



UNICEF/HQ99-0965/Jim Holmes



UNICEF/HQ03-0176/Giacomo Pirozzi



UNICEF/HQ03-0104/Sheh

Rights

UNICEF Youth Voice

UNCRC

Why do children rights need protection?

EVERY child and young person under 18 has rights and responsibilities. They're protected by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It's been signed by every country in the world, except the USA and Somalia.

The Convention begins by talking about the reasons why it's needed:

- BECAUSE children are **individuals** and members of their **families** and **communities**. They have

rights and responsibilities, appropriate to their age and development.

- BECAUSE **recognising** everyone's **rights** is vital for a world full of **freedom, justice** and **peace**. BECAUSE children need **special care** and **protection**.

- BECAUSE **families** play a really important role in society. Children develop best if their families give them **love, understanding**, and **happiness**.

- BECAUSE children should grow

up "in the spirit of **peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality** and **solidarity**."

- BECAUSE, in all countries of the world, there are children living in **exceptionally difficult conditions**. These children need **special help**.

- BECAUSE children's **cultures** and **traditions** should be protected.

- BECAUSE the world needs to **work together** to make life **better** for children, especially children in the **world's poorest countries**.

Your rights under the UNCRC

The Convention spells out your rights in a series of "articles".



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Every child has these rights

Article 1

Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in this Convention.

Article 2

The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race,

religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, no matter what type of family they come from.

Article 3

All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for you.

Article 4

Governments should make these rights available to you.

Article 5

Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to direct and guide their children so that, as they grow, they learn to use their rights properly.

Article 6

You have the right to life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

Article 7

You have the right to a legally registered name and nationality. You also have the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by your parents.

Article 8

Governments should respect children's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

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Article 9

You should not be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good - for example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting you. If your parents have separated, you have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might harm you.

Article 10

Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so that parents and children can stay in contact or get back together as a family.

Article 11

Governments should take steps to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally.



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Children should be heard

Article 12

You have the right to say what you think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect you, and to have your opinions taken into account.

Article 13

You have the right to get, and to share, information as long as the information is not damaging to yourself or others.

Article 14

You have the right to think and believe what you want and to practise your religion, as long as you are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide children on these matters.

Article 15

You have the right to meet with other children and young people and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 16

You have the right to privacy. The law should protect you from attacks against your way of life, your good name, your family and your home.

Article 17

You have the right to reliable information from the mass media. Television, radio, and newspapers should provide information that you can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm you.

Article 18

Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.

Article 19

Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 20

If you cannot be looked after by your own family, you must be looked after properly, by people who respect your religion, culture and language.



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Children must be looked after

Article 21

If you are adopted, the first concern must be what is best for you. The same rules should apply whether the adoption takes place in the country where you were born or if you move to another country.

Article 22

If you are a child who has come into a country as a refugee, you should have the same rights as children born in that country.

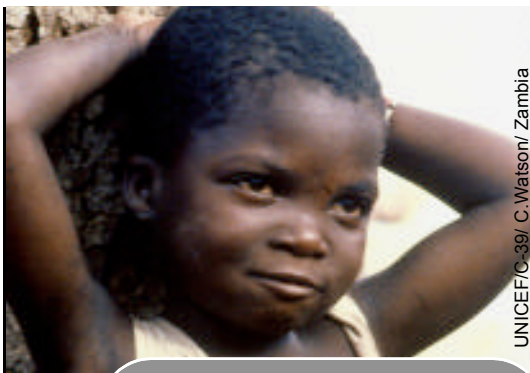
Article 23

If you have a disability, you should receive special care and support so that you can live a full and independent life.

Article 24

You have the right to good quality health care and to clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that you can stay healthy. Rich countries

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should help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 25

If you are looked after by your local authority rather than your parents, you should have your situation reviewed regularly.



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You should have clean water

Article 26

The government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.

Article 27

You have a right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet your physical and mental needs. The government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 28

You have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29

Education should develop your personality and talents to the full. It should encourage you to respect your parents, your own and other cultures.

Article 30

You have a right to learn and use the language and customs of your family whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where you live.

Article 31

You have a right to relax, play and join in a wide range of activities.

Article 32

The government should protect you from work that is dangerous or might harm your health or education.

Article 33

The government should provide ways of protecting you from dangerous drugs.

Article 34

The government should protect you from sexual abuse.

Article 35

The government should ensure that you are not abducted or sold.

Article 36

You should be protected from any activities that could harm your development.

Article 37

If you break the law, you should not be treated cruelly. You should not be put in a prison with adults and you should be able to keep in contact with your family.

Article 38

Governments should not allow children under 16 to join the army. In war zones, you should receive special protection.

Article 39

If you have been neglected or abused, you should receive special help to restore your self-respect.

Article 40

If you are accused of breaking the law, you should receive legal help. Prison sentences for children should only be used for the most serious offences.

Article 41

If the laws of a particular country protect you better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should stay.



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Children should know their rights

Article 42

The government should make the Convention known to all parents and children.

Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights.

Your Call

All people have rights, but also the responsibility to make sure their behaviour doesn't stop others getting their rights.