven campaigns have contributed to declines in youth incarceration and policy change. In South America, organisations like ILANUD, UNICEF, and Glasswing International focus on diversion, youth empowerment, and restorative justice, addressing issues such as armed conflict recruitment and community violence. European bodies including the IJJO, Defence for Children International, and Eurochild promote children's rights through legal monitoring, research, and cross-country policy initiatives. In Africa, groups such as NICRO and Khulisa implement life-skills programs, restorative approaches, and crime prevention networks; while Asia's ACPF, UNAFEI, and HAQ champion youth rehabilitation, legal aid, and regional collaboration. Australian organizations prioritize diversion and community integration via advocacy networks and restorative conferencing. Collectively, these organisations leverage multidisciplinary approaches—policy reform, direct services, mentoring, legal defense, and awareness campaigns—to foster safer communities, support at-risk youth, and drive systemic transformation in juvenile justice worldwide.

Keywords: Juvenile justice, Crime prevention, Youth rehabilitation, Child rights advocacy, Restorative justice, Legal reform, At-risk youth, International organizations, Policy reform

Introduction-

"Preventing juvenile delinquency is not merely about controlling behavior, but about creating environments where young people can thrive."

— *United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)*

Organisations in North America-

- **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)¹:** This is the principal federal agency that leads and coordinates national efforts to prevent juvenile delinquency, improve juvenile justice systems, and reduce youth victimization. OJJDP was created in the year 1974. OJJDP funds research, supports evidence-based programs, and provides training and resources for states and communities.
- **Coalition for Juvenile Justice² (CJJ):** A nationwide network of state advisory groups, dedicated advocates, and youth members working to prevent youth involvement in the justice system and promote fair treatment. CJJ was created in the year 1977. CJJ advises policymakers and organizes conferences and training to implement innovative practices.
- **No Kids in Prison³ (Youth First Justice Collaborative):** This network campaigns to end youth incarceration by closing youth prisons and reallocating resources towards community-based alternatives. It prioritizes youth leadership and has shut down facilities in several states.
- **Fight Crime: Invest in Kids:** It was founded in the year 1996 with its headquarters at Washington DC. It aims at bringing together law enforcement leaders and advocates, this organization promotes research-backed strategies to reduce juvenile crime and advocates for effective prevention and intervention policies.
- **Center on Juvenile & Criminal Justice⁴ (CJCJ):** Focuses on direct services, policy development, research, and technical assistance to reduce dependence on incarceration and

¹ <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov>

² <https://juvjustice.org>

³ <https://www.nokidsinprison.org>

⁴ <https://www.cjcj.org>

support rehabilitation. It was founded in the year 1985 as a San Francisco based Non-Profit organization.

- **The Gault Center:** Dedicated to legal defense for youth in delinquency courts, upholding children's rights throughout juvenile justice proceedings. The Gault Center was established in the year 1997 with its headquarters at Washington DC. It was renamed from the National Juvenile Defender Center to The Gault Center in 2021.
- **National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ):** Conducts research and provides technical guidance to improve the fairness and effectiveness of juvenile and family justice systems. It was founded in the year 1973 with its headquarters at Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
- **American Bar Association Juvenile Justice Center:** Offers resources, research, and legal advocacy for youth in the justice system, including those with disabilities or mental health needs.
- **Reinserta:** Organization in Mexico work extensively with children and young people affected by violence, providing psychosocial care, protection, research, and advocacy to influence public policy. They also operate within juvenile detention centers and prisons, offering support and rehabilitation services to detained adolescents.
- **Juvenile Justice Advocates International (JJAI):** Advocates for better juvenile justice practices, supports reforms, training of juvenile justice operators, helps with diversion, improving detention standards. JJAI founded in 2013 and had its headquarters in Coyoacán, Mexico City.
- **Boost Child & Youth Advocacy Centre:** Situated in Toronto supports children and youth affected by abuse, violence, and exploitation. It works to prevent juvenile crime through education, early intervention, counseling, and collaboration with law enforcement to protect vulnerable young people.
- **Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia:** The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia supports young women and girls involved in or at risk of entering the justice system. It focuses on prevention, rehabilitation, advocacy, and empowerment to reduce juvenile crime and promote safer, more inclusive communities. The Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia was formed in 1982.

Their collective efforts have led to significant declines in youth incarceration, policy changes in juvenile justice, and the expansion of support services for at-risk youth across North America.

Organisations in South America

- **COALICO (Coalition Against the Involvement of Children and Young People in Colombia's Armed Conflict):** It was established in 1999. It monitors and campaigns against recruitment of children into armed conflict and organized crime in Colombia. It has also helped in banning recruitment of children below 18 years.
- **IDB⁵ (Inter-American Development Bank):** It was established in the year 1959 with its headquarters in Washington D.C. It helps in funding and supporting comprehensive youth violence prevention projects in countries like Brazil, Colombia, and Uruguay and works on community policing reforms.
- **Glasswing International⁶:** It was founded in 2007 with headquarters in El Salvador. It helps in implementing job training, therapy, and volunteer-led community programs to provide alternatives to gang involvement across Latin America.
- **Child Rights International Network (CRIN):** Advocates for children's rights and runs campaigns throughout Latin America.
- **Defence for Children International (DCI):** Provides information, advocacy, capacity-building, and coordinates national and regional reforms in juvenile justice.
- **South America Regional Network (ISPCAN):** It has its headquarters in Buenos Aires, Argentina and helps in bringing together multi-disciplinary professionals working in child protection and abuse prevention, often linking to delinquency prevention.
- **Covenant House Latin America:** Offers shelter, mental health support, and vocational training for trafficked, exploited, or abandoned youth in countries including Guatemala, Honduras, and Mexico.

⁵ <https://www.iadb.org/en/news/idb-supports-fight-against-violence-latin-america-and-caribbean>

⁶ <https://igarape.org.br/fighting-gangs-with-jobs-el-salvador-non-profit-steers-youth-away-from-crime/>

These organizations play a vital role in addressing juvenile crime through a mix of advocacy, direct services, and systemic reforms across South America.

Organisations in Europe

- **International Juvenile Justice Observatory (IJJO):** It is based in Brussels, it brings together institutions, professionals, and NGOS from around Europe to promote improved juvenile justice systems, knowledge exchange, and child rights protections for youth in conflict with the law, with ongoing collaborations with entities like Fundación Diagrama (Spain).
- **Child Friendly Justice European Network (CFJ-EN):** It was established in 2019 as an informal network. It officially became a fully operational formal network in 2022 after signing a Framework Partnership Agreement with the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). It has its headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. This network consists of 19 expert organisations from 17 countries, all focused on advocating for, and implementing, child-friendly justice systems and policies at local, national, and European levels.
- **Eurochild:** Eurochild is a broad network supporting child rights protection throughout Europe and influences policy and programming to prioritise child well-being and combat violence or neglect. It was established in the year 2004.
- **European Child Sexual Abuse Legislation Advocacy Group (ECLAG):** It was established in the year 2022. This coalition of 65 NGOs, including ECPAT, Eurochild, Missing Children Europe, Terre des Hommes, and Thorn, fights for robust legislative responses to child sexual violence, with a special focus on online abuse prevention.
- **Terre des Hommes:** It was founded in 1960 in Lausanne, Switzerland, advocates for children's rights globally by promoting health, protection, and justice programs, empowering marginalized youth, and campaigning for policy change to safeguard child well-being and dignity in over 67 countries.

Organisations in Africa-

- **NICRO (National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders) –**

It was established in the year 1910 with its headquarters in Cape Town, South Africa. NICRO focuses on social crime prevention, offender rehabilitation, and youth diversion programs. It provides services aimed at helping young offenders reintegrate positively into society by focusing on restorative justice and community-based reintegration support.

- **Khulisa Crime Prevention Initiative** – It was established in the year 1997 with its headquarters in Johannesburg by Lesley-Ann Van Selm. Khulisa works with children and young people involved in or at risk of criminal behavior. Its “My Path” rehabilitation and reintegration program focuses on developing life skills, fostering accountability, and preparing young offenders for community reintegration.
- **AYICRIP (African Youths Initiative on Crime Prevention)**- AYICRIP, established in 2008, is a continent-wide movement empowering young Africans to fight crime and promote peace through crime prevention education, youth empowerment, and anti-drug initiatives. It encourages positive youth participation in peacebuilding and leadership.
- **Amsha Africa Foundation – East Africa**- Operating in Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda, and South Sudan, Amsha Africa focuses on **preventing child abuse, promoting children's rights, and building community-based child protection teams**. Its initiatives have helped significantly reduce child neglect and violence in rural communities.
- **UNAFRI (United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders)**- It is an intergovernmental body headquartered in Uganda, UNAFRI supports African nations in crime prevention, juvenile justice reforms, and rehabilitation policies. It provides training, policy support, and research to strengthen justice systems across the continent.
- **Secure Africa – Regional Youth Crime Prevention Network**- This initiative engages youth across the continent in crime prevention and peacebuilding training, aiming to reduce juvenile crimes through empowerment and social initiatives under the theme “*Safety and Security through Youth*”.

Organisations in Asia-

- **Asia Crime Prevention Foundation (ACPF)**: ACPF was founded in the year 1982 and with its headquarters in Tokyo, Japan is a prominent NGO established to promote

sustainable development, peace, and stability across Asia through crime prevention programs, including initiatives focused on youth and children.

- **United Nations Asia and Far East Institute (UNAFEI):** UNAFEI was founded in 1962, with its headquarters at Tokyo, Japan specializes in training personnel for crime prevention and criminal justice administration, with specific seminars and courses on juvenile justice.
- **HAQ: Centre for Child Rights (India):** HAQ was founded in the year 1999, provides legal aid to children in conflict with the law, conducts research, and advocates for reforms in juvenile justice systems.
- **Aparajeyo Bangladesh:** In the year 1976 it began its activities working with children in the slums of Dhaka and in the year 1995, the organization was officially founded through the localization of an international NGO. This NGO runs projects promoting alternatives to pre-trial detention, legal aid, and social reintegration for children involved with the justice system.
- **South Asia Coordinating Group on Action against Violence against Children (SACG):** SACG, including various UN agencies and INGOs, supports governments and civil society in ending violence against children through policy advocacy and technical support.
- **STRIVE Juvenile (Indonesia and ASEAN region):** This multi-sectoral initiative addresses child recruitment by terrorist and extremist groups, working on rehabilitation, legal reform, and awareness raising in collaboration with UNODC, EU, and ASEAN.
- **Prayas Juvenile Aid Centre (India):** Prayas was founded in 1988, was established after a fire incident in Delhi slums, through the collaboration of the Delhi Police, the Delhi School of Social Work, and Shramik Vidyapeeth. Prayas has been driving policy change and providing support for juveniles in conflict with the law for over three decades.
- **South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC):** Works in partnership with SACG, national action groups, and grassroots NGOs across South Asia to influence policy, build capacity, and promote alternative care and juvenile justice reforms.

Organisations in Australia

- **Youth Off The Streets:** It has its headquarters in New South Wales, provides intensive one-

on-one support and services to children and young people involved with or at risk of being involved in the justice system. Offers specialist casework, diversion programs, court support, and access to therapeutic pathways to reduce contact with the criminal justice system.

- **Life Without Barriers:** Supports over 2,200 children in foster and residential care, many vulnerable to justice system encounters. Advocates raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility and provides trauma-informed, family-focused programs like Multi-Systemic Therapy to prevent or reduce youth offending.
- **Mission Australia Youth Crime Prevention Program:** Focuses on early intervention and community-based prevention targeting at-risk youth, including education, support, and engagement initiatives.
- **Youth Advocacy Centre (YAC):** A Brisbane-based non-profit aiming to increase young people's access to justice, both legal and social, by providing support and advocacy.

Conclusion

This comprehensive overview highlights the crucial role played by various organizations across the globe in addressing juvenile crime through prevention, rehabilitation, advocacy, and legal reforms. These entities leverage multiple strategies, including community-based programs, policy advocacy, legal defense, and youth empowerment, to help better and safer environments for young people. Their collective efforts along with government initiatives have led to significant reductions in youth incarceration and systemic improvements across regions. Global cooperation and innovative interventions remain essential for creating sustainable, youth-friendly justice systems promoting rehabilitation and social reintegration.

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