

Define the term juvenile delinquency. Write a note on the history of juvenile justice system and the role of the juvenile courts in reducing juvenile delinquency. (CSS-2022)

### INTRODUCTION:

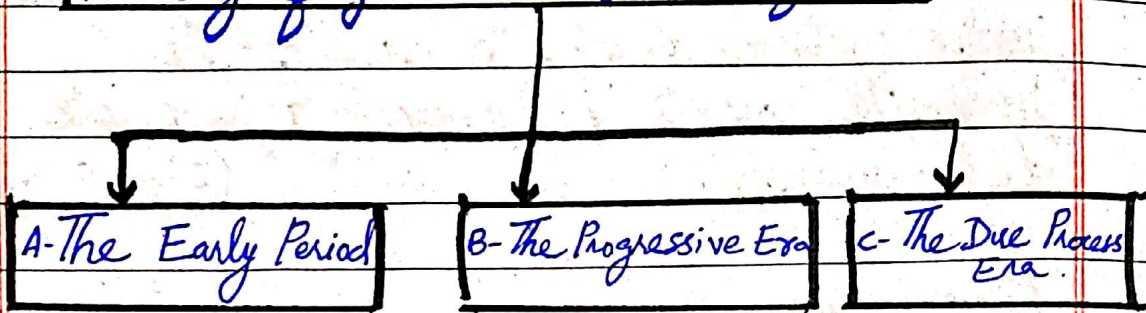
Juvenile delinquency refers to the participation of minors, typically individuals below the age of 18, in illegal activities or behaviors that violate the law. It encompasses a range of offences, including but not limited to theft, drug abuse, vandalism, violence, and truancy. Understanding the history of juvenile justice system and the role of juvenile court is essential in addressing and reducing juvenile delinquency effectively.

### HISTORY OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

The concept of a separate justice system for juveniles emerged in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, driven by the recognition that young offenders require distinct approaches from adult criminals. The history of the juvenile justice system can be divided into three major periods.



## History of juvenile Justice system



### A - The early period :

During the early period, juvenile offenders were often treated and punished in the same manner as adult offenders. There was limited recognition of the unique needs and circumstances of young individuals involved in the criminal behavior.

According to Platt, 1977, the young delinquent was usually treated not as a separate category of person but as a small adult.

### B - The progressive era :

The progressive era shift marked a shift towards more rehabilitative approaches. Reformers, such as Jane Addams and John Augusts, advocated for specialized institutions and programs focused on rehabilitative juvenile offender rather than solely punishing them.

According to Feld, 1999, the progressive era saw the establishment of first juvenile courts, where judges were authorized to exercise parental authority.

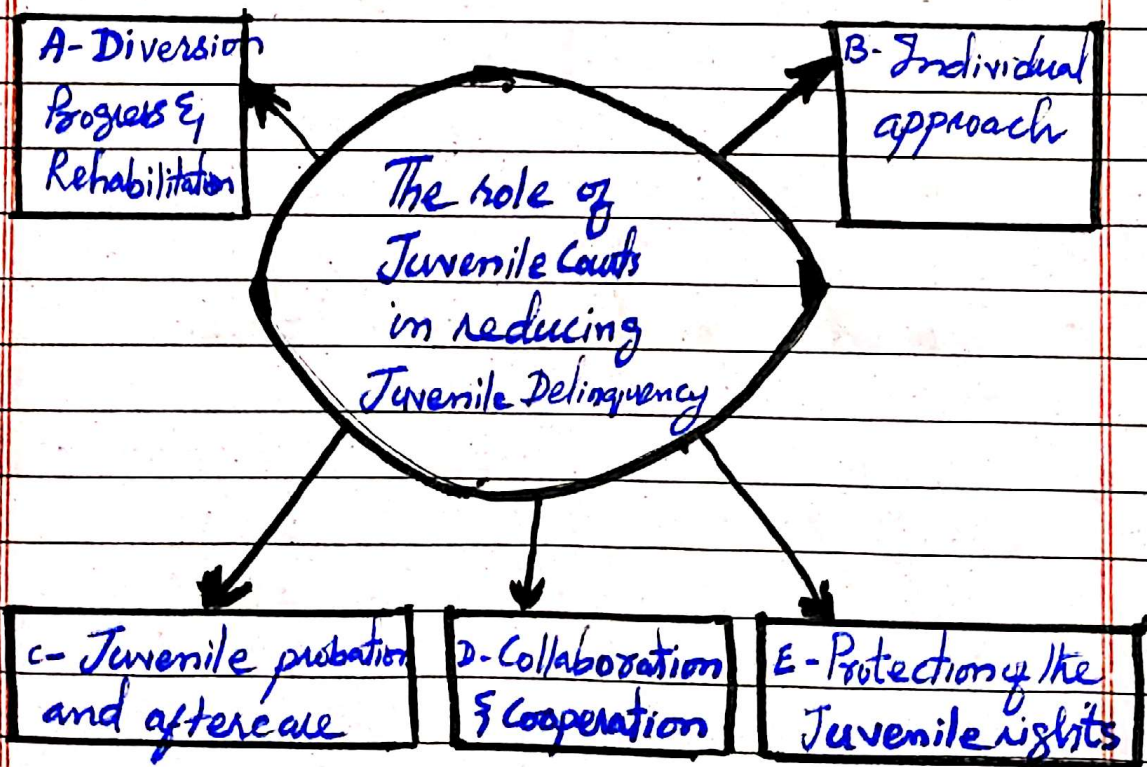


c - The due process era:

It began in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, emphasized the legal rights of juveniles. The supreme court decisions in the cases of Kent vs. United States (1966), and In re Gault (1967) extended constitutional rights for juveniles.

According to Feld, 1999, this era saw the establishment due process of revolution of 1960s emphasized the individual rights for juvenile defendants and led to the significant changes in the procedures used in the juvenile courts.

## THE ROLE OF JUVENILE COURTS IN REDUCING JUVENILE DELINQUENCY





## A - Diversion programs and rehabilitation:

Juvenile courts emphasizes diversion programs and rehabilitation as alternatives to traditional punishments. These programs focus on addressing the underlying causes of delinquency, such as family problems, substance abuse, and educational deficiencies.

According to the study conducted by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 68% reduction in recidivism for participants - compare to non-participants.

## B - Individual approach:

The juvenile court system takes into account the unique circumstances of each juvenile offender. It recognizes that factors such as age, development stage, family environment, and educational opportunities are essential considerations when determining appropriate interventions.

## C - Juvenile probation and aftercare:

Probation and aftercare programs provide ongoing supervision and support to juvenile offenders. Probation officers work closely with young offenders and their families, monitoring their progress, ensuring compliance with court orders, and



providing necessary resources for rehabilitation.

#### D - Collaboration and Coordination:

Juvenile courts act as central hubs for collaboration and coordination among various stakeholders involved in the juvenile justice system. They bring together professionals such as judges, probation officers, social workers, educators, and mental health professionals to work collectively on assessing and addressing the needs of juvenile offenders. This multidisciplinary approach aims to provide comprehensive support and interventions for rehabilitation.

#### E - Protection of the juvenile's rights:

Juvenile courts serve as the protectors of the legal rights of young offenders. They ensure that the due process rights of the juvenile are upheld during legal proceedings. This includes the right to legal representation, the right to be informed of charges, the right to a fair trial, and the right to appeal decisions.

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## CONCLUSION :

The juvenile justice system has evolved over time, recognizing the unique needs and circumstances of youth offenders. By focusing on rehabilitation, diversion, and individualized interventions, the juvenile court plays a vital role in reducing juvenile delinquency.