

# COMPASITO

Manual for Human Rights  
Education with Children



**Third edition**  
Updated in 2023



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## Manual for Human Rights Education with Children

Third edition, updated in 2023

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## **Compasito**

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## Preface

For children to fully exercise their rights, they must know what these rights are. Learning about them makes children more aware and resilient and strengthens their ability to act as human rights defenders, both in their own interests and by advocating for others. This is why human rights education matters.

*Compasito* fills an important role here. It is an important reference tool that ensures that the work done in schools is reinforced and supported by non-formal education and youth work activities. This way, an awareness, understanding and respect can be cultivated in different environments, and children are supported to exercise their rights in different aspects of their lives.

I wish users of this manual success in bringing human rights closer to the lives of children and young people. I have no doubt that this will benefit them in the here and now and prove a valuable long-term investment for our societies.

**Marija Pejčinović Burić**  
Secretary General

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# INTRODUCTION





The States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to (a) the development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential (b) the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms (...)

*Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 29*

## Welcome to *Compasito*!

We hope that this manual will provide you with ideas, inspiration and practical help to explore human rights with children. From a very early age, children become aware of questions related to justice, and they start looking for meaning in the world around them. By fostering an understanding of human rights, by shaping opinions and developing attitudes, human rights education strongly supports this natural interest and learning process.

Children are often considered people who are “not yet adult”, and therefore dependent, inexperienced, undisciplined and in need of order or guidance. *Compasito* builds on a different view, explained well by the German sociologist and educationalist, Lothar Krappmann: children live in the ‘here and now’, “they generate their views on problems and construct competent solutions”. *Compasito* looks at children as young citizens of the present and as rights-holders who are competent in many issues related to their life. It builds on children's motivations, experiences and search for solutions.

*Compasito* was inspired by *Compass*, the manual on human rights education with young people which was developed by the Council of Europe in 2002. *Compass* was developed with older children and young people in mind, but it has also been used extensively with younger people of secondary school age and in school environments in many European countries. The desire of users of *Compass* for a training manual directed specifically at children matched our own conviction that human rights education should start at the earliest possible age.

*Compasito* builds on the philosophy and educational approach of *Compass*. Both manuals adopt a non-formal educational methodology and a structure that provides theoretical and practical support for users of the manual. However, while *Compass* addresses young people themselves, *Compasito* addresses adult educators who work with children. It provides theoretical and methodological information and substantial discussion of the book's human rights themes. *Compasito* also encourages educators to adapt material to reflect their own reality and that of the children they work with. Although the practical activities are specially designed to work with children, most activities do need proper facilitation by an educational expert.

## **What is human rights education with children?**

Human rights education is a process which aims to establish a culture of human rights. The educational process builds on children's active participation, by which they learn about human rights and understand human rights issues, acquire skills and abilities to be able to defend human rights, and develop attitudes of respect for equality and dignity.

Human rights education should have a key role in any educational processes. The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) offers an invaluable opportunity for introducing human rights to children. The CRC identifies those human rights that are relevant to children. Learning about and experiencing children's rights helps children to understand what human rights are about, to understand that they are rights-holders themselves, and to adapt and apply their rights in everyday life. These are the key aims of human rights education with children. In *Compasito*, children's rights are presented within the wider context of human rights as a whole. Thus, universal human rights and

children's rights are jointly presented in such a way that by understanding their own rights, children also understand that all human beings have human rights.



The States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to ... (d) the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin – CRC, Article 29

*CRC, Article 29*

## Human rights education and education for democratic citizenship

Human rights are essential to democratic development and form an important part of citizenship education. However, a number of social and political trends, both in Europe and beyond, such as economic interdependence, a growth in racism, terrorism, political apathy, social inequality and the influence of social media, all challenge the foundations of a culture of peace and human rights, and thus endanger democratic stability. This is partly why human rights education and education for democratic citizenship have become key priorities for governments, and for non-governmental organisations too.

Human rights education and education for democratic citizenship go hand in hand, because both are needed for effective democracy. Each of these educational approaches leads young people to acquire knowledge, establish core values and develop skills. Education for democratic citizenship puts the 'child citizen' into the focus and aims to educate children to be active and responsible members of their communities. Human rights education, on the other hand, focuses on the human being, promoting equality, human dignity, participation and empowerment for everyone. Human rights education includes citizenship as one of its key themes, and education for democratic citizenship builds on human rights values. Whatever their differences, both approaches serve the development of a culture of democracy, human rights and peace.

### Who is *Compasito* for?

*Compasito* has been designed, above all, for educators and trainers working with children, including teachers, caregivers and parents as well as non-formal educators such as youth workers and educational advisors / assistants in children and youth centres. In particular, it will be of interest to those who are interested in human rights education with children and who are looking for practical tools with which to discuss values and social issues with children. The activities are designed for children from 5 to 13 years old.

*Compasito* builds on the child's and the facilitator's existing knowledge and experience. The activities can be used wherever children spend part of their daily life: in schools, in childcare centres, afternoon clubs, leisure centres, children's organisations, or camps, and even in the family environment. While children do not need to have any special skills to participate in most of the activities, facilitators do need to possess experience and skills in using non-formal educational methodology to run the activities successfully.

## What is in *Compasito*?

Various high-quality, child-related training materials on human rights and children's rights have been produced and are available, both in Europe and internationally. The *Compasito* development team built on these experiences to produce a manual appropriate for a European audience and context. The result is a manual which provides specific content on human rights education, a non-formal educational methodology and an intercultural approach.

At the core of *Compasito* are the 42 educational activities designed for use with children. These activities are organised around 14 themes: Democratic Citizenship, Digital World, Discrimination, Education and Leisure, Environment, Family and Alternative Care, Gender Equality, Health, Human Rights, Migration, Participation, Peace, Poverty, Violence. The development team paid careful attention to the selection of themes, and although the final list may not cover every important subject, it was felt that it reflected those human rights concerns which were of key importance for children. Some themes address issues which are relevant but seldom elaborated in other manuals, such as Education, Health, and Gender Equality. In addition to these specific themes, a category of general human rights was also introduced to provide children with an understanding of the concept of rights and of how to adapt and apply them in their daily context.

### **Non-formal educational methodology**

*Compasito* follows a non-formal educational methodology, building on the active participation and personal experiences of children. Participation and co-operation between children helps to build group cohesion and reduce biases between group members, it deepens understanding of complex concepts, improves problem solving and practical skills, and enhances creativity. All of these are important aims of human rights education. It is important, when running these activities, not to fall into the trap of assuming that the educator – the adult – is all-knowing, and possesses the ultimate truth. Children will bring to the educational process their own experiences, which must be actively drawn upon both to capture their interest and to ensure effective development. Questions, even conflicts, should be regarded as fundamental educational resources, which can be drawn on for positive educational ends.

### **An intercultural and participatory approach**

While children are very much engaged in their own neighbourhoods, cultures and friendship groups, they are curious about the world, and about the existence of other cultures, regions and people. *Compasito* uses stories and examples from various regions and cultures. This rich variety offers children an opportunity to reflect on different cultures and build a stable identity around these reflections. As Reva Klein, a British educationalist explains, children do not simply learn about other children's lives; they form bonds of empathy and solidarity and begin to understand their role in taking action, on a local or a global scale. The original design of *Compasito* followed such an approach, employing an intercultural and inclusive development process with input from facilitators from across Europe and beyond, and from children themselves.

## The organisation of *Compasito*

**Chapter 1** familiarises the reader with what we mean by human rights and children's rights and describes the main international human rights mechanisms.

**Chapter 2** explains the aims and outcomes of human rights education, and places it in a European and international context.

**Chapter 3** provides information and practical tips on how *Compasito* can be used in various formal and non-formal educational settings, and how to get the best out of its educational approach. The tips for facilitators provide ideas on how to start human rights activities with children and different ways to follow them up, including the use of specific actions.

**Chapter 4** collects 42 practical activities for different age groups and at different levels of complexity, related to the 14 themes. These activities can be used sequentially, or in any order you choose, and in general, the children you work with do not need to have special skills or competences.

**Chapter 5** provides essential background information on the selected themes. Facilitators are encouraged to read the themes which are relevant to an activity before running it with children. The questions included within these texts are intended to help readers to reflect on their own knowledge and attitudes, and to be able to place the information in a personal or local context.

The **Appendices** contain essential information on legal documents with key relevance for children in a European context. The Human Rights Glossary contains brief explanations of key terms appearing in the manual.

## *Compasito* and the Youth for Democracy programme

*Compasito* was originally published within the framework of the Human Rights Education Youth Programme. This Council of Europe programme seeks to involve young people in human rights issues, reaching beyond those already active and motivated to a wider public, and bringing human rights closer to their daily reality. The Programme was launched in 2000 to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights. Since then, its activities have reached thousands of young people and has resulted in a cascading effect in the development of human rights education programmes and human rights projects with and by young people all over Europe.

The experiences of the programme were integrated in the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2010. The 2030 strategy of the youth sector of the Council of Europe confirmed the central role of human youth participation, human rights education and intercultural dialogue in the activities of the Youth Department. The strategy aims at enabling young people to actively uphold, defend, promote and benefit from the Council of Europe's core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Within the priority of young people's access to rights, the strategy calls for "increasing capacity building and resources for youth organisations and other relevant stakeholders to provide human rights education and advocate access to rights". The Youth for Democracy programme continues this work by training trainers and multipliers and supporting capacity-building activities in member states. This is significant progress in the recognition of the right to human rights education, which needs consolidation in education and youth policies at national level.

We hope that this third edition of *Compasito* will inspire and support other facilitators and activists to make human rights education a reality for more children in Europe. Children and youth policies intersect and overlap for young people under 18. When it comes to learning *about*, learning *through* and learning *for* human rights, any overlaps can only be beneficial.

## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCING HUMAN RIGHTS



Recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world

*Preamble, Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

## What are human rights?

Human rights are held by all persons equally, universally and forever.

- Human rights are **universal**: they are always the same for all human beings everywhere in the world. You do not have human rights because you are a citizen of any country but because you are a member of the human family. This means children have human rights as well as adults.
- Human rights are **inalienable**: you cannot lose these rights, any more than you can cease to be a human being.
- Human rights are **indivisible**: no-one can take away a right because it is 'less important' or 'non-essential'.
- Human rights are **interdependent**: together human rights form a complementary framework. For example, your ability to participate in local decision making is directly affected by your right to express yourself, to associate with others, to get an education and even to obtain the necessities of life.
- **Human rights reflect basic human needs**. They establish a minimum standard, below which people cannot live in dignity as human beings. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as though he or she were not a human being. To advocate for human rights is to demand that the human dignity of all people be respected.

In claiming human rights, everyone also accepts certain **responsibilities**: to respect the rights of others and to protect and support those whose rights are abused or denied. Meeting our responsibilities is an expression of our solidarity with other human beings.

## Precursors of twentieth century human rights

Many people regard the development of human rights law as one of the greatest accomplishments of the twentieth century. However, human rights did not begin with legal instruments, nor with the United Nations: human rights began with human beings fighting for justice, equality, or recognition. The idea that people have inherent rights is rooted in many cultures and traditions. Throughout history, individuals and groups have campaigned for justice and the right to be treated with dignity. They have done so on the basis of common values, widely accepted by every society and every main religion. We can see from numerous examples of revered leaders and influential codes of practice that the values embodied in human rights are neither a "Western creation" nor a 20th-century invention. They are a response to universal human needs and to the search for justice. All human societies have had ideals and systems of ensuring justice, whether in their oral or written traditions, although not all of these traditions have survived.

References to justice, fairness and humanity are common to all religions – for example, to Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Islam and Judaism. However, these formal principles are often manifested in different forms in practice. Until the eighteenth century, no society, civilisation or culture in either the Western or non-Western world had a widely endorsed practice or vision of inalienable, universal, human rights.


Documents asserting individual rights, such as the Magna Carta (1215), the English Bill of Rights (1689), the French Declaration on the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789) and the US Constitution

and Bill of Rights (1791) are the written precursors to many of today's human rights instruments. Yet, most of these influential landmark documents excluded not only women and many minorities, but also members of certain social, religious, economic and political groups. Not one of these written precursors reflects the fundamental concept that *everyone*, without any distinction, is entitled to certain basic rights, solely by virtue of their humanity.

Other important historical predecessors to human rights lie in nineteenth century efforts to prohibit the slave trade and to limit the horrors of the war. For example, the Geneva Conventions established the basis for international humanitarian law, which addresses the way in which wars should be fought and the protection of individuals during armed conflict. Humanitarian law protects people who do not take part in the fighting and those who can no longer fight (e.g. wounded, sick and shipwrecked troops, prisoners of war).

Concern over the protection of certain vulnerable groups was raised by the League of Nations at the end of the First World War. For example, the International Labour Organisation, originally a body of the League of Nations and now a UN agency, established many important conventions setting standards to protect working people, such as the Minimum Age Convention (1919), the Forced Labour Convention (1930) and the Forty-hour Week Convention (1935).

Although the contemporary international human rights framework builds on these earlier documents, it is principally based on United Nations documents.

 Why is it important that we know about the history of human rights? Do children need to know this, and how can we make it relevant and interesting for them?

## The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Two major influences in the mid-twentieth century propelled human rights onto the global arena and raised the awareness of people around the world. The first influence was the struggles of colonised peoples to assert their independence from foreign powers, claiming their right to equality and right to self-determination. The second was the Second World War. The extermination by Nazi Germany and its collaborators of over six million Jewish people, as well as hundreds of thousands of Roma, homosexuals, persons with disabilities and other groups horrified the world. Calls came from across the globe for human rights standards to bolster international peace and protect citizens from abuse perpetrated by governments. These voices played a critical role in the establishment of the United Nations in 1945 and are echoed in its founding document, the UN Charter (1945).

Rights for all human beings were first articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), one of the first initiatives of the newly established United Nations. Its thirty articles taken together form a comprehensive statement covering economic, social, cultural, political, and civil rights. These rights are **universal** (they apply to all people, everywhere) and **indivisible** (all rights are equally important for the full realisation of one's human rights).

## The human rights framework

In its more than seventy years of existence, the UDHR has achieved the status of customary international law. However, as a 'declaration', it is only a statement of intent, a set of principles to which United Nations member states commit themselves, in an effort to secure a life of dignity for all human beings. For the rights defined in a declaration to have full legal effect, they must be written into legally binding documents called conventions (also referred to as treaties or covenants), which set international norms and standards.

Immediately after the UDHR was adopted, the work to codify the rights it contained into a legally binding convention began. For political and procedural reasons, these rights were divided between two separate covenants, each addressing different categories of rights:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) (ICCPR) articulates the specific, liberty-oriented rights that a state may not take from its citizens, such as freedom of expression and freedom of movement.
- The International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (1966) (ICESCR) addresses the articles in the UDHR that define an individual's rights to certain basic necessities, such as food, housing and health care, which a state should provide for its citizens, in so far as it is able to.

Both Covenants also protect the right to self-determination, although this is a collective right – a right for people, not for individuals.

Since its adoption in 1948, the UDHR has served as the foundation for the core human rights conventions and treaties. Together these constitute the international human rights framework, the evolving body of the international documents that define human rights and establish mechanisms to promote and protect them.

### Core United Nations Human Rights Treaties

- International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965
- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966
- Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, 1979
- Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989
- Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and the Members of their Families, 1990
- Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2006.
- Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances, 2006

Note: Date refers to the year the UN General Assembly adopted the treaty.

### Commitment by ratification

**Ratification** of a convention is a serious, legally binding undertaking by a government on behalf of a state. Every convention contains a number of articles that establish procedures for monitoring and reporting on how well a ratifying government is complying with the convention. When a government ratifies a convention, it accepts the procedures contained within it, which may include the following commitments:

- to uphold the convention, respecting, promoting, and providing for the rights contained within, and not to take any action prohibited by the treaty;
- to change any law in the country that contradicts or does not meet the standards set by the convention;
- to be monitored by a designated authority, responsible for checking that it is keeping to its commitments;
- to report at regular intervals on the state's progress in making these human rights real and effective.

Once a country ratifies a convention, its citizens have a powerful advocacy tool. They can hold their government accountable if it fails to respect the human rights to which it has made a commitment.




For this reason, citizens need to know which human rights conventions their country has promised to uphold. The **Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)**, for example, establishes very specific standards for the humane treatment of children who are detained by the police. If cases of mistreatment arise, such as children being imprisoned with adults, child advocates can demand that the government behave according to the standards it has promised to uphold.

## The evolution of human rights

The human rights framework is dynamic. As the needs of certain groups of people are recognised and defined, and as world events point to the need for awareness and action on specific human rights issues, international human rights law continuously evolves in response. For example, when the UDHR was written in 1948, few people recognised the dangers of environmental degradation, nor its connection with human rights. For that reason, the UDHR does not mention the environment. Since then, however, understanding has grown that fundamental environmental rights require recognition and protection, and there have been various initiatives to embed environmental rights in international law, and to make the connection with human rights explicit. In 2017, a Declaration of Ethical Principles in Relation to Climate Change was adopted in the framework of UNESCO. The Declaration advocates, for example, that prevention of harm is one important ethical principles in relation to climate change. In accordance with this principle, people should aim to “anticipate, avoid or minimize harm, wherever it might emerge, from climate change, as well as from climate mitigation and adaptation policies and actions.”<sup>1</sup>

Today many human rights treaties and declarations exist, forming a large body of international human rights law. As more rights become recognised and established, this body of law grows – mainly as a result of the collaborative efforts of governments and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The process is always lengthy, but two relatively recent examples are the UN Convention on the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearances (2006) and at regional level, the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (2007).

Although the evolution of human rights culminates in and becomes formalised at the UN level, the process of change is nearly always initiated at the grassroot level by people struggling for justice and equality in their own communities. Since the founding of the United Nations, the role of NGOs has steadily grown. It is NGOs - both large and small, local and international - that carry the voices and concerns of people to the United Nations. Although the General Assembly - composed of representatives of governments – adopts treaties, which are ratified by governments, NGOs exert influence at every level. Not only do they contribute to the drafting of human rights conventions, they also play an important role in advocating for ratification of treaties and in carrying out monitoring to see that governments are living up to their obligations.

 Are there non-governmental organisations in your country that monitor and advocate for human rights? Do any work on children's rights? Are they effective?

Like all human endeavours, the United Nations and the human rights framework that has evolved under its auspices are far from perfect. Many critics say the world does not need more human rights conventions – it needs instead the full implementation of those treaties already in existence. Other people believe that the UN system is itself so flawed that the high ideals and standards it seeks to establish lack any credibility. However, in the scope of human history, both the UN and human rights framework are in their infancy. The challenge to citizens of all countries is to work towards making more effective UN institutions without compromising the high ideals on which the UN was founded.

## An Agenda for 2030

In 2015, 170 world leaders gathered at the UN Summit for Sustainable Development with the aim of developing an agenda which would put an end to poverty and facilitate sustainable development. The new Agenda, known as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, builds on the Millennium Development Goals and incorporates a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets – including such goals as ending poverty everywhere, ending hunger, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, and so on (see diagram for the full list of goals).

The SDGs are grounded in international human rights law and are intended to guide global and national development plans up to 2030. They apply across all countries of the globe, aiming to leave no-one behind, and cover issues related to the full spectrum of human rights, including economic, civil, cultural, political, social rights and the right to development. In this way, Agenda 2030 offers an opportunity to advance the realisation of human rights for all people everywhere, without discrimination.



## The CRC as an example of the development of a human rights convention

The creation of a human rights convention always involves the collaborative efforts of many individuals and institutions. The starting point is always a perceived need, a human rights problem that needs to be addressed by the international community. It may be a general need to codify basic rights, such as those in the International Covenants, or a specific global concern, such as the proliferation of landmines or trafficking of persons.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child provides an example of the process by which a human rights convention evolves, and the role of NGOs in its creation.

### 1. Identification of a problem

Efforts to protect children from abuse and exploitation date back to the nineteenth century, when children were generally regarded as the property of their parents until they reached the age of

maturity, generally at twenty-one. Reformers focused on child labour and the abuse of homeless or orphaned children. In 1923 Eglantyne Jebb drafted a Declaration on the Rights of the Child, which consisted of five points. The Declaration was endorsed by the League of Nations in 1924.

However, and despite the work on this Declaration, the UDHR and the conventions that evolved within the UN human rights framework only tacitly accepted that, like every human being, children had human rights. The UDHR recognises the right of children to special assistance and social protection, regardless of their status at birth (Art. 25). However, the UDHR and subsequent human rights treaties did not recognise children as rights holders, but only as mere objects of protection.

## **2. A statement of general principles**

A next step towards the Convention on the Rights of the Child was the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Child. This was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1959 and was based on the structure and contents of the original 1924 Declaration. The new Declaration had ten principles instead of the original five. As a declaration, these principles were not legally binding on governments.

## **3. The drafting process**

These principles then needed to be codified in a convention. The formal drafting process for the Convention on the Rights of the Child lasted nine years, during which representatives of governments, intergovernmental agencies, such as UNICEF and UNESCO, and NGOs, both large and small, worked together to create consensus on the language of the convention. National organisations working on specific issues, such as child labour, health, education or sports were involved, as were larger international organisations, such as Save the Children, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and Oxfam.<sup>2</sup>

## **4. Adoption**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989.

## **5. Ratification**

The CRC was immediately signed and ratified by a larger number of nations in a shorter period of time than any other UN convention.

## **6. Entry into force**

As a result of its rapid ratification, the Convention entered into force as international law in 1990, only a few months after its adoption. The total number of member states that have ratified the CRC has surpassed that of all other conventions: as of 2020, the United States is the only member state which has not ratified it. It is the most widely ratified convention.

## **7. Optional Protocols**

Optional Protocols are later additions to existing treaties, and states can choose whether or not they wish to sign and ratify them. In 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted two Optional Protocols to the CRC. The Additional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography aims to protect against sexual exploitation. The Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict was designed to increase the protection of children from involvement in armed conflicts. In 2014, a third Optional Protocol was adopted (the Optional Protocol on a Communications Procedure), allowing children or persons acting on their behalf to bring complaints directly before the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

## 8. Implementation, Monitoring and Advocacy

The Convention provides individuals, NGOs and international organisations with a legal basis for advocating on behalf of children. The Convention can be used to motivate a government to sign or ratify, and then to monitor how well they respect their treaty obligations. When a government fails to meet these commitments and violates the rights of children, NGOs can call them to account for their failings and violations. The CRC is a legal instrument that details the obligations for states' parties, and provides a solid basis for claims of children rights. In addition to being a tool for advocating for a monitoring system, the CRC supports the change in traditional perspectives and perceptions of children, and is an important source of inspiration and encouragement to move even further beyond the standards set by the convention.

### Regional human rights conventions

While the rights covered in the UN human rights framework are international in scope, complementary human rights systems have been developed that apply to people living in specific parts of the world. These regional human rights conventions are meant to reinforce UN Conventions, which continue to provide the framework and set minimum standards for all parts of the world.

Examples of regional conventions are:

- **European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (ECHR, also known as the European Convention on Human Rights), adopted in 1950 by the Council of Europe and now ratified by its 46 member states;
- The **European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**, adopted in 1987 by the Council of Europe;
- **The European Social Charter**, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1961 and revised in 1996;
- **The American Convention on Human Rights**, adopted in 1969 by the Organisation of American States (OAS), and applying to ratifying governments in North, Central and South America;
- **The African Charter on Human and People's Rights**, adopted in 1981 by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU);
- **The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child** adopted by the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in 1990;
- **The European Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse**, adopted by the Council of Europe in 2010.

### Human rights mechanisms of the Council of Europe

The **European Convention on Human Rights** is the oldest and strongest of these regional human rights systems, with standards for Europe that sometimes surpass those of international human rights conventions. The twenty-seven European Union member states are also members of the Council of Europe and are thus legally obliged to recognise and respect human rights as embedded in the ECHR through their national legislation, resorting to international mechanisms as a 'last resort' when domestic remedies prove ineffective. Within the Council of Europe, overseeing compliance with the European Convention is the responsibility of the Committee of Ministers and the European Court of Human Rights, located in Strasbourg, France.

The European Court of Human Rights is a permanent judicial body that hears and decides on individual or State applications concerning violations of the European Convention on Human Rights. These complaints can be submitted by anyone in the jurisdiction of one of the member states who has exhausted all judicial means available within the national context. The European Court complements the human rights guarantees that exist at the national level.

While the European Convention and the European Court of Human Rights remain central to the Council of Europe's work on human rights, the organisation has developed several non-judicial means to monitor and further the realisation of human rights in its member states. For example, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is an independent body of experts which monitors racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance at the level of Europe as a whole. ECRI makes recommendations to governments on how to combat racism, and works in close cooperation with NGOs.

The **European Social Charter** (ESC, adopted 1961, revised 1996) guarantees social and economic human rights, such as adequate housing, accessible health care, free primary and secondary education and vocational training, non-discrimination in employment and safe work conditions, legal and social protection, fair treatment of migrant persons and non-discrimination in every sphere of society. The ESC establishes a supervisory mechanism, the European Committee of Social Rights, to ensure that states that have ratified the Charter implement these rights. States must report annually to the European Committee of Social Rights on their progress.

The **Commissioner for Human Rights**, an independent institution within the Council of Europe, is mandated to promote awareness of, and respect for, human rights within the member states. The Commissioner identifies possible shortcomings in human rights law and practice, helps to raise awareness and encourages measures to achieve tangible improvements in the promotion and protection of human rights. There is an important distinction between the European Court of Human Rights and the Commissioner. The Court is reactive: it can respond only to complaints laid before it by individuals or by the member states themselves. The Commissioner, on the other hand, may be proactive, conducting investigations into how human rights are safeguarded in different European countries. However, only the Court has the power to take decisions – in the form of judgments – which are binding on the member states.

## Children's rights in the Council of Europe

### Treaties

All of the Council of Europe mechanisms listed above also apply to children and can be used to protect children's rights. Indeed, the Council of Europe has made significant contributions to the protection of children through the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the European Committee on Social Rights. Various Conventions directed specifically towards promoting and defending the rights of children have been adopted by the Council of Europe:

- The European Convention on the Adoption of Children (1968, revised 2008)
- The European Convention on the Legal Status of Children born out of Wedlock (1978)
- The European Convention on Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions Concerning Custody of Children and on Restoration of the Custody of Children (1983)
- The European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights (2000)
- The European Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, also known as "the Lanzarote Convention" (2010)

The last of these treaties – the Lanzarote Convention – has been ratified by all 46 Council of Europe member states and by Tunisia. The Convention requires that State signatories criminalise all kinds of sexual offences against children, and that they adopt specific legislation and take measures to prevent sexual violence, to protect child victims and to prosecute perpetrators. The Lanzarote Committee monitors compliance with the treaty and regularly edits opinions on emerging issues of child sexual exploitation.

The above standards are completed by a number of “soft law” Recommendations on child participation, child-friendly justice, child-friendly social services, child-friendly health services, children in the digital environment, children in migration and other specific issues.<sup>3</sup>

### **Europe for and with children**

In 2006, the Council of Europe launched a programme called ‘Building a Europe for and with Children’. This has formed the framework of a series of initiatives and strategies designed to focus on protecting and promoting children’s rights among member states.

The current Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016 – 2021; “Sofia Strategy”) identifies five key priorities for member states:

1. Equal opportunities for all children: guaranteeing children’s social rights by, inter alia, fighting poverty and preventing exclusion, especially in the times of economic austerity; countering discrimination, including against children affected by migration, children with disabilities, those from minority groups, as well as LGBT and intersex children.
2. Ensuring the meaningful participation of children in all matters affecting them, including in decision-making processes especially when it comes to child-related laws, policies and actions. Participation is also promoted through schools and facilitated by supporting the development of citizenship and human rights education.
3. A life free from violence for all children: combating child sexual exploitation and abuse; eliminating corporal punishment in all settings; countering other forms of violence – bullying, including homophobic and cyber-bullying, and protecting children from radicalisation-linked violence.
4. Child-friendly justice for all children: protecting the rights of children in conflict with the law, especially by avoiding prosecution and promotion of reintegration measures, and the rights of children involved in civil proceedings, in particular in the context of family proceedings.
5. Rights of the child in the digital environment: promoting creative, critical and safe use of the Internet.

### **A tool to assess child participation**

The [Child Participation Assessment Tool](#) has been developed by the Council of Europe in order to support states in meeting the goals of the [Recommendation on participation of children and young people under the age of 18](#). The tool offers a method for facilitating and supporting the implementation of the child’s right to participate. It provides 10 basic indicators enabling states to:

- undertake a baseline assessment of current implementation of the recommendation
- help identify measures needed to achieve further compliance by states
- measure progress over time.<sup>4</sup>

## Children's rights in a digital world

The digital world has opened new possibilities but has also introduced new challenges for young people – for example, threats to private life, data protection, the risk of exploitation, cyberbullying or hate speech. The Council of Europe's work in this area has so far mainly been aimed at children's safety and protection in the digital environment, but the internet as a tool for learning and for participation and citizenship are also being explored, for example with the launch of an intergovernmental project entitled "Digital Citizenship Education". The Strategy for the Rights of the Child promotes children's participation rights in the digital world as a separate priority area. The most prominent outcome of the Council of Europe work in this area is Recommendation(2018)7 on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment, completed by a Handbook for policy makers.

The Council of Europe have created an online game [Through the Wild Web Woods](#) to help children learn basic Internet safety rules. The game uses familiar fairy tales to guide children through a maze of potential dangers, whilst also teaching them to protect identity and personal data, participate safely in chat rooms, recognise sites and online games containing harmful content, develop a critical approach towards online information, and protect their computers against spam and viruses. The game, mainly for children between the ages of 7 and 10, already exists in more than 20 languages. A Teachers' Guide to the game assists educators in helping children to use the Internet safely and responsibly.<sup>5</sup>

## What are children's rights?

Children do not have no more nor less rights than adults. Children are entitled to the same *human* rights as anyone else, but very often need special support in seeing their rights fulfilled. However, in view of the fact that they often experience violations of their rights as a result of their age or vulnerability, children regularly need additional protection, ensuring that they are able to claim their rights.

The CRC provides an ideal approach for children to learn about their human rights. Because it outlines the human rights of children, children themselves, parents and adults who work with children should all be familiar with this important standard of the international human rights framework. *Compasito* frames children's rights within the broader context of human rights as a whole and seeks to help children understand that, along with all other human beings, they too are rights-holders.

## **About the CRC**

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (also called the Children's Convention) defines a child as anyone below the age of eighteen and affirms the child as a full holder of human rights. It contains 54 children's rights articles that can be divided into three general categories, sometimes known as the 'three Ps':

- **Protection** articles, guaranteeing the safety of children and covering specific issues such as violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- **Provision** articles, providing for the child's growth and development, such as through education, healthcare, adequate housing, and play.
- **Participation** articles, recognising the child's ability to participate in decisions affecting him/her, and participate in society in accordance to his/her age and maturity.

The Convention adopts several ground-breaking approaches to human rights. The child's right to be heard (Article 12 of the CRC) constitutes an area not previously addressed in the UDHR (1948) or the Declaration on the Rights of the Child (1959).

The Convention strongly emphasises the primacy and importance of the child's family, in role, authority and responsibility. It affirms the child's right to preserve his/her identity, and to have his/her identity, culture and language respected. The Convention also exhorts the state to support families that are not able to provide an adequate standard of living for their children.

While acknowledging the importance of family for a child's well-being, the CRC also recognises children as rights-bearing individuals, guaranteeing them the right to identity, to privacy, to information, to thought, conscience, and religion, to expression, and to association. The application of these rights in practice may differ according to the child's evolving capacities

The Convention has had an enormous impact worldwide. It has intensified the child-rights efforts of UN agencies such as UNICEF and the International Labour Organization (ILO); it has affected subsequent child-rights treaties - e.g. the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, which speaks of a child's right to a family rather than a family's right to a child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and the Council of Europe's Lanzarote Convention, which protects children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. The CRC has also focused international movements to stamp out pervasive forms of child abuse such as children exploited through prostitution and child in armed conflict, both of which are now the subjects of optional protocols to the CRC.

## General principles of the Convention

According to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the CRC contains four general principles, applicable throughout the entire convention and according to which all other rights should be interpreted:

1. **Non-discrimination** (Article 2): All rights apply to all children without exception. The state has an obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination.
2. **The child's best interest** (Article 3): The primary consideration in all actions dealing with any child should be his or her best interest. In all cases, the best interests of the child take precedence over the interests of the adults concerned (e.g. parents, teachers, and guardians). However, the question of how to decide on the best interests of the child remains difficult to determine and open to discussion.
3. **The rights to life, survival and development** (Article 6): the right of the child to life is paramount, and it is the state's obligation to ensure the child's survival and development. This means that children cannot be subject to the death sentence as stated in Article 37(b).
4. **The child's right to be heard** (Article 12): The child has the right to express an opinion and to have that opinion given due weight according to his/her age and maturity in any matter affecting him or her.



The child's best interest is a fundamental principle of the CRC. However, who should decide what is best for a child? What happens when parents, teachers, authorities or the child have conflicting opinions about what is 'best' for the child?

The Convention is a powerful instrument, which by its very nature engages young people in examining their own rights. It is also an effective tool to assist people of all ages in identifying the complex responsibilities that go with ensuring these rights for children. Using the convention in this way will teach children how to advocate on their own behalf.



## Monitoring the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Like all human rights treaties, the CRC contains articles that establish how governments' compliance with the treaty will be monitored. Part II, Articles 42-45, of the Convention sets up these procedures and requirements:

- It requires that governments make the rights in the Convention widely known to both adults and children (Article 42);
- It establishes the Committee on the Rights of the Child, a body of independent experts that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by its state parties (Article 43);
- It requires states to report every five years on their efforts to implement the Convention (Article 44);
- It encourages international cooperation in the implementation of the Convention, especially with specialised UN agencies such as UNICEF (Article 45).

The mandatory reports are submitted every five years and are usually prepared by a government agency specialising in children's issues. The reports are supposed to indicate both successes in implementing the Convention, and areas where the Government has fallen short, including identifying problems, constraints and obstacles, and indicating what the government intends to do to overcome these challenges. The report is presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva, where the Office of the United Nations' High Commissioner for Human Rights is based. The Committee reviews it and makes recommendations for future action.



Which government agency prepares the report on implementation of the Children's Convention in your country? How do they acquire their information?

The monitoring and reporting process also provide an opportunity for civil society institutions, NGOs, specialist agencies, children and young people, and other people dealing with children to participate actively. They may produce an alternative or 'shadow' report which challenges government claims or raises issues that may have been missed in the official report.



Have alternative or shadow reports been submitted from your country? If so, who wrote them? On which issues did they differ from those of the government?

## Other monitoring mechanisms

The UN often appoints an expert to serve as a **Special Rapporteur** to gather information on a critical issue or country. In response to international concern about the growing commercial sexual exploitation and the sale of children, in 1990 the UN General Assembly created a mandate for a rapporteur to gather information and report on the sale of children, child pornography and child prostitution. This is the only UN mandate for a Rapporteur with an exclusive focus on children.

A number of NGOs also monitor how the Children's Convention is being implemented. Some of these are large international children's advocacy organisations such as Save the Children and Child Rights Information Network (CRIN). Others operate at the regional and national levels. In Europe, for example, the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children (ENOC) investigates, criticises and publicises administrative actions that might be violating the CRC. ENOC's membership includes representatives from a majority of member states of the Council of Europe<sup>2</sup>.

A Children's ombudsperson (or ombudsman, or Commissioner) exists in numerous countries as a public office responsible for the promotion and protection of children's rights. Ombudspersons can often intervene directly, without the authority of parents or guardians, to represent a child's rights in civil or criminal cases where children are directly or indirectly involved. A Children's Ombudsperson can normally be contacted directly with a complaint by concerned individuals.



Is there a Children's Ombudsperson in your country? Do you know how to contact him / her, or which issues can be taken up?

## Promoting the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Civil society, children, teachers, parents and other agencies can play a major role in raising awareness and in lobbying for action to promote child rights. To ensure that everyone who works with children as well as children themselves are aware of these rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child needs to be available in school libraries and read and discussed with children and with parents.

One of the most important ways to promote the Convention is through systematic human rights education, beginning in the early years of childhood. Every child has the right to know their rights! *Compasito* wants to help children learn about their rights.

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- 1 <https://en.unesco.org/themes/ethics-science-and-technology/ethical-principles>
  - 2 The drafting process and the role of NGOs is thoroughly documented in the "Travaux Préparatoires", suggested reference: Detrick, S., Doek, J. E., Cantwell, N., "The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: A Guide to the 'Travaux Préparatoires'", 1992.
  - 3 For a comprehensive list of adopted texts: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/publications>
  - 4 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/child-participation-assessment-tool>
  - 5 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/through-the-wild-web-woods>
  - 6 For the full updated list, please consult [www.enoc.eu](http://www.enoc.eu)

## Chapter 2

# WHAT IS HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION?



[E]very individual and every organ of society ... shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms

*Preamble, Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

## Defining human rights education

Any definition of human rights education will struggle to capture the numerous ways in which people, young and old, come to understand, practise and value their rights and respect the rights of others. In 2002, the Human Rights Education Youth Programme introduced a broad definition that included formal, non-formal and informal education possibilities and contexts for learning human rights:

Educational programmes and activities that focus on **promoting equality in dignity**, in conjunction with other programmes such as those promoting intercultural learning, participation and empowerment of minorities

This definition, which focused on the transformational function and aim of human rights education, remains largely valid. It was further articulated and detailed in the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education<sup>1</sup> which embraces methods, educational objectives and a long-term goal:

Human rights education means education, training, awareness raising, information, practices and activities which aim, by equipping learners with knowledge, skills and understanding and developing their attitudes and behaviour, to **empower learners to contribute to the building and defence of a universal culture of human rights in society**, with a view to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The Charter asks member states to develop policies, legislation and practice which aim at:

providing every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education

The Charter also recognises that learning in human rights education is **a lifelong process** and involves a wide range of stakeholders including policy makers, educational professionals, learners, parents, educational institutions, educational authorities, civil servants, non-governmental organisations, youth organisations, media and the general public.



What is your definition of human rights education?

## Objectives and principles of human rights education

Human rights education always takes place in a particular setting and needs to be based on the needs, preferences, abilities and desires of the learners. The key to understanding human rights education is to look to the purpose, because no matter what the methodology or context happens to be, the aim is always the development of a culture of human rights. The essential elements of such a culture can provide a series of general objectives for human rights education:

- to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms
- to value human dignity and develop individual self-respect and respect for others
- to develop attitudes and behaviours that will lead to respect for the rights of others
- to ensure genuine gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men
- to promote respect, understanding and appreciation of diversity, particularly towards different national, ethnic, religious, linguistic and other minorities and communities
- to recognise and combat racism and any form of racial discrimination
- to empower people towards more active citizenship
- to promote democracy, development, social justice, communal harmony, solidarity and friendship among people and nations
- to further the activities of international institutions aimed at the creation of a culture of peace, based upon universal values of human rights, international understanding, tolerance and nonviolence.

## Knowledge, skills and attitudes



### Knowledge and understanding: Learning *about* human rights

What type of knowledge or understanding do children need to possess in order to be able to recognise human rights in their daily lives? Which skills and attitudes do they need, in order for a culture of human rights to flourish? *Compasito* seeks to answer these questions both in the background information it provides for facilitators and in the activities it recommends for children's learning about human rights. Together, these help to support a holistic approach that embraces learning about human rights, learning for human rights and learning through human rights.

Although a child's understanding of human rights depends partly on their maturity, in general it ought to include the following basic ideas:

- Human rights provide standards of behaviour which are applicable in the family setting, at school, in the community and in the wider world
- Human rights standards are universally accepted: every country around the world has accepted them, at least in principle; they apply to everyone everywhere

- Every child has human rights, and every child is responsible for respecting the rights of others. Children's rights include so-called protection, provision and participation rights
- All children's rights are laid down in the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Other legal documents also exist to safeguard human rights, for example:
  - » the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), at international level the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), at regional level
  - » Bills of rights or human rights protections in a country's constitution often exist at national level.

### **Skills: Learning *for* human rights**

Children need to acquire the skills that will enable them to participate in democratic society and contribute to building a culture of human rights. Skills and competences for human rights include:

- Active listening and communication: being able to express opinions, listen to different points of view, and evaluate arguments
- Critical thinking: distinguishing between fact and opinion, being aware of prejudice and preconceptions, recognising forms of manipulation
- Co-operating in group work and addressing conflict positively
- Consensus building
- Participating democratically in activities with peers
- Expressing ideas and opinions with confidence
- Problem solving.

### **Attitudes: Learning *through* human rights**

Human rights are not just legal documents, relevant to politicians, lawyers and activists. They are also principles for how people, including children, should live together. However, because they are mainly visible through the actions they inform, human rights values and attitudes are perhaps the most difficult aspect of human rights education. For the same reason, they are also arguably the most important aspect. Children learn as much or more from unspoken examples as they do from actual lessons – and they have a keen sense of hypocrisy! It is important for everyone who works with children to model the human rights values they wish to impart. Attitudes to be developed in human rights education include:

- Respect for self and others
- A sense of responsibility for one's own actions
- Curiosity, an open mind and an appreciation of diversity
- Empathy, solidarity with others, and a commitment to support those whose human rights are denied
- A sense of human dignity, of self-worth and of others' worth, irrespective of social, cultural, linguistic or religious differences
- A sense of justice and social responsibility, to ensure that everyone is treated fairly
- The desire to contribute to the betterment of the school or community
- Caring for environmental sustainability and the future of humanity
- The confidence to promote human rights both locally and globally.

## Competences for democratic culture

The idea of competences provides a useful way of integrating the three areas of knowledge, skills and attitudes, and describing sets of complex capabilities. A competence describes what someone knows, understands and is able to do, including psychologically. This means that competences also embrace values and attitudes – in other words, they include not only what a person is technically capable of doing, but also what they might be willing to do.

The Council of Europe has developed a ground-breaking set of competences to help teach young people how to live together as democratic citizens in diverse societies. The competences are not about teaching students what to think, but rather how to be able to navigate a world where people have different priorities and different opinions, and where everyone has a responsibility to support and promote the democratic principles which allow cultures to co-exist. The framework allows member states to adapt the competences themselves to suit their own needs and educational system and the distinct cultural contours of their own societies. The competences are particularly relevant to human rights education, not only because democracy is a human right in itself, but also because democracy is the overarching system of government in which human rights can best be protected. The competences are organised into four broad categories:<sup>2</sup>

Values	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valuing human dignity and human rights</li> <li>• Valuing cultural diversity</li> <li>• Valuing democracy, justice, fairness, equality and the rule of law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Openness to cultural otherness and to other beliefs, world views and practices</li> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Civic-mindedness</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Self-efficacy</li> <li>• Tolerance of ambiguity</li> </ul>
Skills	Knowledge and critical understanding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autonomous learning skills</li> <li>• Analytical and critical thinking skills</li> <li>• Listening and observing</li> <li>• Empathy</li> <li>• Flexibility and adaptability</li> <li>• Linguistic and communicative</li> <li>• Co-operation skills</li> <li>• Conflict-resolution skills</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge and critical understanding of the self</li> <li>• Knowledge and critical understanding of language and communication</li> <li>• Knowledge and critical understanding of the world: politics, law, human rights, cultures, religions, history, media, economies, environment, sustainability</li> </ul>

## Methodology for human rights education

Participatory methods respect individual differences and assume that everyone has the right to an opinion. This makes them particularly effective for human rights education. Education which delivers more than factual content, and which aims to develop skills, attitudes, values and action, requires an educational structure that is 'horizontal' rather than 'hierarchical'. Democratic teaching methods engage each individual and empower children to think independently. Such methods encourage the critical analysis of real-life situations and can lead to thoughtful and appropriate action to promote and protect human rights. To be really effective, human rights education must also provide children with a supportive framework where the rights of every individual child are respected.

The principles outlined below are common educational practices in many different subjects and across a wide variety of learning environments, both formal and non-formal. They are particularly appropriate for human rights education.

- Respect for children's experience, and recognition that a variety of points of view may exist
- Promotion of personal enrichment, self-esteem, and respect for the individual child
- Empowerment of children, enabling them to identify what they want to know and to seek information for themselves
- Active engagement of children in their own learning, with a minimum of passive listening
- Encouragement of non-hierarchical, democratic, collaborative learning environments
- Encouragement of reflection, analysis, and critical thinking
- Engagement of subjective and emotional responses, as well as cognitive learning
- Encouragement of behavioural and attitudinal change
- Emphasis on developing skills and competences, including the ability to apply learning in practical situations
- Recognition of the importance of humour, fun, and creative play for learning.

The activities in *Compasito* incorporate these principles in a variety of methods and techniques. Facilitators should always be aware that methods may sometimes be inappropriate for groups of mixed cultural backgrounds or children with special needs (e.g. relating to physical contact, graphic arts), or they may require unfamiliar or unavailable resources (e.g. access to Internet or library resources).

Each activity should be approached with the expectation that the methods may need to be adapted to meet the needs of a particular group or to suit a particular cultural or social environment.



What are the advantages of a participatory educational process?  
What are the challenges?

## Formal and non-formal education

Many of the choices and adaptations that a facilitator makes depend on the make-up of the group, the age of the children, the skills of the facilitator and the context in which they live and work. One important consideration is whether the setting for human rights education is formal, non-formal or informal.

**Formal education** refers to the structured education system that runs from primary to tertiary education, and may also include specialised programmes for technical and professional training. The



main providers are schools and a range of higher education institutions. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child make it compulsory to provide primary education – at least – for all children.

Non-formal education refers to any deliberate, voluntary and planned programme of personal and social education that aims to convey and practise values, and develop a wide range of skills and competences, outside the formal education curriculum. Non-formal education for children might include out-of-school activities, extra-curricular activities in schools, summer camps and leisure centre activities. Non-formal education uses a participatory approach to learning.

Informal education refers to the lifelong process whereby people acquire attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in their own environment and from daily experience (e.g. family, neighbours, library, mass media, work, play). Informal education is not organised according to a planned programme.

Formal, non-formal and informal education are complementary and mutually reinforcing elements in a lifelong learning process. The activities in *Compasito* have been designed to be flexible enough for use in all such contexts: in the school, in children's organisations, in youth clubs, in summer camps, in social work settings and even in the family.

## Human rights education with children

Childhood is the ideal time to begin learning about human rights values – and learning to live them. The different objectives of human rights education can easily be interpreted to fit the world of the young child in very concrete ways, all relating to the child's personal experiences in the community, in the family, and in the various relationships they encounter every day with adults and other children. Human rights education is partly about cultivating a set of common values and attitudes for these everyday encounters – for example, it seeks to develop children's self-confidence, encourage empathy, and develop a sense of fairness and justice.

Human rights education supports children in:

- valuing themselves and others
- recognising and respecting human rights in everyday life
- being able to articulate and make sense of their own rights
- appreciating and respecting diversity and difference
- developing skills and attitudes to address conflict in non-violent ways that respect the rights of others
- feeling confident about taking steps to defend and promote human rights.

Although children are at the beginning of their educational journey, they possess a wealth of knowledge about the world and the people in it. As far as possible, human rights learning should connect with and build on what children already know. This is true even for young children: it is never too young to begin exploring questions such as what is fair, what is right, how we should treat others, how we would like to be treated – and so on. Indeed, if young children can begin by discussing such questions, they will learn important skills for later life, and will broaden their understanding of the types of values and principles which are necessary for peaceful co-existence – both in the classroom, and later on, in society. For example, although they may not use words like justice, equality or discrimination, by the age of 7 or 8 most children have a strong sense of what is 'fair'.



What are some of the common examples of 'unfairness' that your children complain about? Do you discuss these?

*Compasito* is not intended or recommended as a 'course' on human rights, but as a resource for raising children's awareness and understanding of human rights in the context of their lives. Human rights educators, or facilitators of human rights education activities, should look for opportunities to relate human rights to what is happening in the school, the community and the specific group of children. This might be a conflict in the playground, negative attitudes towards minorities or sexist exclusion of girls from certain activities. On the other hand, facilitators should avoid approaching human rights only from the perspective of violations. Rather, emphasise that we enjoy some, perhaps most, of our human rights every day: that is partly why the violations are noticeable.

One primary aim of human rights education is to encourage people to take action on behalf of human rights. You can encourage and develop children's ability to participate and take appropriate and meaningful action to address issues which appear to be unfair, or where they or someone else has been hurt or humiliated. This may include giving them the skills to resolve conflicts within the group or the family, or to alter their own behaviour towards siblings. Action may also take place in the wider community, for example organising a celebration for International Human Rights Day or putting on an exhibition of human rights artwork.

The younger the children, the more they will rely on the facilitator's support in initiating and executing more complex projects.

## The right to human rights education

Education in human rights is itself a fundamental human right, and governments have a responsibility to ensure that people know about their rights.

The Preamble to the UDHR exhorts "every individual and every organ of society" to "strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms". Article 26.2 of the UDHR states that

Education shall be directed ... to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

The UN Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training states that

States are duty-bound, as stipulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and in other human rights instruments, to ensure that education is aimed at strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Article 1 of the same Declaration states that

Everyone has the right to know, seek and receive information about all human rights and fundamental freedoms and should have access to human rights education and training".

The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education "[recalls] the core mission of the Council of Europe to promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law", acknowledges the central role of education and training in furthering this mission, and calls on governments of member states to implement the measures outlined in the Charter, and to "ensure that the Charter is widely disseminated to their authorities responsible for education and youth".

In general, people who do not know their rights tend to be more vulnerable to rights abuses and the often lack the language and conceptual framework to be able to advocate effectively for them. All the more reason for introducing human rights education to children!

There is a growing consensus around the world which recognises that a quality education needs to include education for, about and through human rights. Such an education can contribute to the building of free, just and peaceful societies. Human rights education is also increasingly recognised as an effective strategy to prevent human rights abuses.

## Human rights education and other educational fields

*Compasito* is structured around 14 human rights-related themes, each of which relates directly to one or more concrete human right and they reflect areas where children's rights are often violated, or they connect with children's daily lives.



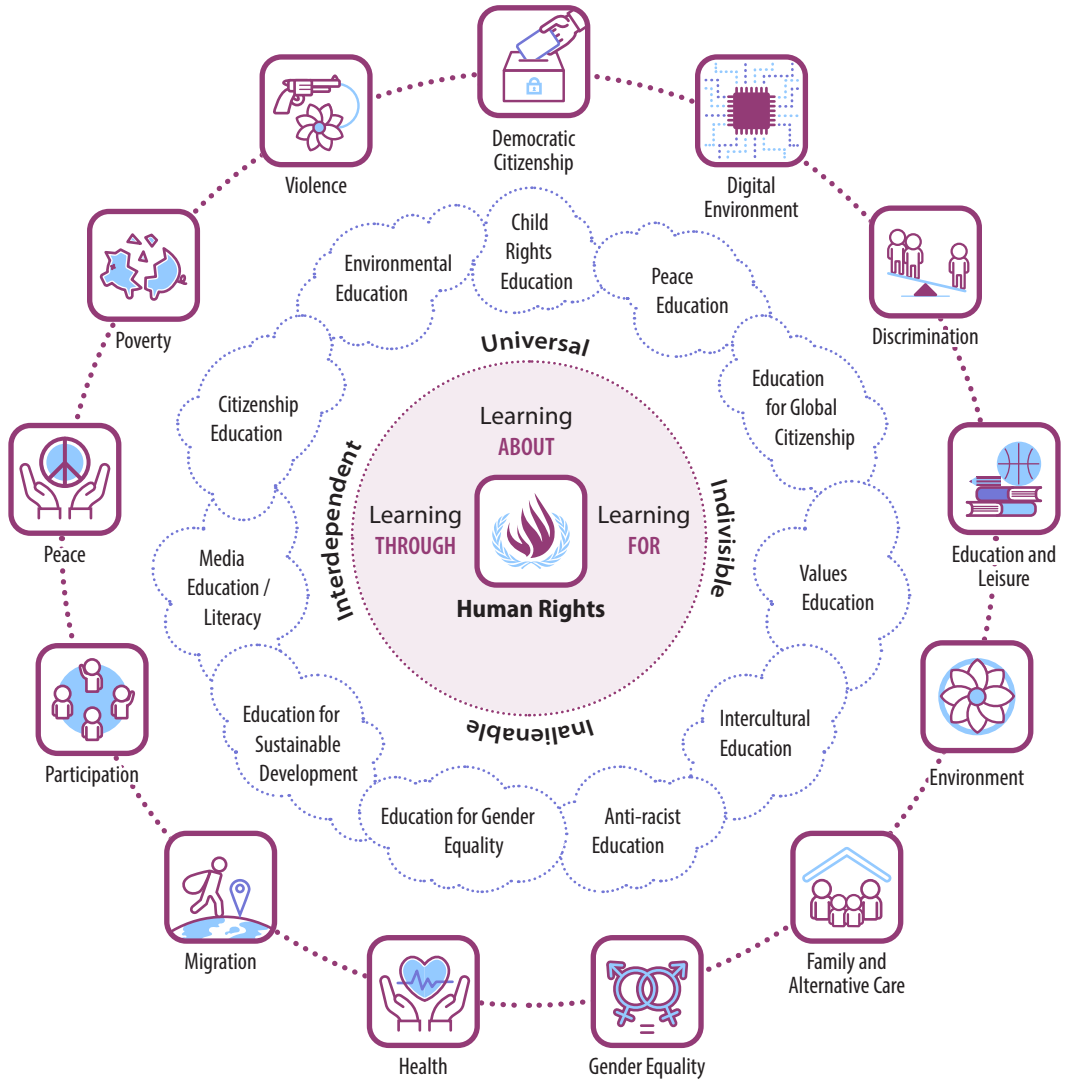
These themes carry equal importance. Indeed, they are interrelated to such a degree that addressing any one of them inevitably carries links to others. This is a direct consequence of the fact that human rights are **indivisible, interdependent and interrelated**: they cannot be treated in isolation, because they are connected to each other in numerous intricate ways.

These problems are not exclusively of interest to human rights educators; they are equally relevant to all those who are engaged in promoting a just and peaceful world and in protecting children's rights. Depending on the educational and social context, educators and facilitators may be encouraged or required to implement and adopt specific educational programmes that connect or partly overlap with human rights education or that prioritise a specific theme. It may be called child rights education, peace education, education for sustainability, media education, gender equality education, environment education, citizenship education or even "patriotic education".

Often, especially in non-formal education activities, we call on children's sense of responsibility and dignity without necessarily calling it human rights education. Human rights education is indeed varied and is present in more ways than we often think! However, it is crucial that the essential values of human rights and principles of human rights education be present for an activity to *promote equality in human dignity*.

The diagram below provides an illustration of the interconnections and potential overlaps between thematic issues and education fields. The issues in the outer circle blend into one another, just as the educational spheres in the central circle merge together.

## Human Rights education in *Compasito*



## The international context for human rights education

“ Democracy is not fixed and immutable, but rather ... it must be built and rebuilt every day in every society.

*The Dakar Framework for Action*

Human rights education has an essential role to play in the development of a human rights culture. This has become increasingly recognised in recent years by national, regional and international programmes and instruments, perhaps particularly since the democratic transition in dozens of countries in Central and Eastern Europe at the end of the 20th century. International organisations are continuing to play an essential role in developing more effective and consistent human rights education strategies at the national level.

### United Nations

#### World Programme for Human Rights Education

In 2004, the UN General Assembly proclaimed a World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing). This Programme “seeks to promote a common understanding of basic principles and methodologies of human rights education, to provide a concrete framework for action and to strengthen partnerships and cooperation from the international level down to the grass roots”. It has been structured into phases, each accompanied by a plan of action providing guidance for implementation at national level:

- The first phase (2005-2009) focused on human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems.
- The second phase (2010-2014) focused on human rights education for higher education and on human rights training programmes for teachers and educators, civil servants, law enforcement officials and military personnel.
- The third phase (2015-2019) focused on strengthening the implementation of the first two phases and promoting human rights training for media professionals and journalists.
- The fourth phase (2020-2024) focuses on youth.

#### Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training

On 19 December 2011, the UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, which recalls the duties of member states to promote and encourage respect for human rights, and notes the “fundamental importance of human rights education and training in contributing to the promotion, protection and effective realization of all human rights”. In the Resolution adopting this Declaration, the General Assembly “[i]nvites Governments, agencies and organizations of the United Nations system, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to intensify their efforts to disseminate the Declaration and to promote universal respect and understanding thereof”.

The declaration reaffirms the responsibility of Governments to promote and ensure human rights education and calls on states to “create a safe and enabling environment for the engagement of civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders in HRE and training.”

The declaration was the first document adopted by the UN specifically focusing on human rights education.<sup>3</sup>

## UNESCO

UNESCO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, has played a key role in the development, implementation and evaluation of HRE initiatives around the globe for many years. For example:

- It has developed frameworks and guidelines to assist educators in human rights education, citizenship education, intercultural education and other related fields. Of particular note is *A Human Rights-Based Approach to Education for All: a framework for the realization of children's right to education and rights within education*.
- It works closely with UNICEF (see below) to support member states in realising the right to education, including doing so through awareness-raising campaigns and training programmes.
- It offers technical assistance in mainstreaming human rights education and advocates for the inclusion of human rights principles and values within the education.

### Education 2030

UNESCO has also been engaged in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). It is now leading and co-ordinating its follow-up, the Global Action Programme on ESD.

In 2015, at the World Education Forum, the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030 announced that:

Our vision is to transform lives through education, recognizing the important role of education as a main driver of development and in achieving the other proposed SDGs [Sustainable Development Goals]. We commit with a sense of urgency to a single, renewed education agenda that is holistic, ambitious and aspirational, leaving no one behind.

## UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund is the UN agency responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide. UNICEF works in partnership with a broad coalition of UN agencies, governments, NGOs, and local grassroots organisations "to help build a world where the rights of every child are realised". UNICEF's work is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

UNICEF's educational programmes are dedicated to making sure that all children can enjoy their right to a quality education. It runs a number of programmes specifically designed to further education in children's rights (and human rights) internationally, regionally and at national level. Voices of Youth is a child-friendly UNICEF website, providing information about questions related to children's life at a global level, and interactive games to promote children's rights. The UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre develops and produces research on the situation of children internationally, in the belief that awareness and understanding of children's rights improves children's situation everywhere in the world.

UNICEF has developed a Child Rights' Education toolkit – 'Rooting Child Rights in Early Childhood Education, Primary and Secondary Schools'<sup>4</sup> – based on the same principles of human rights education applied to Children's Rights.

## Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is the only political organisation which brings together nearly all the countries of Europe, with a total of 46 members. Founded in 1949, its mission is to guarantee and promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

For the member states of the Council of Europe, human rights are supposed to be more than just part of the legal framework; they should also be an integral part of education for children, young people and adults.

In 2010, the **Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education** was adopted by the Committee of Ministers: this is an important reflection of the central role that education plays in the promotion of the Council of Europe's key values – democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

In doing so, the member states recognised the importance of human rights education and education for democratic citizenship, and committed themselves to implementing the measures set out in the Charter and to ensuring that it was widely disseminated to the authorities responsible for education and youth. The Charter contains definitions of education for democratic citizenship and of human rights education, and also includes policy guidelines on how to implement national policies and programmes to support these two subjects. It is presented in the form of a Recommendation from the Committee of Ministers and, since its acceptance in 2010, has succeeded in energising work across the region, both by the Council of Europe and by other organisations.

Every five years, the Education and Youth Departments of the Council of Europe run a review of member states' progress in implementing the Charter. This exercise is part of the Council of Europe's contribution towards the United Nations World Programme for Human Rights Education and the United Nations' 2030 Education Agenda.



*Human Rights and Democracy Start with Us – Charter for All* is a guide to the Charter adapted and designed for children and young people so that they can understand and claim their right to human rights education.

## Human Rights Education Youth Programme

The Council of Europe's Youth Programme supports non-governmental youth organisations in implementing the Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education. This support takes the form of tools and resources on human rights education and capacity-building activities for trainers, multipliers and advocates of human rights education as a human right.

The Human Rights Education Youth Programme was established in 2000, with the aim of bringing human rights education into the mainstream of youth work. The work was originally built around *Compass*, the manual for human rights education with young people. Through a cascading effect, the Programme has reached thousands of individuals and NGOs. Human rights education has become a central part of youth work in Europe and has had important effects on formal education as well.

The Council of Europe youth strategy reaffirms the close relationship between youth policy, youth work and human rights education. The Committee of Ministers defined the aims of the youth sector as enabling young people across Europe to actively uphold, defend, promote and benefit from the Council of Europe's core values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Increasing capacity building and resources for youth organisations and other relevant stakeholders to provide human rights education and advocate access to rights is also defined in the same document as a priority for action.

## Internet literacy and HRE online

The digital world demands additional skills and awareness from young people and also opens up new routes to learning. For human rights education, there are rights concerns online, of which young people need to be made aware, and their opportunities to exercise rights, in particular rights to expression, to information and to participation.

The Council of Europe has published an Internet Literacy handbook<sup>5</sup> and an online game 'Through the Wild Web Woods'<sup>6</sup>, which presents children's rights in child-friendly language. The Youth Department's No Hate Speech Movement, as well as being an educational campaign against hate speech, was also a campaign for human rights online, designed to develop online youth participation and citizenship, including participation in Internet governance processes. The campaign involved groups from over 40 countries and, in addition to traditional campaigning activities, has developed educational resources such as Bookmarks<sup>7</sup>, which remains a very useful resource to complement *Compass* and *Compasito*.

## Non-governmental organisations

Non-governmental organisations play an essential role in the development of a culture of human rights, particularly at the national and local level. Governments often fail to live up to expectations when it comes to the integration of human rights education into the curriculum, and NGOs, as highly committed groups with specialist expertise, can act as watchdogs as well as playing a more proactive role – for example, by contributing to the development of the human rights legislation.

Global human rights organisations, such as Amnesty International, have worldwide educational programmes and work systematically on advocating for human rights education. The People's Movement for Human Rights Education (PDHRE-International) has worked to facilitate Human Rights learning and training at the community level in more than 60 countries, and has produced a range of resources to support learning and dialogue for socio-economic transformation.

Some organisations, such as Human Rights Education Associates (HREA), Democracy and Human Rights Education in Europe (DARE) and many youth organisations, have human rights education as



a focus: they support human rights learning and the training of activists and professionals, develop educational materials and seek to raise the profile of education for democratic citizenship and human rights.

Other organisations concentrate on educating about children's rights. For some, such as Save the Children or Terre des hommes, this is an important part of their worldwide mission; others, such as the Children's Rights Information Network, serve hundreds of child-related NGOs by collecting and disseminating information. At the local and national level, many non-governmental organisations work to organise human rights education programmes and projects involving children and young people.

The Human Rights Education Youth Network is an international youth organisation that gathers individuals and organisations committed to human rights education for and with young people.

Clearly there are many kinds of human rights education and a wide spectrum of institutions and individuals seeking to promote rights learning. These diverse efforts have a great deal in common: all are grounded in the international human rights framework and seek to empower people to realise human rights in their daily lives in concrete and practical ways.

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- 1 Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)7: [https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result\\_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cf01f](https://search.coe.int/cm/Pages/result_details.aspx?ObjectID=09000016805cf01f)
  - 2 More information at [www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture](http://www.coe.int/en/web/education/competences-for-democratic-culture)
  - 3 More information about the Declaration and the World Programme on HRE can be found on the Internet site of the Office of High Commissioner for Human Rights – [www.ohchr.org](http://www.ohchr.org)
  - 4 The toolkit is available at [www.unicef.org/documents/child-rights-education-toolkit](http://www.unicef.org/documents/child-rights-education-toolkit)
  - 5 [www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/internetliteracy/hbk\\_fr.asp](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/standardsetting/internetliteracy/hbk_fr.asp)
  - 6 [www.wildwebwoods.org/popup.php?lang=en](http://www.wildwebwoods.org/popup.php?lang=en)
  - 7 [www.nohatespeechmovement.org/bookmarks?bookmarks](http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org/bookmarks?bookmarks)

## Chapter 3

# HOW TO USE *COMPASITO*

“ No child can learn about human rights in an environment that does not itself respect and promote a culture of human rights. The most important contribution a facilitator can make to a child’s understanding of human rights is to create that environment.

## Getting started with *Compasito*

This chapter is intended to support you, the facilitator, with practical information about using *Compasito*. However, do not let so many “how-to’s” and “should’s” discourage you. No-one knows your context and your children better than you do. Take the information and advice that is helpful to you and run the activities with your group. When you have questions, you may find some helpful answers here. If you create an environment that respects and promotes the human rights of a child, that child is learning about human rights!

Unlike lesson plans for use in a school curriculum, *Compasito* was designed to be as adaptable as possible to the many settings where children can learn about human rights, from summer camps and out-of-school programmes, to youth groups and field trips, as well as school classrooms. Although many *Compasito* activities require some preparation, they can be run almost anywhere and any time. Finding the moment when children are most receptive to human rights learning – which could be when a conflict occurs in the group, but also when the group is feeling celebratory – is part of the art of facilitation: your art!

This chapter covers the following topics

- The goal of *Compasito*
- Experiential learning
- Facilitation
- Thinking and learning styles
- Children’s developmental levels
- What is in a *Compasito* activity?
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child as a foundation
- Selecting activities
- Adapting activities
- Tips for promoting participation
- Tips for facilitation
- Practising human rights education

*Compasito* seeks to develop in children the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes they need to participate in their society, knowing and protecting their rights and the rights of others. In this way, children can actively contribute to building a culture of human rights.

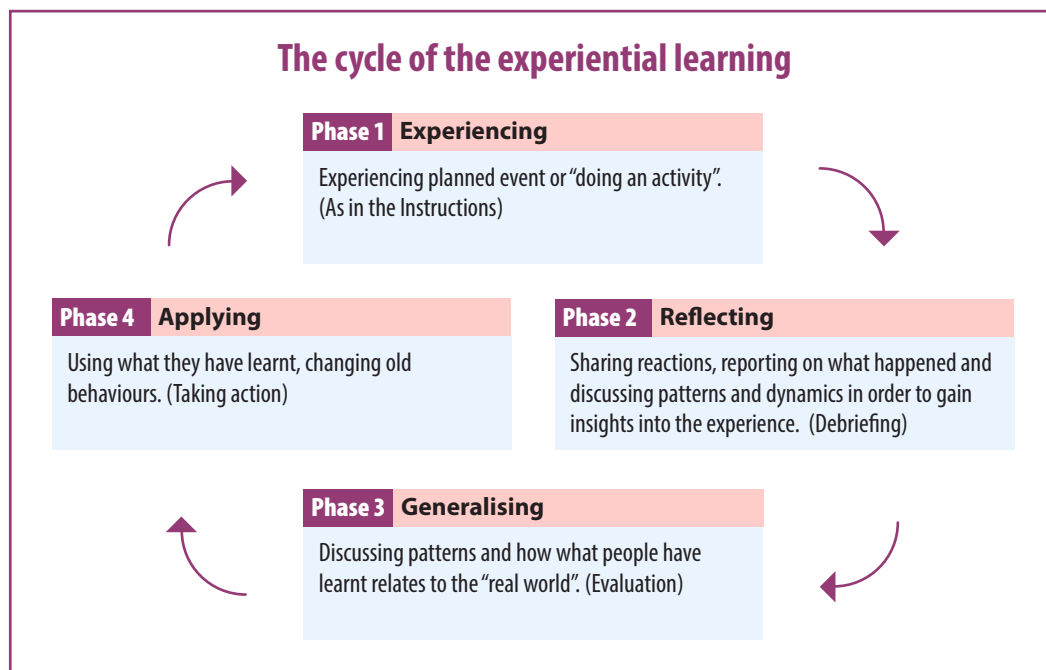
To accomplish this goal, *Compasito* learning activities are designed to:

- start from what children already know as a basis for exploring new ideas and perspectives
- encourage children to participate actively in discussion and to learn from each other as much as possible
- inspire and enable children to put their learning into simple but meaningful and appropriate action in support of justice, equality and human rights
- reflect the core values of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and encourage a culture of human rights among children.

Attitudes and values related to communication, critical thinking, advocacy, responsibility, tolerance and respect for others cannot be taught; they must be learned through experience. For this reason, the activities in *Compasito* promote co-operation, participation and active learning. They aim at a holistic engagement of the child’s head, heart and hands. Only a child who understands that human rights evolve from basic human needs and feels empathy for other human beings will take personal responsibility to protect the human rights of others. This is also reflected in an open-ended learning approach whereby participants are not steered towards one “right” answer, because ambiguity is a fact of the world we live in. Open-ended learning encourages self-confidence to express opinions and critical thinking. This is essential in human rights education because human rights issues are bound to result in different opinions and understandings; it is therefore important for the learners to learn together but still be free to disagree or come to opposite conclusions or points of view.

## Experiential learning

How do we create that understanding and empathy in a child? Human rights education is about education for change, both personal and social. To accomplish this change, the activities of *Compasito* are based on a learning cycle with four phases.



Although all these phases may not always be obvious or occur in this order, they are implicitly present in every *Compasito* activity. There is some *experience* (a planned event / stimulus / activity such as a role-play) followed by a *debriefing* (phase 2) and *evaluation* (phase 3). Each activity description includes suggestions for questions to guide the debriefing and discussion to help people reflect on what happened, how they felt about the experience and how the experience compares with what they already know and relates to in the wider world. Finally, people move on to phase 4, that of *applying*, of putting their learning into practice.

This methodology of experiential learning permits children to develop and change knowledge, skills, attitudes and values in a safe environment that is both challenging and fun. Because it validates the child’s experience and encourages children to take responsibility for their own learning,

experiential learning enhances participation, self-reliance and self-confidence. Each phase of this cycle honours children's lived experience while challenging them to articulate, observe, reflect, question and draw conclusions.

## Experiencing

Phase 1 is about creating or providing a common experience for the group of participants, drawing on their interaction, life realities and opinions. This is usually reflected in the instructions for each activity. The experience of this phase allows the group of learners to have a common reference point for analysis and discussion, and to address human rights issues in the environment and in their lives.

## Reflecting

Phase 2 encourages children to articulate their feelings and reactions. For example, in the 'Debriefing and evaluation' section of each *Compasito* activity, children respond to questions such as "How did you feel during this experience?" or "What happened during this game?". Such open-ended questions invite a wide range of personal opinions about what they experienced in a non-judgmental context. Reflecting also moves children beyond the experience of the activity to its conceptual implications. For example, the discussion that follows an activity such as 'World Summer Camp', leads children to consider that the game can be seen as a metaphor for xenophobia. In the activity 'Cookie Monster', for example, children experience the value of working co-operatively, but the subsequent discussion asks them to articulate this discovery. Asking questions such as "Have you experienced something like this in your life?" or "Why does this happen?" helps children make these connections.

The importance of the debriefing stage cannot be overstated. Without adequate time to discuss children's responses and explicitly make a link to human rights, an activity is at best just a game, a period of fun that can be quickly forgotten. At worst, it can reinforce negative attitudes and stereotypes, mislead or confuse children, or even arouse and not deal with painful emotions. If you do not have time for a thorough debriefing, do not run an activity.

## Generalising

Phase 3 connects the experience of the activity to the "real world" in general and especially to the way human rights are experienced in everyday life. For example, after a simulation activity such as 'Blind- folded' or 'Silent Speaker', children discuss how physical disabilities can limit a child's enjoyment of human rights. Phases 3 and 4 are especially effective in eliciting independent thinking and creating opportunities for children to learn from each other. Learning is highly individualised, not every child will derive the same learning from participating in the same activity and discussion, and these different responses need to be respected.

## Applying

In Phase 4, children explore what they themselves can do to address human rights issues. Taking action is not only a logical outcome of the learning process, but also a significant means of reinforcing new knowledge, skills and attitudes which form the basis for the next round of the cycle. It is also a key element in developing active citizenship in a democracy: individuals can make a difference, even as children. For example, the activity 'A Constitution for Our Group' leads the group to develop its own list of rights and responsibilities, to refer to them to resolve conflicts and to revise them democratically as needed.

Although the activities in *Compasito* are intended to engage children and be fun, they are also purposeful, offering children a chance to apply what they have learned to their social environments.

Most activities have a section of 'Ideas for action'. Such action might be individual and find expression only in the child's private life, such as a new attitude towards siblings. Action might also be collective and result in developing new classroom rules or ways of handling playground conflicts. The Internet also offers new and simple ways for children to 'take action' on global human rights issues. For example, check the websites of human rights and environmental non-governmental organisations for action ideas.

Facilitators play a crucial role in stimulating children to think through their experiences and especially to relate their concerns to human rights. For example, children may decide independently that their school should be more welcoming to newcomers, but they may need the facilitator to connect their action to the human rights principle of non-discrimination.

Whatever its level and type, however, the action that children take should be voluntary and self-directed. The facilitator can encourage and assist children in finding an appropriate action to achieve their goals. However, the motivation to take action must come from children themselves, otherwise children are not learning to become active citizens but rather to follow the directions of an authority figure. Even in a small group there may be great differences in children's readiness and willingness to take action. Not everyone who wants to do something will want to take the same action. The facilitator needs to help children find a range of options for action that meet the diversity of their abilities and interests. Facilitators have a responsibility to make sure that any actions proposed remain within what the law allows, and respect norms and regulations applying to the safety of the children and respect their rights. Facilitators must also see when the consent of the parents or guardians of the children is required and to connect with the school or community authorities concerned.

## Facilitation

*Compasito* uses the word 'facilitator' for the people who prepare, present and co-ordinate the activities and create an environment where children can learn, experience and experiment with human rights. The facilitator sets the stage, creating a setting where human rights are respected but the children are the main actors on this stage. There is, however, no perfect environment for human rights education. Even situations where children violate each other's rights can become learning experiences. The success of any activity, however, depends principally on the tact, skill and experience of the facilitator.

Many people who work with children are unfamiliar with facilitation and find it challenging and even uncomfortable. They take for granted their traditional role as 'leader' or 'teacher'. Most children are also conditioned to depend on an adult to impart information; however, children accept responsibility for their own learning more readily than adults give up their role as authority and expert. Facilitation is not difficult, however, and most facilitators 'learn by doing', provided they understand and accept the shift to a child-centred, experiential approach to learning.

The art of facilitation requires not only a shift in focus, but also a high degree of self-awareness. Because children are powerfully influenced by the behaviour of adults in their lives, facilitators must take care to model the human rights values they wish to convey. An activity on gender stereotyping, for example, will be useless if the facilitator habitually displays gender bias. For this reason, facilitators must recognise, acknowledge and conscientiously address their own prejudices and biases, even more so if they are directed against children in the group.



Every human being has prejudices! What are yours?

Could some of your prejudices affect the children you work with?

What can you do to address these prejudices?

## Thinking and learning styles

To excite the talents and interests of a variety of children, facilitators benefit from a familiarity with the different ways that people think and learn, including themselves. Although everyone uses a mixture of thinking and learning styles, every person has a preferred or dominant style. Below are some common categories (many others exist).

### Thinking styles

- **Visual learners** tend to represent the world to themselves in pictures. They may use phrases such as “I see what you mean”.
- **Auditory learners** remember more of what they hear and may use phrases like “That sounds like a good idea”.
- **Kinaesthetic learners** tend to remember things through feelings, both physical and emotional. They tend to use terms such as “I love it. Let’s go for it”.
- **Learning styles**
- **Activists** learn best from new experiences, problems and opportunities from experience. They love games, teamwork, task and role-playing exercises. They react against passive learning, solitary activities like reading and independent research, and tasks that require attention to detail.
- **Reflectors** learn best when they can think over an activity. They enjoy research, reviewing what has happened and what they have learned. They react against being forced into the limelight, having insufficient data on which to base a conclusion and having to take short cuts or do a superficial job.
- **Theorists** learn best when what they are learning about is part of a system, model, concept or theory. They like structured situations with a clear purpose and dealing with interesting ideas and concepts. They often dislike participating in situations that emphasise feelings.
- **Pragmatists** learn best from activities where the subject matter is clearly linked to a real problem and where they are able to implement what they have learned. They react against learning that seems distant from reality and all “theory and general principles”.



Most people naturally teach and work with groups in a way that matches their own thinking and learning style. Is that true for you?

With what kinds of learners would you be most effective?

What kinds of learner would have most difficulty learning from you?

How can you adapt your communication style to reach more learners?

In practise everyone uses a combination of ways of thinking and learning, and every group of children presents the facilitator with many different learning needs and styles. Keep this in mind when selecting activities from *Compasito*, balancing the types of activities to match the differing needs and learning styles of the children you work with.

Differences in thinking and learning can also account for the way activities run and how children debrief and evaluate them. You will notice that the same activity produces different levels of participation and different results in different children. Some children are more likely to respond to debriefing questions than to other children. Remember, too, that thinking and learning styles may account for only part of these differences. Because of a whole range of factors beyond your control, the same children may react quite differently to the same activity on a different day! As you become more familiar with *Compasito* activities, you will be better able to account for these differences.

## Children's developmental levels

The activities in *Compasito* are developed for children between the ages of 6 and 13, although many can be easily adapted to younger and older children as well as adults. Childhood is the ideal time to introduce human rights education, for although young children already hold strong values and attitudes, they are also receptive to new perspectives and experiences. Developing values such as respect for others and tolerance of difference or skills, such as empathy and critical thinking, requires years. It is never too early to begin!

At the same time children are still very dependent on the guidance and support of adults, especially their families, care-givers and teachers, as well as their peers. Some of the human rights values and attitudes that *Compasito* endorses may clash with those children encounter in other parts of their lives. Explaining the goals and methods of *Compasito* to parents, teachers or community leaders can help prevent potential conflict. Facilitators need to be sensitive to such potential conflicts both within the child and with the child's home, school or community environment. In every case, a child at any level of development should not be made the focal point of such conflict.

While each child is unique, the lists below summarise the main characteristics of these age groups. A skilled facilitator needs to understand the developmental level of the group and select and/or adapt activities to match their physical, cognitive, emotional and social development.



6 to 7-years-olds

### Physical development

- enjoy outdoor activities with brief but energetic spurts of activity
- prefer simple manual tasks, especially combined with developing a particular physical skill

### Cognitive and emotional development

- like to talk but have a short attention span and have difficulties listening to others
- are very curious
- learn best through physical experiences
- have difficulty making decisions
- can read and write, but these skills are still in the emergent stages
- are highly imaginative and easily become involved in role-play games and fantasy play
- like stories about friendship and superheroes
- enjoy cartoon figures

### Social development

- are very competitive
- sometimes find co-operation difficult





8 to 10-years-olds

### Physical development

- seem to have endless physical energy

### Cognitive and emotional development

- like to learn new things, but not necessarily in-depth
- become more aware of differences and inequalities among others
- enjoy problem solving
- enjoy question-answer games
- can feel very frustrated if their work does not meet their expectations

### Social development

- enjoy more independence but still need support
- like to talk and discuss things with peers
- can be very critical of both self and others
- are better able to co-operate
- like to belong to a group
- start to idolise real heroes, TV stars and sports figures instead of cartoon figures.



11 to 13-years-olds

### Physical development

- mature a lot physically although these changes vary greatly among children and may cause self-consciousness and uncomfortable feelings

### Cognitive and emotional development

- mature greatly in their ability to think in a more abstract way
- enjoy arguing and discussing
- find some games predictable and boring; prefer complex activities that involve creating unique strategies and products
- tend toward perfectionism in what they do
- begin to perceive that a story or event can be seen from more than one perspective
- show an increasing interest in social and current events

### Social development

- have a growing interest in a wider social and physical environment
- enjoy testing the limits of self and others
- can combine playfulness and seriousness at the same time
- become more concerned about how they appear to others
- like to learn from role models
- start developing more advanced play in groups and teams
- like to co-operate for common goals
- are strongly influenced by attitudes and behaviour of peers.

## What is in a *Compasito* activity?

The activities in *Compasito* have been designed to promote experiential learning about human rights for a wide variety of settings, learning styles and developmental levels. *Compasito* activities start with an abstract, imaginative situation that engages children as a group, but their debriefing and evaluation section moves to a more personal and individual level. The debriefing and evaluation are the most important part of any activity. Without it, a *Compasito* activity is just an activity. Much more significant than missing an opportunity for human rights learning, however, omitting the debriefing can do real harm, reinforcing stereotypes and trivialising the emotions an activity can evoke in children.

Because non-formal education of this kind appeals strongly to the emotions, certain human rights topics may come uncomfortably close to the reality of some children's lives. Facilitators need to be mindful of this potential when they choose or adapt any activity for their group.

Every activity in *Compasito* is presented in a format designed to help the facilitator select and run the activities that best fit the needs of the group. There are sample discussions questions, tips for facilitating and adapting the activity, and suggestions for follow-up activities the group could take on the human rights issues involved in the activity.

### Activity title

#### Teaser

##### Themes

The human rights themes addressed in the activity (See Chapter 5, for a discussion of these themes). Three themes are proposed for most activities, permitting facilitators to emphasise the issue closest to the children's concern or interest. Themes also suggest the interdependence and correlation among different human rights issues.



##### Level of complexity

A rating of 1, 2 or 3, based on factors such as the degree of children's knowledge or competences required, learning objectives, sophistication of subject matter, complexity of rules time frame, potential risks and group dynamics. A higher level of complexity reflects more difficulty in reaching the learning objectives. However, many activities can be adapted to change the level of complexity. Complex activities are also usually richer in dynamics and issues, and therefore results.



##### Age

The appropriate age group for the activity as it is presented (it can be adapted to other age groups).



##### Duration

The estimated average time for running and debriefing the activity. The actual time may depend on many circumstances such as the size and maturity of the group.



##### Group size

The optimal number of children for running the activity.

##### Type of activity

The kind(s) of engagement the activity calls for (e.g. role-play, drawing, discussion, board game).

##### Overview

A brief summary of what happens in the activity.

<b>Objectives</b>	The intended outcomes of the activity in terms of knowledge, skills, attitudes and action or behaviour about/for human rights.
<b>Preparation</b>	A list of things that need to be prepared before starting the activity.
<b>Materials</b>	A list of materials needed to run the activity.
<b>Instructions</b>	Step-by-step instructions on how to organise and run the activity.
<b>Debriefing and evaluation</b>	Discussion topics for reflecting on the activity, articulating and generalising its main ideas and relating them to human rights. Debriefing is the most important part of any activity and should never be omitted!
<b>Suggestions for follow-up</b>	Further group action or other activities in <i>Compasito</i> that could complement this activity
<b>Ideas for action</b>	Suggestions for ways to respond to the issues raised by the activity.
<b>Tips for the facilitator</b>	Suggestions for improving and/or adapting the activity or for avoiding potential problems.
<b>Further information</b>	Additional information useful for the activity.
<b>Handouts</b>	Texts or illustrations to be copied and made available for the activity.

## The Convention on the Rights of the Child as foundation of *Compasito*

Every activity in *Compasito* relates explicitly or implicitly to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Some introduce children to the document (e.g. 'Rabbit's Rights' or 'Sailing to a New Land'). Others build on this introduction to make children more familiar with their rights, as in 'A Human Rights Calendar' and 'Human Rights in the News'. Some more advanced activities ask children to decide what is or is not their human right or to name specific rights (e.g. 'Board Games').

Because the CRC is central to *Compasito*, facilitators need to be familiar with the document themselves and be able to explain its meaning to children. *Compasito* provides a child-friendly version of the CRC. As this document is called for in many activities, you may want to laminate copies for frequent reuse. You may also want to make a poster-sized version to hang in the place where you meet the children so that you can refer to it easily. A set of cards with the rights of the CRC is also presented for usage in some activities (e.g. 'Board games'). Facilitators should consider printing them on hard paper to make them easier to use.

The CRC contains some complex concepts that will almost certainly need some explanation for children to understand:

**Dignity:** The equality and inherent dignity of every human being is a fundamental concept of human rights. Children may need help in defining this concept in concrete terms.

**Discrimination:** Freedom from discrimination is another fundamental tenet of human rights included in all principal human rights documents. Article 2 of the CRC prohibits discrimination in several specific areas, which children may not fully understand:

- 'Race'
- Ethnic or social origin, property ('social or economic status')
- Birth, which includes children born inside or outside of marriage.

**Evolving capacities** ('Growing maturity'): This phrase in Article 5 refers to the child's increasing ability to exercise rights as he or she becomes older and more capable of responsibility and independent judgment.

**Refugee** ("you have come to a new country because your home country was unsafe"): Article 22 refers to refugees. Most children (and many adults) do not differentiate between an immigrant – who has come to make a new life in a new country, and a refugee – someone who has left the home country because of a well-founded fear of danger or persecution. Unlike immigrants, most refugees want to return home when they are no longer under threat and are entitled to support from the government of the country where they have taken refuge. You may also need to explain that people who are forced to leave their homes but remain in their country are not considered refugees but 'internally-displaced persons'.

The following terms used in the child-friendly version of the CRC may need discussion, both for what they mean and why these concepts are important to human rights. Some terms may have several meanings, not all of which are known to children (e.g. that 'violence' can be both physical and psychological, actual and threatened; that a 'disability' can be physical, mental or psychosocial). Other terms may be only vaguely understood and need concrete examples (e.g. 'exploitation', 'culture', 'abuse', 'neglect'). Ask the children to provide examples from their own experience.

- Abuse / mistreatment / neglect
- "Accepted everywhere as a person according to law"
- Association
- Cultures / traditions
- "Develop physically, mentally, spiritually, morally and socially"
- Disability
- "Exercise your rights"
- Exploitation
- Government
- "Have your birth registered"
- "Have your situation reviewed"
- Health professionals
- "Honour and reputation"
- Identity
- Juvenile justice
- Leisure
- Loss of liberty
- Media
- Nationality
- Nutritious food
- Pornography
- Privacy
- Prostitution
- Rehabilitation
- Social security
- Trade union, union
- Violence
- Warfare
- War zone

When you are introducing children to the CRC, they do not need this level of detailed information. As they become more familiar with human rights, however, look for opportunities to refine their understanding or correct misunderstandings when you observe them. Keep an eye out for the "teachable moment".

## Selecting activities

The facilitator has a variety of factors to consider in determining which activities from *Compasito* to use. Most important of these considerations are:

**1. Your children.** Before selecting activities, the facilitator first needs to know the children involved.

- What are their levels of development, interests, concerns and learning styles?
- Are there conflicts and problems within the group?
- Do these children face particular issues or problems within the community?
- How much do the children already know about human rights? Some *Compasito* activities assume prior introduction to the CRC, for example.

However, don't feel you must wait to use *Compasito* activities until you know the answers to all these questions. Often playing activities is the most efficient way to learn about your group!

**2. Your learning objective.** Some activities can be run to increase general understanding of human rights or even just for fun, but most can and should be directed to themes that are close to the children or are an issue in the group, the community or the world. All *Compasito* activities are good for raising awareness and actions about all human rights. They are also organised so as to allow focus on specific themes that connect between children and current challenges to human rights across Europe:



**3. A learning sequence.** Lasting knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are never achieved in a single activity. Select activities that form a series, whether based on a particular human rights theme or the development of certain competencies. This series might extend over a month, a school term or even a whole year. You may want to choose activities that fit into subject areas of the school curriculum or that address current issues in the group or community.

In every case, seek a balance of activity types and make the needs of children your first priority. Methodological diversity not only makes activities more fun, but also enables children to learn through their senses and emotions as well as their minds. For this reason, *Compasito* offers you a wide choice of techniques and methodologies (e.g. discussion, debate, storytelling, simulation, drama, board games, artistic activities, active group competition). To further assist selection, a chart showing pertinent information on all the activities in *Compasito* can be found on page 62.

## Adapting activities

Facilitators should use *Compasito* as they would a recipe book. Like good cooks, facilitators should feel free to change the “ingredients” of an activity to fit available time or materials, and the size, competence and circumstances of their group. Most activities offer tips on adaptation.

Every group of children presents many different learning styles and different levels of ability. It is easier for facilitators to offer children a variety of ways to learn than for a child to adapt to a single method. For example, an activity that is based on real-life problems, such as ‘Human Rights in the News’, may delight the ‘Pragmatists’ but frustrate the ‘Theorists’. Facilitators could adapt the activity to extend the analytical aspect by comparing how a problem is reported differently in different media. Similarly, many activities can be adapted to accommodate different levels of reading and writing skills. For example, the facilitator could take over all the written aspects of an activity such as ‘Rabbit’s Rights’. Facilitators should be creative in providing ways for children to respond to what they have learned. For example, in addition to group discussion, children might draw, mime, write in a journal or share their ideas in pairs.

Careful selection and adaptation of activities is especially important to ensure the inclusion and equal participation of children with special needs, such as homeless, migrant, refugee and institutionalised children. Avoid exposing what may be painful differences amongst the children.

Be especially sensitive to the needs of children with disabilities and avoid putting them in the position of “agreeing to” an activity in which they cannot participate equally. Instead, when you know a child in your group has a disability, adapt the activity to the child rather than expecting the child to accommodate to the activity. For example, some adaptations for children with disabilities might include:

- Avoid using red and green in an exercise. Children with Daltonism (colour-blindness) have difficulty distinguishing them.
- Include explanations and handouts in Braille for visually-impaired children.
- Position non-mobile children so as to allow them maximum participation.
- Use visual images and written instructions to encourage participation of hearing-impaired children.

## Tips for promoting participation

Skilled facilitators can ensure that every child participates fully, even the shy and disengaged. Here are a few suggestions:

- Rephrase your questions several times to ensure everyone understands.
- Use clear language that children understand; avoid jargon.
- Take responsibility for clear communication (e.g. ask “Did I say that clearly?” rather than “Did you understand?”).
- Ask open questions that cannot be answered with a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ (e.g. not “Did you enjoy that activity?” but “How did you feel about that activity?”).
- Establish ground rules for discussion (e.g. no interrupting but raising hands to speak).
- Draw out silent children, asking them to report or share experiences, but never put pressure on a child to participate.

- Create different roles for group work to ensure equal involvement (e.g. timekeeper, materials manager, reporter, scribe).
- Emphasise that every child has something to contribute to the activity.
- Summarise regularly or ask children to do this.
- Explain an activity clearly before beginning so that children know what to expect.
- Connect present activity to previous and future activities.
- Do not expose any child to ridicule, embarrassment or repercussions at home.
- When possible, seek the support of other facilitators, thus increasing the chance for children to connect with facilitators and be exposed to different teaching and learning styles.
- Acknowledge that no facilitator can control everything that happens or be aware of every child at every moment. Just be attentive without being over-concerned.

## Tips for facilitation

Every facilitator needs a repertoire of short techniques and activities for special purposes. These are often helpful for motivating the group, for engaging the children in a process, getting their attention, breaking tension or resistance, gaining their confidence and interest, or simply breaking the ice or having a bit of fun! Here are a few proven favourites. A treasury of others can be found on the Internet.

### Icebreakers / Warm-ups / Starters

For getting a group started and building solidarity.

- **Group Still Life:** Ask children to bring an object from home that has special significance to them. Each child explains the object as it is added to a group display.
- **Me Too!** Explain that children must locate others who share the same characteristic. Then call out some categories (e.g. birth month; number of siblings; kind of shoe fastening). Under the right circumstances, use more sensitive categories (e.g. religion, language spoken, skin colour).
- **Musical Chairs:** Arrange chairs in a close circle and ask children to sit down. Stand in the middle of the circle and explain that you are going to state your name and make a statement about yourself. When you do, everyone for whom that statement is also true must change chairs. (e.g. "I am X and am left-handed", "I am X and I have a cat" or "I am X and I dislike eating \_\_\_"). Try to get a chair for yourself. The person left without a chair then makes a similar statement about herself or himself. Continue until most children have had a chance to introduce themselves in this way.
- **Portraits:** Divide children into pairs and give each plain paper and a pen. Explain that each person is to draw a quick sketch of the other and to ask some questions (e.g. name, hobby, a surprising fact) that will be incorporated into the portrait. Allow only a short time for this and encourage everyone to make their portraits and names as large as possible. Then ask each child to show his or her portrait and introduce the "original" to the group. To facilitate learning names, hang the portraits where everyone can see them.
- **Teamwork:** Divide children into small teams and allow them time to discover the characteristics they have in common (e.g. culture, appearance, personal tastes, hobbies). Ask each team to give itself a name based on their shared qualities. Each group then introduces themselves to the others and explains their name.

## Energisers

For raising or refocusing the group's energy.

- **The Chain:** Ask children to stand in a circle with their eyes closed. Move them around, attaching their hands to each other so that they make a knot. Then tell them to open their eyes and try to untangle themselves without letting go of their hands.
- **Fireworks:** Assign small groups to make the sounds and gestures of different fireworks. Some are bombs that hiss and explode. Others are firecrackers imitated by handclaps. Some are "Catherine Wheels" that spin and so on. Call on each group to perform separately, and then the whole group makes a grand display.
- **Group Sit:** Ask children to stand in a circle toe-to-toe. Then ask them to sit down without breaking the connection of their toes. If culturally appropriate, the children could also stand in a circle behind each other with their hands on the shoulders of the child in front. In this way, when they sit down, each one sits on the knees of the child behind them. Of course, neither version is suitable for groups in which any child has physical disabilities.
- **The Rain Forest:** Stand in the centre of children and ask them to mimic you, making different sounds and gestures for aspects of the forest (e.g. birds, insects, leaves rustling, wind blowing, animals calling) by snapping fingers, slapping sides, clapping hands, and imitating animals. The result sounds like a rain forest.
- **Silent Calendar:** Ask the whole group to line up in order of the day and month they were born. However, they cannot use words to accomplish this. You could do the same with shoe sizes, number of hours spent watching TV per week, or any other interesting personal data.
- **The Storm:** Assign different sounds and gestures to small groups of children (e.g. wind, rain, lightning, thunder). Then narrate the soft beginnings of the storm, conducting the various sounds like an orchestra (e.g. "And then the lightning flashes! And the thunder roars!") to the conclusion of the storm.
- **Three Circles:** Ask the children to stand in a circle, and silently to choose one other child in their mind, without telling anyone whom they chose. Explain that when you say, "Go", they will have to run three times around the child they chose. The result will be a complete chaos, but very funny, as everyone is running after someone and being run after at the same time.
- **To the Lifeboats!** First demonstrate a 'lifeboat': two people hold hands to form the boat; passengers stand inside the circle formed by these two people. Then explain that everyone is going on a voyage: "At first the sea is calm and everyone is enjoying the trip. Then, suddenly, the ship hits a rock. Everyone must get into a lifeboat in groups of three (or one, or four, etc.)". Children then scramble to form 'lifeboats' and take in the proper number of passages. Usually someone 'drowns'. Then tell children to get back on the ship and take up the narrative again. "Now the ship continues peacefully ... but suddenly a hurricane begins. The ship is sinking. Everyone to the lifeboats in groups of two." Continue like this through several 'shipwrecks'.

## Evaluation and reflection activities

For ending a day or a session:

- **Ball Toss:** Children toss a ball from one to another. Each person who catches the ball states one thing she or he learned or can use from the activity.
- **Collective Summary:** Pose a summarising question (e.g. "What will you especially remember from today's activity?") or an open-ended statement (e.g. "Try to think of a word or phrase that sums up your feelings at the end of today" or "I still wonder..."). Ask children to respond in turn.
- **Group Bulletin Board:** Each child in turn adds one word or picture to a group display and explains why it represents something important he or she is feeling or has learned.



- **Releasing the Dove of Peace:** The facilitator mimes holding a significant object (e.g. a dove) and invites each child to say something to it as it is passed from one child to another. After the 'object' has been passed to everyone, they draw into a tight circle and collectively let it go.

## Managing conflict

For addressing conflicts within the group and within individual children:

Conflicting feelings and values are inevitable when dealing with a topic such as human rights, especially when engaged in non-formal activities like those in *Compasito* that intentionally address children's emotions as well as their intellects. Such conflict, which may arise between children but also within an individual child, is not necessarily negative and with skilled facilitation can even be transformed into a constructive experience. Learning to deal with conflict is one of the most important life skills children can acquire and an essential one for developing a culture of human rights in the world around them. Here are some ideas:

- **Anticipate conflict:** When preparing an activity, think about possible conflicts it might evoke in the group or in individual children. Is the topic, the rules or terminology too sensitive for some or all of the children?
- **Do not provoke conflicts but also do not step aside when they arise.**
- **Don't assume conflicts are your fault – or anyone's fault.** They are normal and inevitable within every group. Help children accept that fact and avoid blaming. Focus on managing conflict, not fault finding.
- **Do not ignore bad feelings in the group.** Acknowledge their reality and help children address them.
- **Take plenty of time for debriefing and discussions** after each activity so that children have a chance to express how they are feeling, both about the activity and each other. This is perhaps your most important opportunity for modelling conflict management.
- **Talk to children individually:** Often a child's feelings are too personal or painful to be discussed within the group. When you sense this, make an opportunity to speak privately about what may be causing this distress. Let the child know you are ready to listen whenever he or she is ready to discuss the problem.

## Practising human rights education

No child can learn about human rights in an environment that does not itself respect and promote a culture of human rights. The most important contribution a facilitator can make to a child's understanding of human rights is to create that environment.

Model the principle of the child's best interest. For example, deal with the conflicts that inevitably arise among children in a manner that emphasises everyone's right to participation and to express an opinion, as well as everyone's responsibility for the welfare and harmony of the group. Engage children in actively resolving conflicts.

Practise the non-discrimination you want the children to learn. Be aware that even with the best intentions, we all reflect the biases of our own culture. These prejudices and stereotypes are especially true in the area of gender equality. Research shows that without knowing or intending to do so, most teachers give boys more attention and encouragement than girls. Make a special effort to see that girls participate equally in all parts of an activity. If necessary, practise positive discrimination.

*Compasito* can only be as effective in promoting human rights as you, the facilitator, are!

### **Respecting children's rights in human rights education**

Learning human rights through human rights education, be it in a school or out-of-school environment, implies that all children's rights are protected and respected in that process! Facilitators need to be particularly attentive to make sure that the *Compasito* activities respect everyone's right or privacy and dignity, address situations or reactions that may offend or ridicule children or make them feel uncomfortable. No child should be pressed to participate, or say / share more about their opinion or experience than they want to.

One simple way of addressing or preventing such situations is by involving more than one facilitator, which is always recommended in larger groups. This also makes it easier to attend to any particular reaction or emotional reaction during an activity.

Of course facilitators always need to take into account the specific legislation and regulations in place about the protection of children's safety and security. When in doubt, they should always opt for the safe(r) option.

### **Violence and abuse in the family**

Discussion of family life may provoke conflicting feelings in children, especially in teenagers. It may be helpful to discuss this with parents and care-givers, except where there is a reasonable suspicion of abuse of the child. If a child reveals abuse or violence, the facilitator should be prepared to support them and signal the case to the supervisor or the competent authorities in accordance with the child safeguarding policy of the institution or the child protection laws of their respective country.

## Notes for teachers

There are some fundamental challenges to meeting the aims of human rights education in a classroom setting. For example, a typical lesson period may be too short to complete all but the shortest activities, or the pupils may not be in a position to influence decisions about what they learn. In addition, the options for applying what they have learned may be more limited, but these difficulties are not insurmountable. For instance, teachers are finding ways to overcome problems such as timetabling pressures by extending an activity over two periods or by using the opportunities during "theme weeks", when the normal timetable is suspended. The activities in *Compasito* contain suggestions for adaptation to the group and to the context of learning. The creativity and competences of teachers are always needed to make sure that children and human rights education remain at the centre of the activities.

In some countries human rights education requires a change in classroom practice in order to move away from "chalk and talk" (the teacher giving the pupils information that has to be learned by heart) and moving towards encouraging critical thinking and more independent learning. In countries where teachers do not normally have the role of a coach, advisor or facilitator, changes need to be introduced gradually so that both teachers and pupils feel confident working in a democratic atmosphere where questioning and freedom of expression thrive. An understanding of the methods and techniques used in *Compasito* will help teachers make changes; these are described above and include tips on how to organise discussions in large classes. Another way to develop facilitation skills is through working together with someone experienced in this way of working. For instance, invite a facilitator from a local children or human rights organisation to co-run a session.

If it is difficult for teachers to use some of the activities, they should bear in mind that human rights education is also about developing knowledge and understanding, for instance, knowledge about what human rights are, the legal instruments, and the relevance of human rights for the development of civil society and world peace, all of which can find their place in the formal education system. The background information about human rights and the global themes are valuable teaching and learning material in their own right.

## Chapter 4

# FORTY-TWO ACTIVITIES FOR HUMAN RIGHTS EDUCATION WITH CHILDREN

## Summary of all activities

Title	Themes	Complexity	Duration	Page
A Body of Knowledge	Discrimination · Education and Leisure · Health	3	120-180	66
A Constitution for Our Group	Democratic Citizenship · Participation · Human Rights	3	60-90	69
A Human Rights Calendar	Human Rights	1	60-90	74
A Long Journey	Migration · Discrimination · Human Rights	2	60	78
A Modern Fairytale	Discrimination · Education and Leisure · Violence	2	60	81
Advertising Human Rights	Human Rights · Digital Environment	2	60-90	86
Blindfolded	Discrimination · Health · Participation	1	45+	89
Board Games	Human Rights	3	45	92
Boys Don't Cry!	Discrimination · Gender equality · Human Rights	2	60-90	106
Bullying Scenes	Discrimination · Violence · Human Rights	2	60	109
Capture the Castle	Peace · Violence · Human Rights	3	120	114
Card Games	Human Rights	1	30	118
Compasito Reporter	Environment · Health · Digital Environment	2	90-120	122
Cookie Monster	Peace · Poverty · Human Rights	2	40-60	125
Dear Diary	Discrimination · Health · Poverty	2	60	129
Every Vote Counts	Democratic Citizenship · Participation	3	90	135
From Bystander to Helper	Peace · Violence · Digital Environment	2	60	139
Human Rights in the News	Human Rights · Digital Environment · Participation	2	45-60	142
If the World was 20 People...	Poverty · Discrimination · Human Rights	3	60	145
Once Upon a Time...	Democratic Citizenship · Discrimination · Gender Equality	2	40	150
Our Flag	Democratic Citizenship · Discrimination · Participation	2	60	156
Picture Games	Discrimination · Digital Environment · Human Rights	2	30	159
Picturing Ways Out of Violence	Violence · Peace	1	60	164
Puppets Tell the Story	Human Rights	2	90-120	167
Putting Rights on the Map	Human Rights · Democratic Citizenship · Environment	3	60	170
Rabbit Rights	Human Rights · Health	1	30	173
Reading the Label	Environment · Poverty · Human Rights	3	60	176
Sailing to a New Land	Health · Migration · Human Rights	1	45	180
Silent Speaker	Discrimination · Health · Participation	2	45	188
Take a Small Step Forward	Discrimination · Poverty · Family and Alternative Care	2	60	191
Telephone Call!	Digital Environment · Discrimination · Participation	1	60	198
The Battle for the Orange	Peace · Violence · Human Rights	1	30	200
Waterdrops	Environment · Migration · Democratic Citizenship	1	60	202
We are Family	Discrimination · Family and Alternative Care · Gender Equality	2	60	207
What a Wonderful World	Environment · Discrimination · Poverty	1	50	209
What if ...	Education and Leisure · Poverty · Human Rights	2	60	211
What is in my Bag?	Migration · Discrimination · Human Rights	2	60	215
Where Do You Stand?	Democratic Citizenship · Participation · Human Rights	1	30-40	218
Who Should Decide?	Family and Alternative Care · Participation · Human Rights	2	45	221
Words that Wound	Discrimination · Violence · Digital Environment	2	60	225
World Summer Camp	Discrimination · Poverty · Human Rights	2	45-60	228
Zabderfilio	Human Rights · Discrimination	1	35	232

## Overview of the activities

Title / Type	Themes	Overview
<b>A Body of Knowledge</b> Making a collage, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Education and Leisure</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul>	Children draw the outline of a body and write in knowledge and skills relating to its different parts. They discuss how to acquire this knowledge, and what happens if certain rights are denied.
<b>A Constitution for Our Group</b> Discussion, consensus building, rule making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children develop a group 'constitution', listing their rights and responsibilities.
<b>A Human Rights Calendar</b> Drawing, painting, cutting, presenting information graphically	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children make a group calendar to mark important human right dates.
<b>A Long Journey</b> Group discussion, drawing, writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children develop a story about a family about to migrate and imagine the needs and challenges along the journey.
<b>A Modern Fairytale</b> Storytelling, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Education and Leisure</li> <li>• Violence</li> </ul>	Children take it in turns to tell a story based on a series of pictures and then find out the real story behind them which focuses on modern-day slavery.
<b>Advertising Human Rights</b> Storytelling, drawing, writing, drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Digital Environment</li> </ul>	Children develop a TV advertisement for children's rights.
<b>Blindfolded</b> Simulation, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	Blindfolded children try to dress themselves and reflect on the experience and human rights of people with a disability.
<b>Board Games</b> Board games Do You Know Your Rights? Moksha-Patamu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	This activity contains two board games about children's rights with different rules.
<b>Boys Don't Cry!</b> Discussion activity and drama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Gender equality</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children discuss gender-related statements and then create a short drama sketch on gender stereotypes and discrimination.
<b>Bullying Scenes</b> Discussion with some movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children discuss bullying and then position themselves to show how they would respond to different bullying scenarios.

Title / Type	Themes	Overview
<b>Capture the Castle</b> Active adventure game, experiential learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children represent different sides in a battle and need to organise themselves in order to win. Afterwards they discuss the different feelings on opposing sides of a conflict, the reasons and mechanisms behind it.
<b>Card Games</b> Popular games using cards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children “play” with the CRC cards and familiarise themselves with their rights.
<b>Compasito Reporter</b> Neighborhood walks, reporting, photography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Digital Environment</li> </ul>	Children report on human rights conditions in their community by taking photos of relevant examples and creating an exhibition
<b>Cookie Monster</b> Game of group negotiation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Two groups negotiate between each other to share snacks in a series of rounds, using the game to discuss the relationship between what is ‘fair’, equality and human rights.
<b>Dear Diary</b> Storytelling, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Poverty</li> </ul>	Children read three different accounts of the same experience and discuss mistaken judgments about people.
<b>Every Vote Counts</b> Discussion, planning, simulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	Children design a democratic voting process and then hold a mock vote.
<b>From Bystander to Helper</b> Personal narratives, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Digital world</li> </ul>	Children tell stories about times when they have been a victim, abuser, bystander, or helper in instances of violence.
<b>Human Rights in the News</b> Scanning media, making a poster.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Digital Environment</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	Children scan the news for different human rights that are enjoyed, violated or defended, and make posters to display their findings.
<b>If the World was 20 People...</b> Discussion, making structures out of paper cups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children use paper cups to represent all the people in the world, and then build structures according to how they think a number of basic services and qualities are distributed.
<b>Once Upon a Time...</b> Storytelling, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Gender Equality</li> </ul>	Retelling a familiar story with the characters’ gender reversed, leading to discussion of gender stereotypes.
<b>Our Flag</b> Discussion, drawing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	Children develop a group flag expressing their values and identity as a group.

Title / Type	Themes	Overview
<p><b>Picture Games</b>                      Playing with pictures  <i>Captions</i>  <i>Speech Bubbles</i>  <i>Half of the picture</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Digital Environment</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	<p>Children work with pictures to explore stereotypes, different perspectives, and how pictures can inform and misinform.</p>
<p><b>Picturing Ways Out of Violence</b>                      Creating human statues, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Peace</li> </ul>	<p>Children illustrate a conflict or violent situation with a 'human statue' and then illustrate how it could be resolved without violence.</p>
<p><b>Puppets Tell the Story</b>                      Drama with puppets, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	<p>Children create a puppet show based on a familiar story with a human rights violation. The group creates a new conclusion that responds to the violation.</p>
<p><b>Putting Rights on the Map</b>                      Drawing, analysis, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Environment</li> </ul>	<p>Children work co-operatively to create a map of their community and identify the children's rights associated with major institutions.</p>
<p><b>Rabbit Rights</b>                      Imaging, brainstorming, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Health</li> </ul>	<p>Children think about the care a pet needs and extend that to the needs of children and their right to survive and develop.</p>
<p><b>Reading the Label</b>                      Group discussion, drawing, writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	<p>Children look at the labels on their clothes and personal belongings and discuss what lies behind them.</p>
<p><b>Sailing to a New Land</b>                      Prioritising, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	<p>The children imagine they are sailing to a new continent, but to get there they must choose to cast non-essential items overboard.</p>
<p><b>Silent Speaker</b>                      Role-play, guessing game</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Health</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	<p>Children read an article from the CRC without making a sound; their team members try to identify the article by lip reading.</p>
<p><b>Take a Small Step Forward</b>                      Role play, simulation, discussion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Family and Alternative Care</li> </ul>	<p>Children imagine themselves in the role of other children around the world, and compare the difficulties involved in daily life.</p>
<p><b>Telephone Call!</b>                      Group discussion, drawing, writing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Digital Environment</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Participation</li> </ul>	<p>An adaptation of a traditional children's game, where children whisper a message from ear to ear, and then compare the result with the original message.</p>



<b>Title / Type</b>	<b>Themes</b>	<b>Overview</b>
<b>The Battle for the Orange</b> Group competition and discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peace</li> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children compete for possession of an orange and discuss how to resolve conflicts.
<b>Waterdrops</b> Experiential learning, prioritising, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment,</li> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> </ul>	Children decide how they can use water so that they do not waste it. They discuss personal action to preserve one of most important resources.
<b>We are Family</b> Drawing, Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Family and Alternative Care</li> <li>• Gender Equality</li> </ul>	Using pictures and drawings, children discuss concepts of family and different family structures.
<b>What a Wonderful World</b> Drawing, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environment</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Poverty</li> </ul>	Children draw contrasting pictures of environments where they would and would not like to live. They discuss how they can influence their own environment.
<b>What if ...</b> Analysis, drama, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education and Leisure</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children imagine the consequences that might arise from a given scenario, and then present their results as a short drama piece.
<b>What is in my Bag?</b> Group discussion, drawing, writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migration</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children discuss what they would pack in their bags if they had to leave their home suddenly because of an emergency.
<b>Where Do You Stand?</b> Discussion with some movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Democratic Citizenship</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children take a physical position in the room in response to a statement and then explain and justify their opinions.
<b>Who Should Decide?</b> Decision -making, small group discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family and Alternative Care</li> <li>• Participation</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children respond to questions about who in the family should decide on different issues.
<b>Words that Wound</b> List-making, ranking, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Violence</li> <li>• Digital Environment</li> </ul>	Children consider examples of hurtful language or other online content and assess its effects.
<b>World Summer Camp</b> Prioritising, negotiation, discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination</li> <li>• Poverty</li> <li>• Human Rights</li> </ul>	Children select people to share a tent with from a list of people with brief descriptions, and then discuss the assumptions on which they based their choices.
<b>Zabderfilio</b> Storytelling, reflective activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Human Rights</li> <li>• Discrimination</li> </ul>	Children watch a puppet show about a made-up animal, and discuss the value of diversity.

# A Body of Knowledge

*I didn't know how much I knew!*



Complexity



7-13 years



60-90 minutes



4-24 children



Discrimination



Education and  
leisure



Health

## Type of activity

Making a collage, discussion

## Overview

Children draw the outline of a body and write in knowledge and skills relating to its different parts. They discuss how to acquire this knowledge, and what happens if parts of the body develop differently, or if certain rights are denied.

## Objectives

- To reveal children's knowledge and abilities – to themselves and others
- To raise awareness of ways and places of learning
- To discuss the right to education
- To become aware of people with disabilities

## Preparation

- Collect magazines.
- Tape together four pieces of flipchart paper for each small group. (Be aware of the size of your participants. They may need more paper!)

## Materials

- Large sheets of paper
- Markers
- Magazines for cutting out pictures
- Scissors, glue and other materials for making a collage

## Instructions

1. Introduce the topic by reminding the children that they have a human right to learn and develop as much as possible. Observe that they already have a lot of knowledge and skills that they probably don't think about. Ask them, for example, to name a few things that they know how to do, but which they didn't know when they were five or six years old (e.g. reading, writing, counting money, telling the time). Explain that this activity will look at the right to learn and develop.
2. Divide the children into groups of four and give each group materials for making a collage and a sheet of paper large enough to draw the outline of one of the children on it. Explain the activity:
  - a. Each group will draw a life-size outline of one of the children in the group. The outline should fit onto the flipchart sheets: if your children are tall, they can tape more sheets together. Groups should write the names of all the children in their group on the paper.
  - b. Ask the children to think about what they know and are able to do best. For each thing they know or can do, they should think about which part of the body is needed. They can include physical skills (e.g. singing, riding a bicycle), cognitive skills (e.g. doing maths, remembering jokes) and personality traits (e.g. being a friend, keeping a secret).

- c. Ask them to make these ideas visible: invite them to draw, paint, write or paste words and pictures onto the appropriate parts of the body. For example, if someone is good at football, they could draw a ball on the figure's foot, – or on the head; if someone is a good reader, they could cut out a picture of a book and place it near the eyes or head of the figure; if someone is a good singer, they could draw musical notes coming from the figure's mouth.
  - d. Ask them to think of other things that they know or can do, not just what they do best.
3. Allow the children to work on this task until their figure is almost completely covered with drawings, pictures, slogans, and so on.
  4. Bring the children together and ask each group to introduce their 'child' to the others, explaining some of the skills and knowledge they have included. If possible, stick the figures up on the wall, or arrange them on the floor so they are visible to everyone.

## Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
  - Was it easy to find things you are able to do?
  - Are there any differences between the drawings? Are you surprised by any of the drawings? Why?
  - Did you miss out any important abilities?
  - Do you remember where you learnt the skills and knowledge in your pictures? Do you remember who you learned them from?

*At this stage, you could ask individual children to write some of the sources of knowledge mentioned in the discussion onto the diagrams, or you could write these in yourself.*

2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Do you think that all children have the opportunity to learn the things you have mentioned? Why or why not?
  - What is needed for children to be able to learn these things?
  - What happens if some of these sources of learning are missing?
  - For example, what if there are no schools? How can children learn to read and write? What happens if they don't learn these skills? Does it matter? How might it affect the rest of their lives?
  - What if there were no other children to play with, no family members to learn from, and no youth groups or clubs?
  - What if a child has a disability and cannot go to school, join a club, or play with other children?
  - What things need to change in order for children with disabilities to be able to fully take part in places where they can play and learn with others?
  - Why is it so important for children to be able to learn and develop?
  - What other human rights do children have that are important for their development?

## Suggestions for follow-up

Stick the drawings up around the room so that the children and others can see them.

The activities 'Blindfolded' and 'Silent Speaker' allow children to consider how they might cope with

a disability. 'Dear Diary' looks at the same event, as experienced by different children, including one with a learning disability and another with a chronic illness.

## Ideas for action

Invite someone with a learning disability or a local organisation working with this target group to come and talk to your children about learning disabilities and alternative learning strategies.

Explain the concept of learning styles to the children (See Chapter III), emphasising that there are many different kinds of intelligence and ways of learning. Encourage the children to share experiences about their own learning styles and about methods which they find easier or more challenging. Invite the children to suggest ways of supporting each other's learning.

## Tips for the facilitator

For younger children, it can be helpful to have some A7-sized cards with pictures or words that give examples of skills and knowledge, so that they only have to put the card next to the right part of the body. You can also provide empty cards for further ideas.

If you are short of large pieces of paper, you can prepare human silhouettes yourself using A3 or larger sheets.

Be aware that not every child or every cultural setting will be comfortable about drawing around a child. If this is the case, or if you do not know the group well, you should prepare an outline before the session. Be careful to make an outline that children of all genders can identify with.

Some children may have difficulty remembering how they learnt something, especially if they learnt it from a person outside the formal education system. Remind them that they learn a lot from each other as well as from family members and other adults in their lives. Help them to see that a great deal of learning comes through contact with other children, and this method may not be possible for some children with tactile sensitivity. It is not necessary to identify the source of every skill the children have listed! The goal is to enable the children to recognise the importance of different sources of learning, both in relation to knowledge and skills.

In the debriefing, help children make the connection between the way they acquired knowledge or skills, and the difficulties for certain children without access to those methods, or to the relevant places, institutions, people or contexts.

Reinforce the point that everyone has an equal right to learn, although they may not all learn in the same way. Make sure that you yourself are prepared to support any children with special learning needs in your group. How, in general, should schools or youth clubs work with and support such children?

## Adaptations

This activity could also be run with each child drawing his or her own outline and identifying their own skills and knowledge.



# A Constitution for Our Group

*Who has responsibility for my rights?*



Complexity



8-13 years



Part 1: 60–90 minutes. Part 2 (optional, and at a later date): 30-45 minutes



4-30 children



Democratic Citizenship



Participation



Human Rights

<b>Type of activity</b>	Discussion, consensus building, rule making
<b>Overview</b>	Children develop a group ‘constitution’, listing their rights and responsibilities
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To understand the relationship between rights and responsibilities</li> <li>• To relate rights and responsibilities to children's daily life</li> <li>• To develop skills of co-operation and participation</li> <li>• To create an agreed set of rules and responsibilities for the group</li> </ul>
<b>Preparation</b>	Optional: make copies of the simplified Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pencil and paper for each participant</li> <li>• Flipchart and markers</li> <li>• Optional: Copies of the simplified CRC</li> </ul>

## Instructions - Part One

1. Explore the children’s experience and understanding of rules and responsibilities, starting with a few restrictions that they will already understand. Ask them to complete the following sentence:

*“I don’t have the right to \_\_\_ because ...”*

(e.g. “I don’t have the right to hit my sister because it will hurt her” or “I don’t have the right to take stuff that doesn’t belong to me, because that’s unfair”). Make a list of these sentences.

Then ask the children to make some statements about things they *do* have a right to, using the formulation:

*“I have the right to...”*

(e.g. “I have the right not to be hit.” / “I have the right to be treated fairly.”)

2. Ask the group if they have heard of a ‘constitution’. Explain briefly that it is a very important document in nearly every country. The Constitution of a country sets out the basic rights and basic rules for how society is organised. Give an example of the kind of thing that is written into a constitution – for example, that laws are made by Parliament, or that the President is the official head of the country.

3. Tell everyone that we are going to make a constitution for our group. Divide the children into small groups of four or five and give each group some paper and markers. Explain that:
  - Each small group should write down three or four basic rules for the whole group.
  - Each rule should use the phrase “Everyone has the right to...” (e.g. Everyone has the right to say what they think).
  - This can only be written down as a right if everyone in the small group agrees.
  - The goal is not necessarily to have lots of rules, but to have rules that everyone accepts.
4. Bring everyone back together and ask each group to present their rules. Record these on a chart, such as the one below.
  - First, ask for the specific rights that each group has identified and list these on the flipchart under the ‘Rights’ column. Combine any rights that are similar, asking for group approval for any revised language.
  - After listing a right, ask what specific responsibility we all have to see that everyone enjoys this right. Write this in the ‘Responsibilities’ column next to the corresponding right, using language such as, “We have a responsibility to...”, “We should...”, or “We must...”.

*Example*

<b>OUR CONSTITUTION</b>	
<b>Rights</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
We must be treated fairly. We can express our opinion. We have the right to play.	We must treat everyone fairly. We should always listen to other people’s opinion. We must respect safety rules.

5. After including all the rights and responsibilities listed by the small groups, ask the children to review their draft constitution.
  - Point out that it is better to have a few good rules than lots of not-so-good rules: Do all the rights make sense? Can we get rid of any of them?
  - Are there other rights and responsibilities that need to be added?
6. When the lists of rights and responsibilities are complete, ask the children whether they feel happy with the Constitution they have created.
  - Are they willing to observe the set of rules that they have drawn up?
  - Who is responsible for making sure that everyone observes this Constitution?
  - What should happen when someone doesn’t respect one of the rights?
  - Do we need to have penalties or punishments for not following rules? Why? Do you think you would disobey any of these rules if there were no penalties?
7. When you have arrived at a final version of the Constitution, make a clean copy and hang it in a prominent place. Explain that these will be our rules for working and playing together, both for children and for adults.
8. Conclude the discussion by emphasising that rules and responsibilities help us to live together so that everyone’s rights are respected. Rules protect our rights (e.g. to participate, to have an opinion, to learn, to play, etc.), rules keep us safe and healthy, and they also create responsibilities so that we respect the rights of others.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Was it easy for your small group to develop a list of rights? Was it easy to identify the responsibilities?
  - Was it easy to work together as a group? Did you always agree?
  - Were any of the ideas for rights not agreed on by the whole group? Why?
2. Discuss rules, rights and responsibilities by asking questions such as these:
  - Which rules do you have in your life (e.g. at home, at school, in other settings)? Who made these rules? Whose rights do these rules protect?
  - Which duties or responsibilities do you have? Where did these come from, and how did you find out about them?
  - Do adults have rules to obey? Do they have responsibilities?
  - What did you learn about rights and responsibilities in this activity?

### Part two (Optional)

1. A few days or weeks after making the Constitution, ask the children to take another look at it. Point out that laws often have to be improved, sometimes they need to be removed, and sometimes new ones need adding.
  - Do they still agree on the rights and responsibilities that they drew up earlier?
  - Are some rules harder to observe than others? Why?
  - Does anything in the Constitution need to be changed? Do we want to get rid of any rules or rights? Do we want to add any new ones?
2. Discuss enforcement of rules and responsibilities, asking questions such as these:
  - Are some rights neglected or ignored more often than others? Why?
  - Who has been taking responsibility for seeing that these rights are respected?
  - Who has been deciding what happens when someone doesn't respect one of the group's rules?
  - Does the group need to work together to establish consequences for breaking the rules?

## Debriefing and Evaluation

Discuss the question of whether it matters who makes the rules for a particular group: in our case, we made the rules ourselves, as a group. Relate this process to the way laws are made in a democracy.

- Does it help to have a Constitution for our group?
- What difference does it make that you made your own rules?

## Suggestions for follow-up

You could give every child a copy of the group's Constitution.

If conflicts or problems arise in the group, try to use the group's Constitution to resolve them. Problems or conflicts may also bring out further reasons for revising the Constitution.

You could devote more time to Part 2, Step 2, in order to enable the children to develop some established consequences for breaking the rules co-operatively.

Give children copies of the simplified CRC or the CRC cards. Ask them to compare their Constitution with this document of rights for all the children of the world. Are there any rights and corresponding responsibilities in the CRC that they want to add to their Constitution?

With older children, discuss why children need a special convention that defines their rights. Do children have different human rights from those of adults? Do they have different responsibilities? Help the children to understand the relationship between responsibilities and the CRC principle of evolving capacities.

The activity 'Every Vote Counts', which engages children in the process of democratic decision making, could be used either before or after this activity to look at similar themes.

## Ideas for action

Ask the children to find out if their school, team, or club has a set of rules or policies and procedures that guard and protect the rights of the children, and whether those rules also state their responsibilities. Use the following questions to think about any of those sets of rules:

- Did you know that such rules existed? Who made them?
- Do you agree with the rules?
- Can they be changed? If so, how?
- What happens when people don't follow these rules?

## Tips for the facilitator

Some children may not be familiar with the word or concept of a 'constitution'. You might decide not to introduce the word (Phase 1, Step 4) and simply call the document "Our rights and responsibilities". On the other hand, you may want to introduce the concept of a constitution before they write their own, by asking children to find out the answers to the following:

- Does our country have a constitution?
- What is in our Constitution?
- Who wrote it? When was it written?
- Who needs to respect it?

Many children have a negative attitude towards rules, seeing them only as restrictions on their freedom. You may need to spend some time discussing and giving examples of how we need rules to live together. Look at some of the rules which seem to them to be arbitrary – for example, the rule to brush your teeth, or to do your homework. Discuss whose rights these rules are supposed to be protecting, and compare this with rules about taking turns, respecting differences or refraining from



violence. In the second case, who are the rules protecting? Make the distinction between rules or responsibilities which are there to protect us, and those which ensure that we do not harm others.

Children will often start with negative sentences such as “We should not shout”. Try to transform such statements into positive ones, such as, “We should speak calmly to each other”.

## Adaptations

To make this activity less difficult for younger children, keep the discussion focused on specific rights and responsibilities. Ask them simple questions such as:

- How do you think we can work together?
- What do we need as a group so that we get on well and enjoy working together?
- What do you need, so that you will enjoy being in this group?

Avoid going into the complications of rules, enforcement, and responsibility for enforcement.

For older children, you could go further into the abstract relationship between rights, rules, and responsibilities, using debriefing questions such as these:

- What is the relationship between rights and rules?
- What is the difference between rules and responsibilities?

# A Human Rights Calendar

*Every day of the year is a human rights day!*



Complexity



8-13 years



60-90 minutes to start. Monthly sessions after.



4-30 children



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Drawing, painting, cutting, presenting information graphically

## Overview

Making a group calendar to mark important human right dates

## Objectives

- To raise awareness of the many aspects of human rights
- To raise awareness of divisions of time (e.g. months, weeks, days of the week) and the dates of special occasions
- To improve planning skills
- To develop creativity and imagination

## Preparation

- Prepare a label or laminated sheet for each month. Stick these up, in order, around the room
- Prepare and copy a list of 'Special Days to Remember'. Make sure you know what each of these days is supposed to remember, so that you can explain, if necessary.

## Materials

- 12 sheets of A4 paper with the months of the year, if possible laminated in plastic
- Copies of the handout 'Special Days to Remember'
- Pens, markers or coloured pencils for each group
- Sticky tape
- A few sheets of A4 paper for each of the Days to Remember
- Post-its or small coloured pieces of paper
- Optional: additional art supplies, a small calendar, a child-friendly copy of the CRC for each group

## Instructions

1. Explain to the children that they are going to make a calendar that will tell them when special days are coming up, especially those that relate to human rights. Show them the 12 months written on the wall (or floor).
2. Discuss with the children what human rights are and explain, if they don't know already, that there are also children's rights. Ask the children for examples of children's rights and give examples of your own if necessary.
3. Ask the children if they know of any special days that can be linked to children's rights or human rights. Ask them to recall any holiday days or special days and see if they can relate them to children's rights or human rights (e.g. religious holidays can be linked to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Belief; national holidays to the right to a nationality; cultural holidays to the right to culture). List these examples on post-its or pieces of paper and stick them under the

correct month. Encourage the children to be creative and think of some days that can be linked to human rights. Encourage them to guess. Then distribute the list of 'Special Days to Remember'.

4. Ask if the children are aware of any of these days, and why are they important. For those they do not know, explain their significance briefly. Ask children to suggest ways to celebrate some of these holidays to show their importance to human rights.
5. Divide children into four or more groups and assign each group a few *special days* to work on. Give the groups A4 paper, colouring materials, coloured paper and other resources to complete the calendar.
6. When the pages are complete, ask the children to put their drawings under the correct month on the wall, so everyone can see them. Explain that a few very important holidays have been left out!
7. Ask the children if birthdays count as an important date, and why birthdays are related to human rights. Explain that everyone has a right to life and to a name. Give everyone a post it and ask them to write the date of their birthday with their name. One by one, ask them to stick their post-it onto the big calendar, and say, "My birthday is an important day!"

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy this activity?
  - What did you learn about the calendar? About human rights?
  - Do you think it is important to mark these days? Why?
  - Which of these special days do you look forward to? Why?
2. Point out that although we celebrate these special days, we enjoy human rights every day. Ask questions such as these:
  - What are some of the human rights you enjoy every day? Which human right(s) are you enjoying at this moment?
  - Does every child have these rights? Does every child have the opportunity to enjoy them?
  - What can we do to make sure that every child's rights are protected?

## Suggestions for follow-up

At the beginning of every month, remind the children of the events coming up in that month. Explain the significance of the days, drawing a connection to human rights. Plan together how to celebrate each one.

In the week of a special human rights day, choose an activity from *Compasito* that addresses issues related to that particular holiday. Use the activity summary to help with this selection.

Ask children to research specific days in order to become experts on why the day is important.

## Ideas for action

Ask the children to plan how to celebrate special days, including birthdays.

The children may want to organise a celebration of certain holidays in the whole community, for example, for Human Rights Day or Children's Rights Day.

## Tips for the facilitator

Move among the groups while they work on the calendar to make sure that children understand the meaning of each holiday they are working on.

If you include national or local cultural and religious holidays, be sure to include all those celebrated by the families and communities of children in the group. When in doubt, ask the children to bring a list from home.

To be sure that each child's birthday is celebrated equally, develop a group ritual with the same privileges, recognition or treats for every birthday child. Depending on the local culture, you may want to use a child's name day rather than their birthday.

Look for ways to make the calendar lively and decorative. Encourage use of appropriate symbols for each holiday and names in other languages.

## Adaptations

For older children: give them copies of the child-friendly version of the CRC and / or the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and ask them to try to connect the holidays on their pages with specific rights (or articles). Do not reproduce the whole list of special days, but select days of relevance to your group, even if the children are not yet familiar with that holiday. The three days marked with a star have particular significance for children or for human rights.

Instead of giving each child a day to work on, ask them to create a group drawing for different days.

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Adapted from Compass: A Manual on Human rights education with Young People (Council of Europe, 2002), p. 263.



## Handout

### Suggested days to remember

January 1	World Peace Day
January 24	International Day of Education
January 27	International Holocaust Remembrance Day
February 21	International Mother Language Day
March 3	World Wildlife Day
March 8	International Women's Day
March 21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
March 21	World Forest Day
March 22	World Water Day
March 27	World Theatre Day
April 7	World Health Day
April 8	International Roma Day
April 22	Earth Day
May 1	International Workers' Day
May 9	Europe Day
May 15	International Day of Families
June 1	World Children's Day*
June 5	World Environment Day
June 20	World Refugee Day
June 21	World Peace and Prayer Day
August 7	Education Day
August 12	International Youth Day
September 15	International Day of Democracy
October 1	International Music Day
October 5	World Teachers' Day
October 16	World Food Day
October 24	United Nations Day
November 9	International Day against Fascism and Antisemitism
November 16	International Day for Tolerance
November 20	World Children's Day*
November 25	International Day for Elimination of Violence against women
December 1	World AIDS Day
December 3	International Day of Disabled Persons
December 10	Human Rights Day
December 18	International Migrants' Day

\*Children are celebrated on June 1, International Children's Day, and on November 20, Universal Children's Day, the day observed by the UN and UNESCO. In addition, many countries observe their own Children's Day.

# A Long Journey

## *The world is my country*



Complexity



6-13 years



60 minutes



6-30 children



Migration



Discrimination



Human Rights

### Type of activity

Group discussion, drawing, writing

### Overview

Children develop a story about a family about to migrate, and imagine the needs and challenges along the journey.

### Objectives

- To appreciate the difficulties that migrants are likely to face at different stages of a journey to a new country.
- To develop empathy and solidarity with migrant communities
- To raise awareness of the rights of migrant children, and develop ideas for protecting and respecting them

### Preparation

Familiarise yourself with migrant rights in general, and with conditions in your country in relation to migrants. See the useful resources below, and the chapter on Migration.

Prepare three pieces of A3 paper: write 'BEFORE' at the top of the first page, 'DURING' at the top of the second, and 'ARRIVAL' at the top of the third.

### Materials

- Coloured pencils and A3 paper for each small group.
- Flip chart and markers

## Instructions

1. Ask children if they know what migration means. Encourage them to share examples of friends or families with migrant stories. Then provide them with the following definition of migration: "movement of people to a new area or country in order to find work or better living conditions" (Oxford Dictionaries)
2. Tell them to imagine a family consisting of two adults and three children who are going to move (migrate) to this country from Country X. You can name a particular country but be careful not to choose one that might trigger strong reactions from the group. Ask the children to imagine everything that the family will need to think about and do at three different stages:
  - Before leaving
  - During the journey
  - On arrival in the new country.
3. Discuss with the group and agree on the names of each member of the family. Write the names on a flip chart or on a board so that children can easily remember.
4. Divide the children into three groups with roughly equal numbers of participants. Give each

group a piece of A3 paper with one of the key stages written at the top, and some coloured pencils. One group will be responsible for thinking about the group's needs BEFORE leaving; another for DURING the journey; and the third group will assess the ARRIVAL.

5. Tell the children that they should draw the family and write down or draw all the things that this family will need to think about, including what they will need to make the journey safely. Remind them again that the family consists of two adults and three children. Tell them to make sure that all children in the group are able to contribute drawings or ideas.
6. Give the groups time for discussion and to complete their drawings. Encourage them to include anything that seems important.
7. When the groups have finished, ask each group to present their work to everyone else. Begin with the group thinking about BEFORE, then proceed to DURING and then ARRIVAL.
8. After the presentations, stick the drawings on the wall as a "fresco". Briefly summarise the journey, adding anything essential that the children might have missed out, e.g. visas. Ask for clarification if there is anything in the drawings which is not clear to yourself or other children.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

Discuss the activity by using questions such as these:

- Was it easy to work together in a group? Why, or why not?
- Were there any ideas which the group could not agree on?
- Are you surprised by any of the things in the other groups' drawings? Are there things you would not have thought about including?
- How did you decide on the things that the family should think about and what they would need to do?

Relate the activity to issues of migrant rights and discrimination, asking questions such as these:

- Do you think it is easy for a family to migrate? Why, or why not? What do you think would be the hardest thing for the children in the family?
- Do you think migrants should have the same rights as everyone else in the hosting country? Why or why not?
- Should migrant children be entitled to any specific support in the new country which becomes their home?
- Some children have to migrate to a new country without their parents or other adults: what are the particular difficulties that such children might have to face? Think about the journey, the arrival, and the life afterwards in the country.
- What can we do to make sure that *all* migrants in our country / region / school feel welcome, and that their rights are respected?

## Suggestions for follow-up

In a later session, or if you have more time, you could give each small group a set of CRC cards and ask them to make links between the needs and rights at each step of the journey.

The activity 'What is in my bag?' can be used to work more on the issue of refugees and asylum seekers.

The activity 'Take a Step Forward' can be used to initiate a discussion on why many people – including children – are forced to leave their country or region.

## Ideas for action

If there are migrant children or children from migrant families in your group, you could invite members of their family to meet the group and view the “fresco”. Ask them to give feedback on the children’s ideas and explain what it was really like for them – before, during and after their journey to this country.

The website <http://iamamigrant.org> from the International Organisation for Migration provides testimonies from migrants from all over the world in several languages. Use these testimonies to create a drama piece or to speak about the rights respected and violated in the process of migration.

## Tips for facilitators

For the country of origin of the ‘family’, you could decide this beforehand or ask children to decide. Be aware of any children in your group with histories of migration in their family.

If the group is big, divide them into six small groups: two groups can work on the same part of the journey in parallel.

If you have migrant or refugee children in your group, be very sensitive towards their needs and emotions, and tell them about the activity beforehand so they can choose whether or not to participate. See if you can make use of their experiences, if they are willing to participate. Be aware that some of their experiences may be traumatic.

Bear in mind that children are likely to repeat in a session things they hear at home, and some of the answers from members of the group may be racist or discriminatory. Migration is not an easy issue. Try not to judge or block opinions: it is better that they are aired so you can discuss them.

You could give children larger pieces of paper for their drawings: tape pieces of A3 paper together or give them flip chart paper instead.

While the children are working in groups, circulate among them to facilitate the process, and use questions to support the children to think about other aspects or obstacles arising during the journey.

## Adaptations

For younger children, just ask them to draw, without using words.

## Useful resources

The Council of Europe adopted in 2019 a Recommendation on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood – CM/Rec(2019)4. This Recommendation recalls the rights and specific needs of young refugees. You may want to consult it as background information relating to the particular needs and rights of migrant children.

- UNESCO Convention of Migrant Rights: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001435/143557e.pdf>
- International Organisation for Migration: [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)



# A Modern Fairytale

*Footprints in the sand are not made sitting down!*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30 children



Discrimination



Education and  
Leisure



Violence

## Type of activity

Storytelling, discussion

## Overview

Children take it in turns to tell a story based on a series of pictures and then find out the real story behind them which focuses on modern-day slavery.

## Objectives

- To introduce the issue of child labour and modern-day slavery
- To promote active listening
- To introduce the European Court of Human Rights (for older children)

## Preparation

Make copies of the drawings on the handouts - enough for one between two children.

Make copies of the child-friendly Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC): one for each child.

## Materials

- A wooden stick
- Copies of the drawing sequence provided as a handout
- Copies of the child-friendly CRC

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to gather in a circle to hear a story in a special way. Try to create a mysterious atmosphere. Show them the wooden stick and explain that this is a 'talking stick': only the person holding it may speak. When one person has spoken using the stick, they should pass it on to someone else.
2. Lay the pictures out so that the children can see all of them and explain that together they will create a story about a girl named Siwa, based on these pictures. Then distribute the pictures, giving one picture to each child or pair of children. Explain that each child or pair should tell the part of the story represented by the picture they have been given. Give the children time to think about what their picture represents, and to discuss it with their partner if they are working in pairs.
3. Be the first person to hold the stick, and say a little to demonstrate how the story will be told. Then pass the stick to the child who wants to start the story. Explain that the person who wants to speak next should hold up their picture. If there are several who want to speak, the current speaker decides who should receive the talking stick.
4. When the story has come to an end, ask the children if they would like to hear the real story behind these pictures. Tell them or read out the story of Siwa.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
  - Was it difficult to tell the story of Siwa from the pictures? Why?
  - Was your story similar to the real one?
  - What did you think about Siwa's story? How did it make you feel?
  - Do you have any questions about Siwa's story?
2. Discuss child labour and forms of modern-day slavery by asking questions such as these:
  - What is a slave?
  - How was Siwa's situation like slavery?
  - Do you think that Siwa's story could happen in your country? Do you know of any similar examples?
  - Are there still slaves in the world today?
3. Give children copies of the child-friendly CRC, UDHR or ECHR. Relate Siwa's story to human rights:
  - What are the consequences for children who are forced to work, for example on their physical and mental health?
  - How does being forced to work affect a child's human rights? Can you name any of Siwa's rights in the CRC that were violated?
  - What can we do to make sure children do not end up in forced labour?

## Suggestions for follow-up

An activity dealing with such potentially upsetting issues should not stand alone. You should follow this with an affirming and positive activity, however brief: for example 'Putting Rights on the Map' or 'From Bystander to Helper'.

With older children, use the Council of Europe's comic strip, which deals with a similar case: [www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/comics/](http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/comics/). Make sure to check beforehand that the content is appropriate for your group.

## Ideas for action

The children can investigate the laws in their country which protect against child labour. Ask them to look into issues such as how much work children are allowed to do legally, from what age they are allowed to work, and what types of work are permitted. Do children need the permission of parents/guardians to work?

The children could design and conduct a survey to find out how much and what kinds of work children do at home. Does working in your family constitute child labour (e.g. child care, housework, helping parents with their work)? Do girls and boys contribute equally to work around the home?

Plan a campaign with the children to combat child labour and human trafficking.

## Tips for the facilitator

You can use a hat or any other object, instead of the stick.

The children may need help telling the story from pictures, or putting the pictures into a sequence. You could guide the story so it is closer to the **True** version by taking part yourself, as one of the storytellers. .

You may need to explain the concept of trafficking: human trafficking is ‘the movement of people by means such as force, fraud, coercion or deception, with the aim of exploiting them’ (Unseen UK).

Siwa’s story is likely to be upsetting for some of your children: be ready to answer any questions they may have. You should also be able to point them towards people or organisations who could help if they or others find themselves in a similar situation.

Siwa’s story is based on a real-life case settled in the European Court of Human Rights (*Siliadin v. France*, No. 73316/01). There is a short summary of the case at <http://hudoc.echr.coe.int/>. The story presented in *Compasito* deliberately does not name a specific homeland for Siwa (who was actually from Togo). This is in order that children do not assume that trafficked children always come from Africa, or from non-European regions. You may wish to change the story to reflect the situation in your country, but you should be careful not to suggest that trafficking only occurs in countries outside Europe. Sadly, there are many cases involving children being trafficked from one European country to another, or within a country of Europe.

Make sure that you are able to explain other instruments which offer protection against child labour, apart from the CRC. See the Chapter V background texts on education and leisure time and migration.

Help children to differentiate between work they may do to help their families, for example at home, and inappropriate child labour.

Worldwide, girls are given less leisure and are expected to do more unpaid work than boys. You may wish to explore the difference in expectations placed on boys and girls, and discuss this in relation to gender equality.

## Adaptations

For older children: use Siwa’s story to discuss the European Court of Human Rights, using the questions below as a guide:

- Siwa and her lawyer took her case to the European Court of Human Rights. Have you ever heard of this court? Who or what did Siwa’s case try to change?
- What did the ECHR decide in Siwa’s case? What happened as a result?
- Has your country signed the European Convention of Human Rights?
- Can you, as a child, apply to the ECHR? What can the ECHR do for you?

For younger children: Number the pictures and lay them out in order so that children can see the sequence of events. Be particularly careful about the questions you ask, and use the picture cards for the CRC, or simply ask generic questions about children’s rights or human rights.

## Further information

- On the European Court of Human Rights: [www.echr.coe.int](http://www.echr.coe.int)
- For a video on the ECHR: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0cmUQTgjCw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M0cmUQTgjCw)
- On the Council of Europe’s campaign to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings: [www.coe.int/en/web/anti-human-trafficking/home](http://www.coe.int/en/web/anti-human-trafficking/home)



## Handout

### Siwa's story

Once upon a time, not so long ago, there was a girl called Siwa. Her family was very poor. She lived with her uncle because her parents had died when she was a child.

When she grew older, Siwa realised that the world was much bigger than just her country and that there were other interesting places to visit. But like many people in her country, Siwa was poor and didn't have the money to travel.

One day, however, her uncle came up with a plan. He suggested sending Siwa to France to live with someone he knew, called Mrs X. Siwa was excited by the idea of travelling and was eager to go. The uncle agreed with Mrs X that she would buy Siwa a plane ticket to her country and that Siwa would live at her house and help the family with the housework until she had earned the price of her plane ticket. So Siwa boarded a plane and flew to France. She was looking forward to all the new things she would be experiencing there. Mrs. X had promised to send her to school and to take care of her legal papers so that she could travel freely and explore her new country.

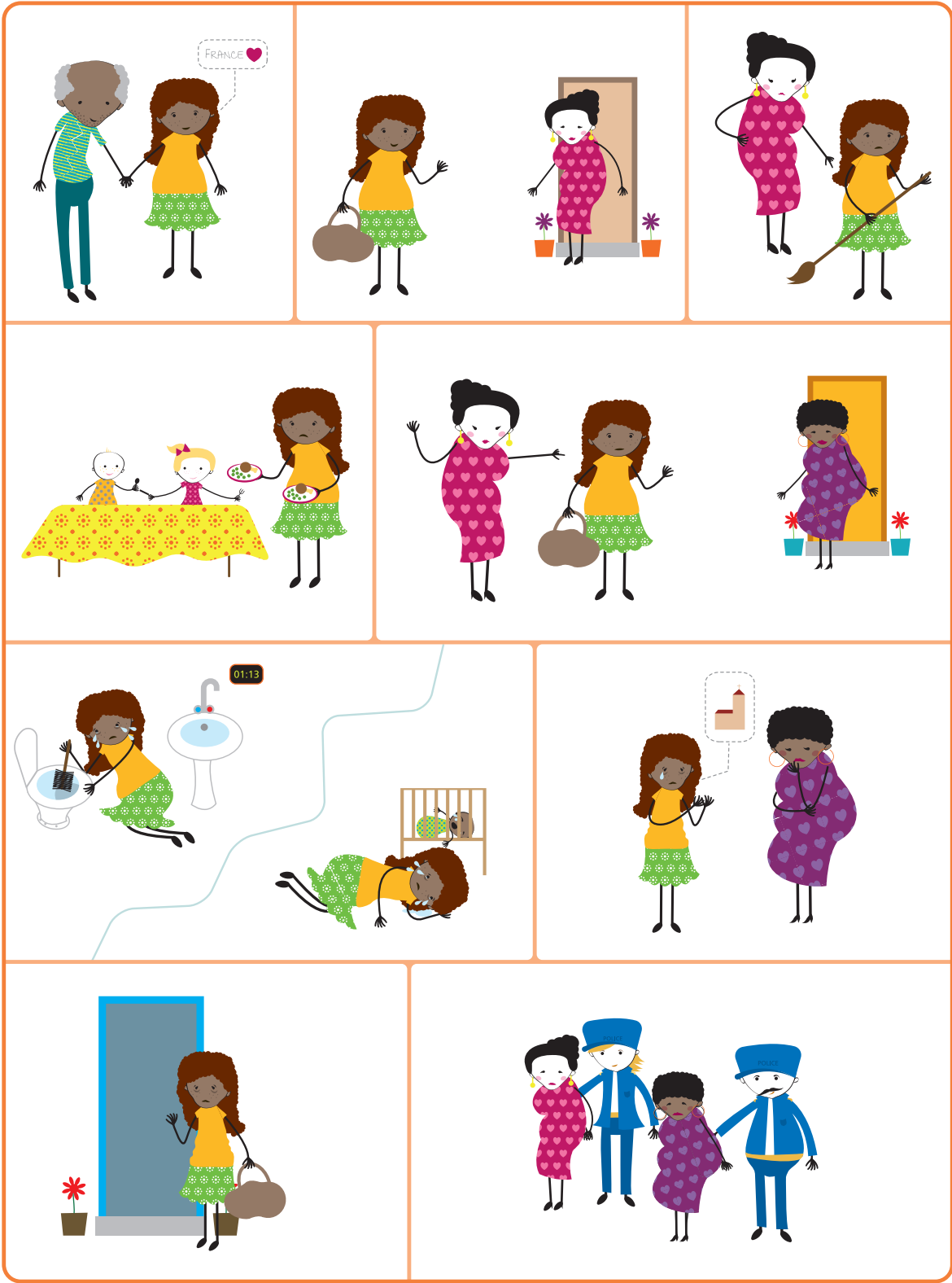
However, once Siwa arrived at Mrs. X's house, things started to go wrong. Mrs. X was not as friendly as the girl had imagined. She expected Siwa to take care of her children and do all the housework by herself. When Siwa asked about school, Mrs. X said that it could wait.

After a while Mrs. X told Siwa that she was going to live with Mrs. Y for a while. Siwa hoped that now she could finally start going to school and enjoying her stay in this new country. Sadly, however, Mrs. Y was worse than Mrs. X. Life became even harder for Siwa. Now she had to start work early in the morning and could not go to bed until late at night. And even then she couldn't get a good night's sleep as she was sleeping on the floor in the children's room and had to take care of the baby, who woke up crying several times during the night. She was not even allowed to leave the house to walk around in the city. Life was miserable. Siwa regretted ever leaving her country.

One morning Siwa managed to get permission to go to a religious service. But instead of going, she gathered her courage and knocked on the door of a neighbour's house. She asked the young couple living there for help and told them her story. The couple was shocked. They could not imagine someone being treated like a slave in modern times. Siwa's story was like a bad dream, but she didn't seem to be able to wake up. She had to find a way to help herself.

The couple took Siwa into their house and reported her case to the police. The police began to investigate, and charged Mrs. X and Mrs. Y. However, Siwa was not satisfied with having these two women punished. She wanted to make sure that no other child like her would ever have to go through what she had. With her lawyer's help, she filed a case at the European Court of Human Rights, demanding that France should change its laws to protect children from this kind of servitude. The Court agreed with Siwa, and demanded that France make sure that there would be no further incidents of forced work in the future. At last Siwa was contented. She had not only managed to escape from imprisonment in Mrs. Y's house, she had also made sure that no other child in that country would have to experience what she did.

Source: Adapted from the European Court of Human Rights case *Siliadin v. France*, No. 73316/01.



# Advertising Human Rights

*Let's tell the world about Human Rights*



Complexity



8-13 years



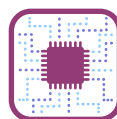
60-90 minutes



4-30 children



Human Rights



Digital Environment

## Type of activity

Storytelling, drawing, writing, drama

## Overview

Children develop a TV advertisement for children's rights

## Objectives

- To develop critical thinking skills in relation to advertising and the media
- To practise creativity and communications skills
- To deepen understanding of human rights
- To develop ideas on how to promote children's rights

## Preparation

If possible, set up video equipment to record the advertisements or use a mobile phone.

Children will already need to be familiar with children's rights. See the Adaptation for suggestions if they are not.

## Materials

- Paper and art supplies

## Instructions

1. Divide children into groups of three or four. Explain that they have been asked to advertise children's rights. Each group will make an advertisement for television or for the Internet that lasts between one and three minutes, to make people aware of and understand a particular right.
2. Ask children to describe some advertisements that have caught their attention. Brainstorm features of good advertisements (e.g. clever phrases, sound effects, music, humour, a serious message).
3. Explain that each group will need to decide on an audience for their advertisement – for example, is it to be aimed at children, parents, teachers, the general public or all of these? Brainstorm a few other possible audiences and discuss ways in which an advertisement can be made attractive to a chosen audience. Give some examples if necessary, for example, what would make it interesting to parents? To children?
4. Quickly refresh children's knowledge of children's rights, for example by brainstorming the rights that they can remember.
5. Start the work in groups, reminding them that each group should begin by choosing a right they want to advertise and the audience(s) they want to address. Encourage them to choose a right that they think people really need to know about, and an audience of people who really need to know about it. Ask someone from each group to report back on which right they have chosen for their advertisement, and which target audience.
6. Once groups have chosen a right, they should develop an idea to advertise it. Encourage them to consider different ways of presenting the right (e.g. acting out a story, singing a song, drawing the storyboard for a cartoon). Remind them that they will be making a video for TV or online use,

so it should be visually interesting and have action. Remind them to make it simple enough to be presented in less than three minutes.

7. Circulate among the groups to monitor their progress. Once a group has completed their advertisement, ask them to give it a title and begin to rehearse the scenario.
8. When all groups have planned their advertisements, bring the whole group together to share ideas and get feedback from others. Ask each group to explain their right, their audience, and their ideas. If they are ready, they can also try to perform it. Record any performances with a camera or mobile phone. After each description or performance, encourage constructive suggestions and feedback from others in the group, asking questions such as:
  - Will this idea appeal to the chosen audience?
  - Will it clearly convey the idea of the right to the target audience?
  - What do you like about the ideas presented?
  - Can you offer any suggestions for improvement?
9. Give the groups further time to improve and practise their advertisements.
10. Ask each group to present their advertisement and plans to each other.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
  - Were any parts of this activity especially challenging? Especially fun?
  - Do you think that the audience you were thinking of would like your advertisement?
  - Are advertisements always positive? Why or why not?
  - Were your characters realistic? Were there any stereotypes of people? How could you change this in your video?
  - Will this activity change the way you look at advertisements?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Why did your group choose that particular right?
  - Why did you choose that particular audience?
  - How do you think people are likely to react to your advertisement? What will it make them think or do?
  - Is a TV advertisement a good way of sending people a message about human rights? Why or why not?
  - Can you think of any human rights that would be difficult to advertise or represent?
  - Why is it important for children to know about their rights?

## Suggestions and follow-up

Upload the videos made by the children to your club or school website, or make a blog about 'Our rights' where you could post the videos. Make sure you have parents' authorisation for all children included in the videos.

Explain that many advertising campaigns combine TV advertisements with graphic advertisements in print media such as magazines or newspapers or as posters on kiosks, buses and in other public places. Start by asking the children to look through the print media or their neighbourhoods to find advertisements they like, and to discuss what makes them attractive. Then ask the children to develop a two-dimensional, graphic advertisement of a right. These graphic advertisements could

also be created on computer, if the technology is available. Make an exhibition of the images for the children's centre or school.

Point out that many advertising campaigns employ a famous personality. Ask for some examples from the group. Who would they choose to take part in their advertisement? Why would that person be appropriate for the right or audience they have chosen?

Discuss with the children what it would be like to make a longer human rights video that told a story:

- How would it be different from an advertisement?
- What would it be important to think about when writing the story and producing the video? (e.g. a good narrative; practical considerations such as expenses; the human rights message)?

## Ideas for action

If at all possible, make good quality videos of these advertisements! You could ask for technical assistance with lighting and sound, or the loan of equipment from local TV stations or film schools. Remember, however, that even a "bad" video can be a learning experience.

If it isn't possible to make a video, you could perform the stories as if they were being filmed. Several of these advertisements could make a lively human rights lesson for other children or parents.

Encourage children to critique advertisements that they have seen:

- Who is the intended audience?
- What is the intended message?
- What are viewers supposed to do or think, as a result of the advertisement?

## Tips for the facilitator

This is a complex activity that may challenge children and require them to use new skills (e.g. writing dialogue or songs, developing a storyboard). The facilitator needs to monitor the groups' progress carefully, helping children to keep on task, and moving them forward.

Some groups will move faster through the process than others. If a group completes one task, give them individual instructions for the next step. Give groups plenty of time to practise and to revise their advertisement after feedback.

Use the activity to encourage critical thinking about advertising and its purposes, and to practise giving and receiving constructive criticism.

Due to the nature of advertising – promoting a complex aspect in a very short amount of time – children might bring into play stereotypical representations of people belonging to certain groups. If that is the case, the facilitator should be ready to address this during the debriefing and/or in subsequent activities. At the very least, facilitators should raise children's awareness of the power of stereotypes in promoting aspects such as anti-Roma racism, antisemitism, disabilism, homophobia, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, etc.

## Adaptation

This activity requires familiarity with human rights generally and children's rights in particular. You may want to extend the brainstorming at point 4 to cover general features of children's rights or human rights. If children appear to need more background to human rights, you could begin with a more introductory activity, e.g. 'Board Games'. To familiarise children with the CRC specifically, you could assign each child an article of the CRC and ask them to illustrate it; then ask children to read out their article and explain their illustration.



# Blindfolded

*Don't look - listen!*



Complexity



6-13 years



45+ minutes



4-28 children



Discrimination



Health



Participation

## Type of activity

Simulation, discussion

## Overview

Blindfolded children try to dress themselves and reflect on the experience and human rights of people with a disability.

## Objectives

- To understand the specific rights and needs of children with disabilities
- To develop co-operation and different forms of communication within the group

## Preparation

Organise a set of clothing items (e.g. hats, scarves) for each small group that can easily fit any child

## Materials

- 1 scarf for each team of four participants, for blindfolding
- An additional five items of clothing for each group (e.g. a hat, scarf, jacket, shoes and a bag). You could use clothes belonging to children in the group but be sure you have the same number and type of items for each group.

## Instructions

1. Ask the children if they know anyone with a disability. What are some disabilities that people may have? How do they know if people have a disability? Can you always see whether someone has a disability?
2. Ask the children if they have ever wondered what it would be like to be visually-impaired or blind. Explain that this activity will put them in a situation where they will experience an event without being able to use their sight.
3. Divide the children into groups of four. Give each group a set of five items of clothing.
4. Ask for one volunteer from each group who would accept being the first to be blindfolded. Tell these volunteers that they will need to put on the five pieces of clothing while blindfolded. Then tell the groups to use the scarf to blindfold the eyes of the volunteer.
5. When the volunteer has been blindfolded, ask the other children to hand him/her the pieces of clothing one by one. The child should try to dress himself/herself alone, and the rest of the group should say as little as possible. If s/he needs help, the rest of the group can give instructions.
6. To keep the momentum of the activity going, change roles after about four minutes, whether the children have succeeded in dressing themselves or not. Continue until each child has had a turn at being blindfolded.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity, asking questions such as these:
  - Was it hard to dress yourself while blindfold? Why?
  - How did it feel not being able to see?
  - Did you receive helpful instructions from your group? How could they have helped more?
  - How did you feel about giving instructions? Were some instructions hard to explain?
  - If you were visually-impaired, what are some other tasks or activities that would be difficult for you? Would any tasks or activities be easier?
  - How could you adapt some tasks or activities to make it possible for someone who is visually-impaired to do them? Give examples.
  
2. Draw out stereotypes about people with a disability, asking a few questions such as these:
  - Do you know anyone who is visually-impaired or blind? Do you know anyone with any other disabilities? What things do you think children with disabilities like doing? Are they different from the things you like doing? Why or why not?
  - Do you always know if someone has a disability or not? Is it always important for you to know? Why or why not?
  - Do you think children with disabilities have friends? Are they only friends with other children with disabilities? Would anything be different in your friendship if your friend had a disability? Why or why not?
  - What do you think children with disabilities want to be when they grow up? Are they different from you? Why or why not?
  - Should children with disabilities be educated in the same school and class as yourselves? Why or why not?
  - Everyone has a right to the things they need to live a full life. What are some things that you need? Do children with disabilities need these things too?
  - Does the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and all the rights within it also apply to children with disabilities? Do you know of anything in the convention specifically about children with disabilities?
  - What can you do to help children with disabilities have access to all the rights in the CRC? In the classroom? In the playground? In the community?

## Suggestions for follow-up

Ask the children to think of an activity that they could do with everyone blindfolded. For safety reasons, select a seated activity (e.g. a guessing game, a role play). Choose a favourite group activity. How could the activity be adapted to include children who are visually-impaired or blind?

To emphasise how the need for assistance also challenges the carer or assistant, you might try a short activity such as a 'trust walk', with a blindfolded child being led around a safe place by another. Then exchange roles and debrief the activity.

Give the children the opportunity to experiment and experience other limitations, such as limited mobility (e.g. a 'sack race', experimentation with crutches, one arm in a sling) or the inability to speak, read or count. It's always important to debrief these activities to break down stereotypes, and to emphasise the human rights of people with disabilities.

Several other activities address issues relating to children with disabilities. ‘Silent Speaker’ reflects on the experience of hard of hearing or deaf children. ‘A Body of Knowledge’ considers the effects of exclusion on the development of children with disabilities.

## Ideas for action

The children could carry out an assessment of their meeting or living place, school or community: could a person with disabilities live, work or play here with comfort and safety? Could anything be done to make these places more accessible?

The children could investigate where children with disabilities live and learn, and why they are or are not among other children. Focus on where children with disabilities live and go to school in the community, and whether this is the same or different to other communities?

Ask a representative of a community group or organisation for children with disabilities to come to your group and speak about their work. You could organise an exchange, or meet up with children who are part of the group or organisation.

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity assumes that none of the children themselves have diagnosed disabilities. In many groups of children, at least some have disabilities, although they may not be immediately obvious (e.g. children who wear glasses could be considered visually-impaired). Be sensitive to children and their concept of themselves and their abilities and/or disabilities. Use children with disabilities in the class as resource people to help explain answers to some of the debriefing questions – but only after first privately asking if they are comfortable with this role.

Balance the discussion about the need for assistance on the part of people with disabilities with a reminder of the many things they are able to do for themselves. Emphasise that people with disabilities have the same basic needs and rights as everyone else, and that many places, activities and tasks can be adapted to make them accessible for all people, including those with disabilities. Give examples of where this might be the case (e.g. ramps, acoustic signals for pedestrians at traffic lights, closed captions on videos).

Prepare yourself by reading Article 23 of the CRC – “mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child’s active participation in the community”. You can use the CRC cards to introduce this article and discuss it with the participants. The UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, adopted in 2006, marks a shift in the representation of people with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights and active members of society. More information can be found in the Discrimination section in Chapter 5.

## Variations

You could use paper dolls, with cut-out “clothes”, and the blindfolded children have to dress the dolls instead of themselves. If you have a small group, you could use just one or two paper dolls, asking different children to add articles of clothing.

You could run the activity with the blindfolded people completing a puzzle instead. The puzzle could be any simple 2D or 3D puzzle.

# Board Games

## How well do you know your rights?



Complexity



8-13 years



45 minutes



2-6 children per board



Human Rights

### Type of activity

This activity contains two board games about children's rights with different rules. Children can play the game by themselves but a facilitator may be needed for support and to run the debriefing.

## Do You Know Your Rights?

### Overview

In this activity children test their understanding of children's rights by moving backwards and forwards across a board, and picking up 'rights cards' when they land on coloured squares. The game tests their understanding of children's rights.

### Objectives

- To introduce human rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- To help children relate human rights to everyday life
- To raise awareness of human rights issues

### Preparation

- Check the answers on the cards before the lesson, to be sure you are familiar with and understand the issues.
- Make copies of the board provided as a handout. You will need one board for each small group
- Copy the and cut out the game cards in Handout 1 and Handout 2. Each small group needs both these handouts.
- Shuffle all the game cards together and place them in one pile with the title of the cards facing up.
- Optional: copy the child-friendly CRC for each child.

### Materials

- One game board per small group, ideally copied onto A3 paper.
- Counters or playing pieces, and dice
- Two sets of game cards per small group: Rights cards, and Penalty / Neutralising Rights cards
- Optional: copies of the child-friendly CRC

## Instructions

1. Divide children into groups of two to six and give each group:
  - a board
  - a dice
  - a set of cards

2. Ask each child to choose a counter to play with and explain the rules of the game:
  - Tell children that the aim of the game is to reach the end first, by taking turns to throw the dice and move their counter up the board.
  - Explain that for this game, they should ignore the snakes and ladders on the board. Point out the coloured or grey patterned squares and tell them that if they land on one of these, someone from an opposing team or a different player should pick up the top game card from the pile and read it aloud. They should listen to the question and instruction on the game card and try to answer the question. The opposing team or player can then reveal the correct response. Show them the cards and read one out as an example.
  - Explain that some of the cards tell them to move forwards, some tell them to move backwards, and some tell them to miss a turn. If they get a card telling them to move backwards, they can 'neutralise' it by naming the article of the CRC that has been violated. In this case, the player gets a bonus step forward.
  - The facilitator decides in case of doubt about whether an answer is to be considered correct or not.
  - Tell everyone to roll the dice in turn. The child in each group with the highest number is the first to play.
  - The player with the highest score rolls the dice again and moves forward according to the number on the dice.
  - Continue with the person on the left of the first player.
  - The first player to reach the end is the winner but the game should continue until every player has reached the end.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

Discuss the activity, asking questions such as these:

- What did you think of this game?
- Did you learn anything new about children's rights? About the world around you?
- Did any of the cards seem strange or unfamiliar? Why?
- Can you think of examples from your life similar to those on the cards – either where human rights are respected, or where they are violated?

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity requires some familiarity with children's rights and the CRC, so you might want to run a revision session before playing the game. Some of the cards may also be relevant to more than one right – and to other rights than only the one written on the back. You should allow children to be able to neutralise by naming other rights which are relevant but a facilitator is needed to verify the answer. You could hand out copies of the child-friendly CRC for the children to refer to if necessary.

If several groups are playing this game at the same time, a second facilitator is recommended in order to respond to questions about the cases.

Children could play the game in teams to help each other identify 'neutralising rights'.

## Adaptation

Adaptation for younger children: you could omit the task of identifying articles of the CRC in order to 'neutralise' backward steps. Instead you could ask them what they could do to change the situation. Younger children may also have difficulty reading the cards, so facilitators could take the role of reading the cards out loud.



## Handout 1: Rights cards

### RIGHTS CARD 1

Your friend's parents separated this summer but your friend still lives with each of them on alternate weeks because that was his/her choice. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 2

You learned that if you are in serious trouble you can always call for help. If you dial the emergency number and explain the situation, someone will put you in touch with organisations that try to help children who are abandoned, mistreated or have other problems. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 3

In your friend's class, children who have difficulty learning get extra help from teachers. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 4

Your head teacher learnt that some children in your community haven't attended school because their parents do not have legal permission to live here. The head teacher managed to get in touch with them and convinced them to send their children to school. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 5

You have a right to know your human rights! Go forward 4 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 6

Teachers at our school are not allowed to use physical punishment or to insult children, even when they have behaved badly. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 7

In your school there are many staircases but also elevators and ramps so that people who use wheelchairs or have trouble walking can move around easily. Go forward 3 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 8

Your friend's father had a bad accident and couldn't work for a long time. While he was recovering, the Government supported the family, so they had enough money to buy food and pay the rent. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 9

You learn that your rights should be protected even during wartime and that there are special agreements to be sure this happens. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 10

In your community there are libraries for children, and magazines, films, games and TV shows made especially for children so that they can learn about and understand what is going on in the world. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**

### RIGHTS CARD 11

Unfortunately you have to have an operation. But the good news is that you have the right to special protection and care, and even to have one of your parents or someone you love stay with you. Go forward 2 squares.

**Can you think of any rights which are relevant?**



cut

## Handout 2: Penalty and neutralising cards

### PENALTY CARD 1

Your friend loses one of her shoes but doesn't have enough money to buy a new pair. The school says barefoot children are not allowed to attend. Go back 2 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 2

Your classmate's parents are Roma. Their family is having trouble finding a place to live, because people say, "They are different". Go back 4 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 3

You learn that in some countries children are forced to fight in wars. They are hungry, thirsty and very scared. Go back to the start.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 4

A girl in your school is a model. She earns lots of money and her picture appears in magazines. But she often misses class and doesn't have time to do her homework or play with friends. She looks really tired. Go back 2 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 5

You are only allowed to speak the national language at your school. Children are punished if they speak a different language, even on the playground. Miss a turn.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 6

There is a school in your neighbourhood where children from different religions are welcome, but children without any religion are frowned upon. Miss a turn.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 7

Your friend's parents divorced last year. Now his mother won't let him see his father or grandparents any more. He really misses his dad. Go back 3 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 8

There is a girl in your class who can never play after school and has no time to study because she has to take care of her younger brothers and sisters. Go back 3 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 9

A boy in your class refuses to help clean up after lunch because he says, "Cleaning up is a girl's job!" Go back 2 squares.

**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**

### PENALTY CARD 10

The school has a football team and many other sports' clubs for boys set up as after school activities, but there is nothing set up for the girls.













**Can you think of a right to neutralise this penalty?**





# Handout 3: Reverse of the cards



<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>	<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>
<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>	<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>
<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>	<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>
<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>	<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>
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<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>	<p>Do you know your Rights?</p>  <p><b>COMPASITO</b> Manual for Human Rights Education with Children</p>



## List of Solutions

Rights card 1	<p><b>CRC Article 12, Respect for the views of the child</b> Children have the right to express their opinion when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.</p>
Rights card 2	<p><b>RC Article 19, Protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect</b> 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.</p> <p><b>CRC Article 36, Protection from other forms of exploitation</b> Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development and well-being.</p>
Rights card 3	<p><b>CRC Article 23, Children with disabilities</b> Children who have any kind of disability should have special care, support, and education so that they can lead full and independent lives to the best of their abilities.</p>
Rights card 4	<p><b>CRC Article 28, Right to education</b> Children have a right to education, which includes going to school. Primary education should be free.</p>
Rights card 5	<p><b>CRC Article 29, The aims of education</b> Education should develop the child's personality, skills and talents to the full. Education prepares children for life. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other nations' cultures.</p>
Rights card 6	<p><b>CRC Article 28, Right to education</b> Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Violence (physical and moral) should not be used to discipline a child.</p>
Rights card 7	<p><b>CRC Article 23, Children with disabilities</b> Children who have any kind of disability should have special care, support, and education so that they can lead full and independent lives to the best of their abilities.</p>
Rights card 8	<p><b>CRC Article 26, Benefit from social security</b> The society in which a child lives should provide it with social security (education, culture, nutrition, health, and social welfare) so that the child can develop properly. The Government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.</p>
Rights card 9	<p><b>CRC Article 38, Protection of children affected by armed conflict</b> Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army or take any direct part in hostilities. Children in war zones should receive special protection.</p>
Rights card 10	<p><b>CRC Article 13, Freedom of expression and information</b> Children have the right to seek, receive and share information in all forms (visual, written, broadcast and electronic...), as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.</p>
Rights card 11	<p><b>CRC Article 24, Healthcare and health services</b> Children have the right to good quality health care – that is, medicine, hospitals and doctors when sick. Children also have the right to clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment, so that they stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries to achieve this.</p>

## List of Solutions

Neutralising Right 1	<b>CRC Article 27, Adequate standard of living</b> Children should have a standard of living which allows them to meet their physical and mental needs. The Government should help families who cannot afford this.
Neutralising Right 2	<b>CRC Article 2, Non-discrimination</b> The rights in the Convention apply to everyone, whatever their race, colour, religion, sex, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever language they speak and wherever they come from, and the state must protect the child from any discrimination.
Neutralising Right 3	<b>CRC Article 38, Protection of children affected by armed conflict</b> Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army or take any direct part in hostilities. Moreover, children in war zones should receive special protection.
Neutralising Right 4	<b>CRC Article 32, Child labour</b> The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or their education, or that might lead to their exploitation.
Neutralising Right 5	<b>CRC Article 29, The aims of education</b> Education should develop the child's personality, skills and talents to the full. Education prepares children for life. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other nations' cultures. <b>CRC Article 30: Children of minorities and indigenous people</b> Children of minorities and indigenous people have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.
Neutralising Right 6	<b>CRC Article 14, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion</b> Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide their children on these matters. <b>CRC Article 2: Non-discrimination</b> The rights in the Convention apply to everyone, whatever their race, colour, religion, sex, ability, whatever they think or say, whatever language they speak and wherever they come from. The State must protect the child from any discrimination.
Neutralising Right 7	<b>CRC Article 9, Separation from parents</b> Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good, for example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting a child. Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child. The Government has a duty to provide all necessary information about the absent family member.
Neutralising Right 8	<b>CRC Article 31, Leisure, play and culture</b> All children have the right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of recreational and cultural activities. <b>CRC Article 32, Child labour</b> The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or their education, or that might lead to their exploitation.
Neutralising Right 9	<b>CRC Article 2, Non-discrimination</b> The rights in the Convention apply to everyone, whatever their race, colour, religion, sex, ability, whatever they think or say, whatever language they speak and wherever they come from. The State must protect the child from discrimination.
Neutralising Right 10	<b>CRC Article 2, Non-discrimination</b> The rights in the Convention apply to everyone, whatever their race, colour, religion, sex, ability, whatever they think or say, whatever language they speak and wherever they come from. The State must protect the child from discrimination.

## Moksha-Patamu

<b>Overview</b>	Originally a Hindu game to teach moral instruction, allowing a player to ascend higher in life or fall to lower levels. In this activity, the game has been adapted with respect to human rights, producing similar effects.
<b>Objectives</b>	To emphasise the positive effects of human rights
<b>Preparation</b>	Copy and cut out the game cards and make a large copy of the board.
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Game board</li> <li>• Game cards at the end of this activity</li> <li>• Dice and playing pieces</li> </ul>

### Instructions

1. Divide children into groups of 6 and give each group a board, 6 game pieces and a die.
2. Explain the activity:
  - Everyone rolls the die. The child with the highest number goes first.
  - The first player rolls the die and moves forward according to the number on the die.
  - What happens next depends on the square where the player lands:
  - If a player lands on a square containing the bottom of a ladder, the player moves up to the square at the top of the ladder.
  - If a player lands on a square containing the head of a snake, the player must slide down the snake to the square containing the end tail of the snake.
  - If the player lands on a shaded square, the person to the player's left picks up a card and reads it aloud. The player who landed on that square must say whether they think the statement on the card is true or false according to human rights. Give them an example by reading out one of the cards.
  - If the player answers incorrectly, he or she stays on the same square. A player who gives the correct answer earns the chance to move forward two squares. If he or she can name the article of the CRC that defines or protects that right, then he or she moves forward an extra square. It is not necessary to name the exact number of the CRC article.
  - The next players then take their turns one by one.
  - The game is over when a player reaches the last square or throws a number on the die that moves his/her piece beyond the last square.

### Debriefing and Evaluation

Discuss the activity and relate it to human rights, asking questions such as:

- How did you like this activity?
- How did knowing about human rights help you to climb the ladder?
- In real life how does knowledge of human rights help you? How does it help others?
- What happens to a whole community when people do not know about their human rights?
- What happens when most people know their human rights?
- Could you play this game without knowing about the Child Rights Convention?
- Why is it important that there is a special human rights convention for children?

## Suggestion for follow-up

Give children copies of the child-friendly version of the CRC and ask them to come up with their own ideas and make cards that reflect their own experience. Then replay the game using these self-made cards.

You may like to follow this activity with Human Rights Calendar which will create a group calendar to mark important human right dates or Human Rights in the News; this will help children analyse how human rights are reported in news and media.

## Ideas for action

Relate the cards to the children's experience. Discuss what they can do when violations such as these occur. Who can help them in claiming their rights?

## Tips for the facilitator

In order to play this game, children will need some understanding of what human rights are. The activities 'Rabbits Rights' and 'Sailing to a New Land' make a link between human needs and human rights and would work well as an introduction to the topic.

In the debriefing, encourage children to think of real experiences, focusing on violence, bullying, and situations of injustice or unfairness that they have experienced or observed.

Make copies of the game board and distribute it to the children so that they can play the game with their family and friends.



## Handout: Cards

Copy and cut out these cards or make others appropriate to your group.



<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>A child who gets married is no longer a child.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 1.</b> Who is a child? Everyone under 18 years of age is considered a child, and has all the rights in this convention.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>All children have the same human rights, no matter whether they or their parents are citizens of a particular country or not.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 2.</b> Non-discrimination: The rights in the Convention apply to everyone, wherever they come from, and the State must protect the child from any discrimination.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>Girls can only play on the football field if the boys are not using it.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 2.</b> Non-discrimination: The rights in the CRC apply to everyone regardless of their race, colour, religion, sex, ability, whatever they think or say, whatever language they speak and wherever they come from. The State must protect the child from any discrimination.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>If you commit a crime, you can be put in jail with adult criminals.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 37.</b> Torture, degrading treatment and deprivation of liberty: Children who break the law should not be treated cruelly. They should not be put in prison with adults and should be able to keep in contact with their families.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>Our school librarian lets me sign out any book I want.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 17.</b> Child's access to appropriate information and media: Children have the right to reliable information from diverse sources, including mass media. Television, radio, and newspapers should provide information that children can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm children.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>A nearby factory emits smelly chemicals into the air that makes people cough.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 24.</b> Healthcare and health services: Children have the right to adequate healthcare when sick, including medicine, hospitals and doctors. Children also have the right to clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment, so that they will stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.</p>

fold



<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>Only your father can decide what is best for you.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 18.</b> Parents' joint responsibilities: 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.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>Although I must use a wheelchair, I can go to school with the other kids in my neighbourhood. The school should provide me with a ramp.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 23.</b> Children with a disability: Children who are wheelchair users and have any kind of disability should have special care, support, and education so that they can lead full and independent lives to the best of their abilities.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>Our school computers block some Internet sites.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 17.</b> Child's access to appropriate information and media: Children have the right to reliable information from diverse sources, including mass media. Information sources should provide information that children can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm children.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>In some places children, especially boys, must serve in an army.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>False.</b> It's a Violation  <b>CRC Article 38.</b> Protection of children affected by armed conflict: Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army or take any direct part in hostilities. Moreover, children in war zones should receive special protection.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>When a baby is born, the parents must give it a name and officially register its birth.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 7.</b> Birth registration, name, nationality and the right to know and be cared for by parents: All children have the right to a name; they have the right to nationality; also the right to know and to be cared for by their parents.</p>
<p>Statement:</p> <p><b>My parents allow my 17-year-old brother to watch whatever he likes on TV but they restrict what I can watch because I'm only 10.</b></p>	<p>Answer: <b>True.</b> It's a Right  <b>CRC Article 5.</b> Parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities: The family has the main responsibility for guiding how a child exercises his or her rights, based on growing age and maturity. Governments should respect this right.</p>

fold



Statement:

**Even though I am 13, my parents read all my mail before they let me see it.**

Answer: **False**. It's a Violation

**CRC Article 16.** Privacy, honour, and reputation: Children have a right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their families, their homes and their letters and mail.

Statement:

**Class 8 produces a weekly magazine and distributes it to the neighbours.**

Answer: **True**. It's a Right

**CRC Article 13.** Freedom of expression: You have the right to think what you want, to say what you like, and nobody should forbid you from doing so. You should be able to share your ideas and opinion, regardless of frontiers.

Statement:

**My mother is working in another country now, but every month either she comes home or my father and I visit her.**

Answer: **True**. It's a Right

**CRC Article 10.** Family reunification: Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so they can stay in contact with their parents or get back together as a family.

Statement:

**My friends and I are forbidden to speak our native language at school.**

Answer: **False**. It's a Violation

**CRC Article 30.** Children of minorities and indigenous people: Children have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.

Statement:

**I have the right to a name, a country and a family.**

Answer: **True**. It's a Right

**CRC Article 8.** Preservation of identity: Governments should respect children's right to a name, a nationality and family ties. Governments have a duty to protect children's identity.

Statement :

**Children who misbehave at school should not be given physical punishment of any kind.**

Answer: **True**. It's a Right

**CRC Article 28.** Right to education: Children have a right to education, that is, to go to school. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity; violence should not be used to discipline a child.

fold



Statement:

**My family came here to get away from the war in our country. But refugee children like myself are not allowed to go to school here.**

Answer: **False.** It's a Violation

**CRC Article 22.** Refugee children: Special protection must be given to refugee children. Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children born in that country.

Statement:

**I have a right to see both my parents, even if they are separated.**

Answer: **True.** It's a Right

**CRC Article 9.** Separation from parents: Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good, for example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting a child. Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child.

Statement:

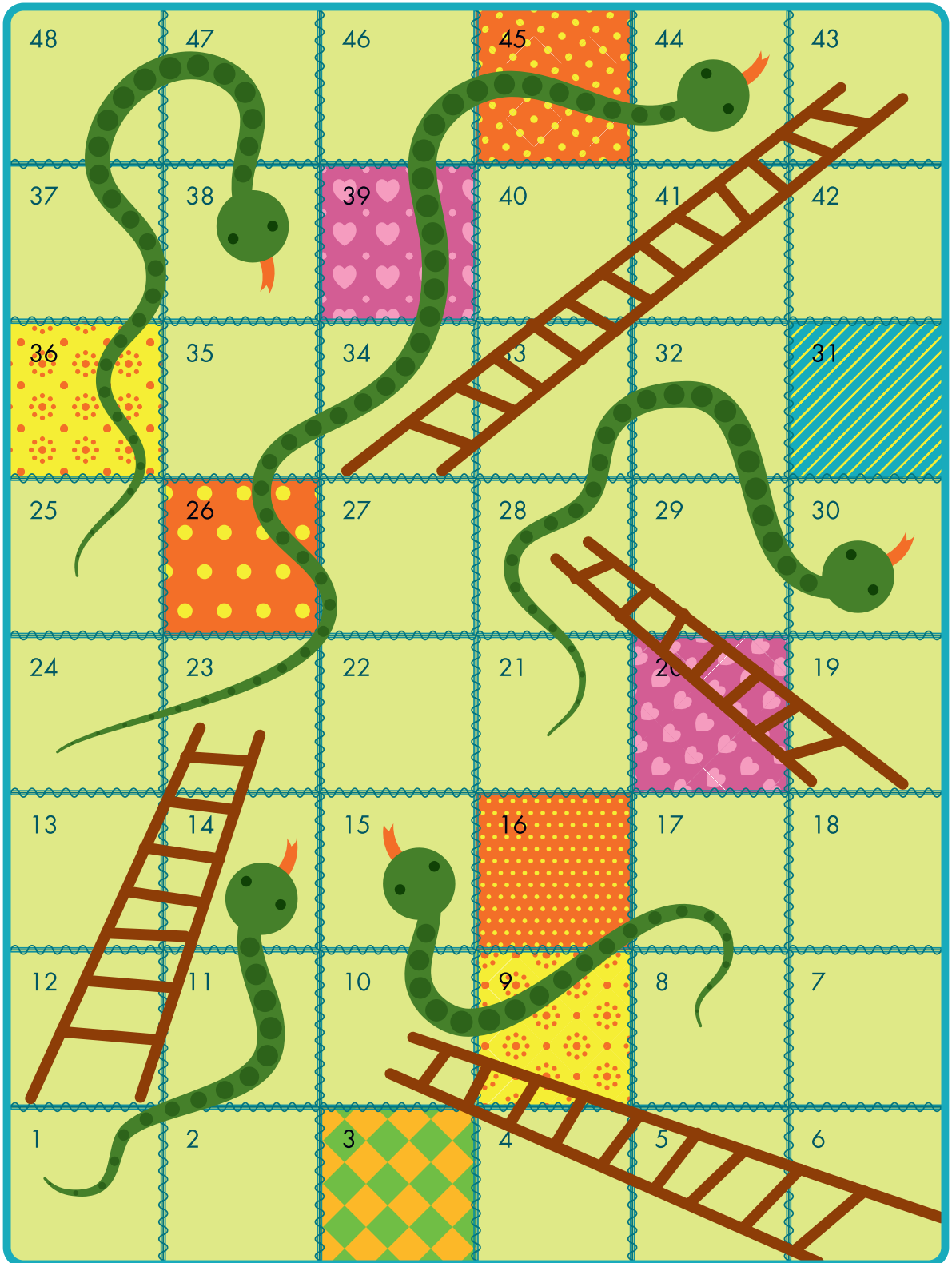
**I miss a lot of school because when the baby is sick, I take care of him while my mother is at work.**

Answer: **False.** It's a Violation

**CRC Article 32.** Child labour: The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or their education, or that might lead to their exploitation.

fold





# Boys Don't Cry!

*And girls are smarter...*



Complexity



6-13 years



60-90 minutes



4-30 children



Discrimination



Gender Equality



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Part 1: Discussion activity  
Part 2: Drama

## Overview

Children discuss gender-related statements and then create a short drama sketch on gender stereotypes and discrimination.

## Objectives

- To discuss gender stereotypes and gender equality
- To promote tolerance
- To illustrate how stereotypes can lead to discrimination

## Preparation

Select three statements from the list at the end of the activity or create new ones.

Prepare four signs: I agree / I don't know / I am still thinking / I disagree.

Place each one in a different corner of the room.

Choose additional statements to use for the drama sketch and write them out on separate slips of paper.

## Materials

Paper and markers for the signs, slips of paper for the statements

## Instructions

### Part 1: Taking a Position

1. Explain the first part of the activity to the children:
  - Show them the signs in each corner of the room
  - Tell them that you will read out three different statements, one at a time. They should stand in the corner near the sign which best represents their position. For example, if they agree with the statement they hear, they stand next to the sign saying, 'I agree'.
2. Tell the children that they must be honest about what they believe, and should not criticise others for having a different opinion. Everyone should feel free to stand next to whichever sign they most agree with.
3. Read out the first statement and wait until the children have chosen a position. Then ask the children in different corners why they have chosen this position. Invite children to change positions if they change their mind after hearing others' reasons. Repeat this process for all three statements.
4. Bring children back into one group and discuss this part of the activity, using questions such as these:

- Did anything about this activity surprise you?
- Why do you think people had different opinions about these statements?
- Did anyone's reasons lead you to change your position? Why?
- Is there a right or wrong answer to these questions? How do we know?

## Part 2: Acting it Out

1. Divide the children into small groups of no more than five and give each group a different statement. Explain that each group has about 15 minutes to read their statement, discuss it, and create a short sketch (a mini play) that gives a message about this statement.
2. Ask each group to present their sketch. After each presentation, ask the audience what message they think the presentation was intended to communicate. Then ask the presenting group what message they *wanted* to convey.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the effects of gender stereotypes, asking questions such as these:
  - Are there different rules and expectations for boys or girls in this group? In the classroom or in school? In the family? Do you think that's right?
  - Can you think of other ideas about how boys or girls are seen or what they are supposed to do? Do similar ideas exist in other parts of our country? Of Europe? Of the world?
  - What happens when a boy or girl doesn't agree with these ideas and wants to act differently or be seen differently? Have you ever been in a situation like that? How did you feel? What did you do?
2. Relate gender stereotypes to human rights and discrimination, asking questions such as these:
  - How do these ideas about boys and girls, or males and females, affect or limit our choices? Can you give some examples?
  - How do these limitations affect our human rights? Which human rights might be affected?
  - What does the human right "to be free from discrimination" mean? Can you think of any situations when girls or boys may be discriminated against because of their gender?
  - What can we do in the future so that boys and girls can act more freely, in the way they want to?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'What a Wonderful World' focuses on appearances and realities. The activity 'Once Upon a Time...' also deals with gender stereotypes.

## Ideas for action

Develop with the children a personal 'code of conduct' for how people in the group should behave towards each other and how to ensure that girls and boys are treated equally. Mount it on the wall and refer to it when conflicts occur within the group.

## Tips for the facilitator

Be careful not to reinforce the stereotypes that this activity seeks to address. Be aware of your own prejudices and stereotypes relating to gender and how you may be conveying them to children as a facilitator for the group.

The children may ask for your opinion: try to avoid influencing them or giving them the 'right' answer.

When choosing statements for the group, try to select statements that will elicit different opinions and stimulate discussion among the children.

Avoid polarising girls and boys. Depending on the group, you might decide to create either single-sex groups, or gender-balanced groups for the sketches.

Parents' attitudes strongly influence those of their children. You might hear both positive and negative reactions from parents about this activity.

## Adaptations

To shorten the activity, run only Part 1 or Part 2, whichever is most relevant to your group.

Instead of creating a sketch, ask the children to make a visual presentation (e.g. a drawing, cartoons, a collage with pictures from magazines, etc.).

## Sample statements

- Pink is for girls and blue is for boys.
- Girls should play with dolls.
- Boys don't cry.
- Boys don't wear skirts.
- A girl cannot be the leader.
- Online games are best played by boys.
- Football is for boys.
- Girls are weak and boys are strong.
- Girls help their mothers. Boys help their fathers.
- It is better to be a girl than a boy.
- When something goes wrong, boys are always blamed first.
- Boys can say 'dirty words', but girls can't.
- Girls are smarter than boys.
- Girls win in fights because they fight 'dirty'.
- Boys are lazier than girls.
- Girls are better liars than boys.
- Girls care more about beauty than boys do.
- Girls look better than boys.
- Boys are good at building things.

# Bullying Scenes

*Every bully is a coward in disguise!*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30 children



Discrimination



Violence



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Discussion with some movement.

## Overview

Children discuss bullying and then position themselves to show how they would respond to different bullying scenarios.

## Objectives

- To deepen understanding of different kinds of bullying
- To identify strategies, people and organisations that can support children being bullied
- To analyse different responses to bullying

## Preparation

Mark the four corners of the room as numbers 1– 4. Children should be able to move freely from one corner to another.

Select a few of the Bullying Scenes at the end of this activity that are most relevant for your group.

## Materials

- A space that allows the children to sit in circle.
- Coloured Paper
- Markers
- Scissors

## Instructions

1. Introduce the topic of bullying asking questions such as these:
  - What is bullying?
  - Is there a difference between being mean and bullying? What is it?
  - What are the different ways people bully?
  - Why do you think people bully?
  - How does bullying affect people who are bullied? People who bully? The whole community?
2. Ask each child to trace one of their hands on a piece of coloured paper and cut it out. For each finger, they should think of one person that they could turn to for support if they are being bullied (e.g. friend, parent, teacher, school administrator, police, counsellor, sibling). Ask the children to explain why they chose those supporters.
3. Explain that you are going to look at different ways people can respond to cases involving bullying. Demonstrate how this will work:
  - The teacher will read out a description of bullying. For each situation, three possible responses are given. A fourth response is always available if anyone thinks of one.

- Each corner of the room has a number. After you hear the situation and the responses, go to the corner that represents what you think you would do in this situation.
4. Read out the bullying situation and give the children time to choose their responses and move to the corresponding corner of the room. Once the children have taken a position, ask a few of them in each position to explain why they chose that response and some of its advantages and disadvantages. Allow those children who chose the open corner to explain how they would respond to the situation.

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. After responding to five or six bullying scenes, debrief the activity by using some of the following questions. Select a few from the list: do not attempt to use them all!
  - What did you think of the activity? What feelings did you have during it?
  - Were any of the scenes difficult to respond to? Which ones and why?
  - Did any of the bullying scenes feel familiar?
  - Do people who are bullied need help and support? Why?
  - Where can people who are bullied find help and support?
  - Why do people bully others? Is it fair?
  - What could you do if you're being bullied, and the person you turn to for help and support doesn't do anything about it?
  - Who is responsible for helping and supporting children when they are being bullied?
  - What can be done to make bullies change their behavior?
  - What happens if no-one stops people from bullying? What happens to the bullies? What happens to the community?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Which human rights are violated when someone is bullied?
  - Who has the responsibility to protect children from bullying?
  - Does the bully have any rights? Does he / she have the right to bully you?
  - Can you imagine what it would be like if no-one was bullied?
3. At the end of the debriefing, ask the children to look back at their 'hands of support' and add any other people or organisations they can think of that they could turn to for support when being bullied. Display the 'hands of support' around the room so that the children can refer to them in the future.

## Suggestions for follow-up

You may like to focus further on violence by running the activity 'Picturing Ways Out of Violence'. The activity 'Words that Wound' also focuses on verbal bullying and could be run before or after this activity.

## Ideas for action

Discuss how the group could create a 'No Bullying' campaign and ask members of the community to join in the initiative. For example, you might like to organise an exhibition, invite a professional from a

child support organisation to talk to the children, and/or identify an adult in the school or community to be the key person children can turn to for help.

Create a theatre performance that shows how children can respond when they're bullied, and perform it for other groups of children.

Find out if there is a local children's hotline / helpline that children who are being bullied can call. Find out which services children can turn to for support in the local community. Give this information to children during the activity, and if possible invite someone from one of these agencies to speak to the group.

## Tips for the facilitator

Introduce a magic stick / talking stick or 'microphone' so that people wanting to speak must wait their turn.

Some form of bullying may exist among children in your group. Bullying affects all children to varying degrees and may take different forms. Be sensitive to the dynamics within your group, but try not to focus on specific individuals or relationships.

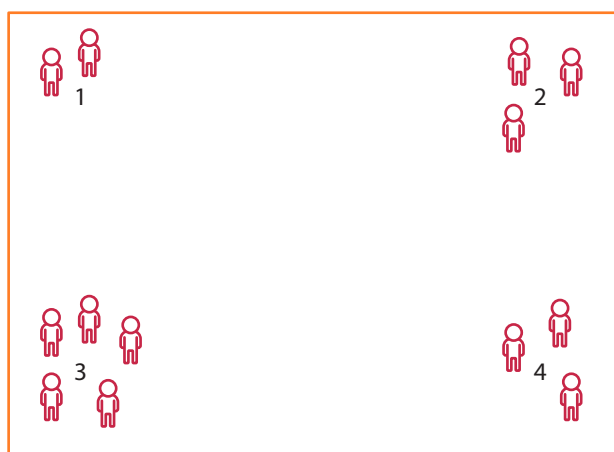
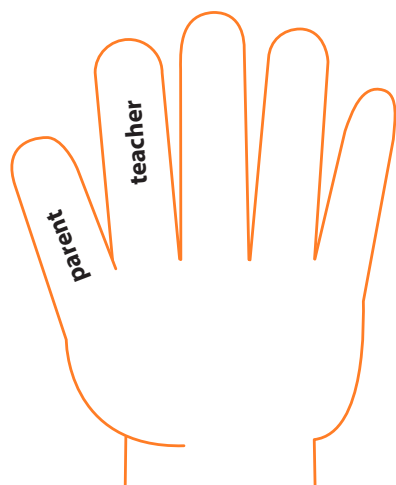
## Adaptations

Write your own bullying scenes that the children in your group can relate to instead of using those that are provided.

Instead of doing the activity with the whole group, you could divide the children into small groups and allow them to discuss the statements together, as a group or as an individual reflection.

Divide children into small groups, give each group a bullying situation and ask them to role play both the bullying and their response. Discuss and debrief the role play, asking other groups for alternative responses.

You could use the first part of the activity 'Hands of support' as an activity by itself. You could also do this part after the 4-corners discussion – as part of the "solutions".





## Handout: Bullying Scenes

### Case 1

Your friends start calling you names, sending you nasty text messages and forcing you to give them things. You don't feel good when these things happen. What would you do?

1. Nothing. You must have done something wrong to make your friends act like that.
2. Start calling them names in return and threaten them.
3. Speak to your parents or teacher and tell them what is happening.
4. Something else (Open corner).

### Case 2

A group of kids in your class are spreading hurtful rumours about you by sending instant messages around. Many kids now won't play with you or even speak to you. Even your friends are starting to think the rumours may be true. What would you do?

1. Nothing. No-one will believe you if everyone thinks the rumours are true.
2. Start spreading bad rumours about the other kids.
3. Tell everyone the rumours are untrue.
4. Something else (Open corner).

### Case 3

Your older sister or brother keeps hitting and kicking you when nobody is looking and tells you that if you tell anyone she/he will just hurt you more. What would you do?

1. Tell your parents or teachers what is happening.
2. Ask your friends at school to help you fight the older brother or sister.
3. Tell her/him that it hurts, and to stop doing it.
4. Something else (Open corner).

### Case 4

Your teacher keeps calling you "stupid" every time you get an answer wrong in class and says that there's no point in even trying to teach you because you can't learn. Other children have started calling you names too. What would you do?

1. Go straight to the headteacher and tell them what is happening.
2. Skip the class of that teacher.
3. Ask your parents if you can change class or change school.
4. Something else (Open corner).

### Case 5

You notice one of your friends is teasing and making fun of the younger children at the summer camp. Your friend has started taking things from them as well. What would you do?

1. Tell the camp leaders what is happening, without letting your friend know.
2. Help your friend take things from the younger children, in case he/she starts to take things from you.
3. Tell your friend that you think that what he/she's doing is wrong and that he/she should leave the younger children alone.
4. Something else (Open corner).



**Case 6**

A group of older kids from another school like to pick on younger children from your primary school. They wait to catch children walking home, or waiting for the bus alone, surround them, and then take money, food, or toys away from them. They also throw rocks and sometimes threaten even worse things. What would you do?

1. Be very careful, and make sure you go to and from school with friends.
2. Tell adults at your school what is happening and ask for help.
3. Carry rocks or a knife to protect yourself.
4. Something else (Open corner).

**Case 7**

A new boy in your class is a refugee. Your friends always say racist things to him, make fun of his English and tell him to go back home. What would you do?

1. Join in: he's not your friend so you don't have to worry about him.
2. Tell your teacher that your friends are saying racist things to him.
3. Offer to give him English lessons when you're not playing with your friends, to help him fit in.
4. Something else (Open corner)

**Case 8**

You've been teasing one of your friends because he or she is really bad at reading and writing and you noticed that recently he/she has started to sit alone. Once you noticed tears in the child's eyes. What would you do?

1. Nothing, he/she was probably just having a bad day and it has nothing to do with you.
2. Stop teasing your friend and ask him/her why he/she was crying.
3. Tell your friend that you won't tease him/her in front of anyone anymore but that he/she really is stupid and he/she should get some extra lessons.
4. Something else (Open corner).

**Case 9**

A group of kids in your class have been spreading a hurtful rumour about you and posting edited photos of you on social networking sites. Many kids now won't play with you or even speak to you. What would you do?

1. Nothing. Everyone probably believes the rumours so there's no point doing anything.
2. Tell your parents or a teacher about the posts and ask them for help.
3. Start posting a new rumour about someone else and hope that everyone soon forgets what was posted about you.
4. Something else (Open corner).

# Capture the Castle

*If you don't think, you lose!*



Complexity



8-13 years



120 minutes



16-30 children,  
2-3 adults or older  
facilitators



Peace



Violence



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Active adventure game, experiential learning

## Overview

Children represent different sides in a battle and need to organise themselves in order to win. Afterwards they discuss the different feelings on opposing sides of a conflict, the reasons and mechanisms behind it.

## Objectives

- To develop empathy with opposing sides to a conflict
- To develop skills of co-operation
- To raise awareness of emotions present in a conflict
- To foster strategic thinking and planning

## Preparation

If the game is played outside, examine the area and mark clear boundaries for the activity. Identify any potentially dangerous areas and point them out to the children and group leaders.

Cut three pieces of orange paper into 10 equal strips each (30 pieces in total) and do the same for the three pieces of blue paper. These represent three 'Action Plans' for the Orange group (in 30 pieces) and three for the Blue group (in 30 pieces).

## Materials

- A very large space that allows the children to run and to hide
- Three sheets of orange paper, three sheets of blue paper. These are the 'Action Plans'.
- Three different distinguishing signs for each separate group (e.g. coloured face paints or visible ribbons)
- Drinks and snacks for after the game

## Instructions

1. Explain there is a beautiful city with a castle at its centre. The city is controlled by the Purple Party, but there are two opposing groups who want to invade and take over the castle: the Blue Party to the south and the Orange Party to the north.
2. Divide the children into 3 groups in roughly the following proportions: 40% Purples, 30% Blues and 30% Oranges. It is important to have exactly the same number of children in the Orange and Blue groups. There can be fewer in the Purple group. Explain the boundaries of the playing area. Give the Blue Party the 30 pieces of orange paper (3 Orange 'Action Plans'), and the Orange Party the 30 pieces of blue paper (the Blue group's Action Plans).
3. Explain the activity carefully so that all the children understand:

- Everyone must stay within the boundaries of the activity area.
- Each group should establish a camp within the game's boundaries. The city that the Purple Party is defending should be exactly in the middle, the Blue Party's camp on one side and the Orange Party's camp on the other.
- The Orange and Blue parties have each other's action plans at the start. To be able to capture the Castle, the two invading parties need to retrieve one of their action plans from the opposing side (10 pieces). They do this by exchanging pieces of the opposing side's plans: for example, a Blue group member can acquire a piece of Blue plan by handing over a piece of Orange plan – and vice versa. Each piece of an Action Plan needs to be taken separately by one of the invaders to the opposite camp. Only one piece can be carried at a time. When an invader reaches the opposite camp, he/she hands over the piece he/she has brought with him/her and swaps it for a piece of his/her own Plan. This is then taken back to his/her own camp.
- To defend the Castle, the Purples must try to prevent the Blues and Oranges from exchanging their plans. They try to catch the invaders and take away the pieces of their plans. 'Catching' means just touching lightly on the shoulder or arm.
- When caught, the Blue or Orange player has two choices: 1) give their piece of the plan away to the Purples and then be free to rejoin the game; 2) refuse to give the piece away and remain a 'prisoner' in the city until the game is over or the piece is handed over to the Purples. The Blue and Orange Parties can help each other.
- All pieces of the plans must be carried in a visible way.
- The two or three facilitators do not take part in the game but supervise to see that the rules are respected.
- Once the Blue Party or the Orange Party has collected ten pieces, to make a complete action plan, they have won! If the Purple Party manage to get ten pieces of either the Blue Party's or Orange Party's plan, the Purple party has won.
- The game is over when one Party has won or when the set time limit decided by the facilitator has run out.

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Discuss the activity, using questions such as these:
  - What happened in the game? How did you find it? Did you complete your mission?
  - What strategy did you have? Did everyone participate? How were decisions made in your group?
  - How did you feel about the other two parties?
  - Did the Blue and Orange Parties team up or fight each other? How did that affect the outcome of the activity?
  - Did the Blue and Orange Parties fight against the Purple Party and vice versa? If yes, why?
2. Relate the activity to conflicts by using questions such as these:
  - Was the situation realistic? Can you think of similar situations in real life? What are some reasons why such conflicts happen in real life?
  - How do you think this situation could be changed? How could such conflicts be prevented?
  - Do you know of any other conflicts in your life? What, if anything, are you doing to resolve them? What could be done to change these situations?
  - How do conflicts arise? What can we do to avoid them, solve them, manage them and/or safeguard peace (depending on the examples discussed)?

3. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - What are some human rights that are often violated when people are in conflict? What about in an armed conflict?
  - How are different parties in a conflict affected by having their rights violated? How might this affect their futures?
  - How are children affected by conflict? How does this affect their futures?
  - What can be done to prevent conflicts and human rights violations such as these?
  - What does it mean to 'resolve' a conflict. Can you think of an example?
4. Sum up by recalling relevant articles from the CRC, such as article 38.

## Suggestions for follow-up

Look into some of the conflicts present in the group or in the community, or perhaps more widely. Help children to understand the reasons behind particular conflicts and allow them space to discuss this in more detail.

The activity 'The Battle for the Orange' can be a good activity to show children how conflicts can be resolved. You could even run it before this activity to see if children can apply their knowledge!

## Ideas for action

If your debriefing discussions focused on armed conflict and peace, try to organise an action or symbolic demonstration for peace and/or visit a peace organisation. Help the children find out about how peace organisations understand peace and approach conflict resolution.

Discuss with the children the ways they deal with conflict among themselves. Help them develop some ground rules for addressing conflicts within their group that reflect human rights standards (for example: no physical violence, no insulting language, everyone has the right to an opinion and to express it freely, everyone should have the same chance to participate).

## Tips for the facilitator

No-one has to fight over anything in this activity. Children in weaker physical conditions can achieve much more through strategy, quickness and co-operation than those who rely on aggression and strength. If you have children of different ages, try to make sure there is a mix of older and younger children in each group. Make sure there is a gender balance in groups and be aware of any children with disabilities that might need consideration.

Prepare the adult facilitators or helpers. Make sure they understand the rules and boundaries and are aware of any potential dangers in the area.

Explain to the Blue and Orange Parties the importance of having a strategy – for example when people are caught. Emphasise that 'to catch' means simply touching the person. See some variations below for how to adapt to differently-abled groups.

The duration of the game will depend on the group. Be prepared for the activity to be shorter or longer than expected.

## Adaptation

If one group or an individual child is weaker than the others, provide some hints on possible strategies (e.g. they could verify how many pieces of which plan have already reached the other camp; risk the loss of some pieces to save the others; not send pieces of all the plans at the very beginning but save some until you have understood the rhythm of the game).

Rather than a simple 'catch', include a test after a Purple Party member tags a Blue or Orange Party member (e.g. when they meet, they play 'rock, paper, scissors'; if the Purple wins, then the Blue or Orange gives up the piece; if the Blue or Orange wins he or she goes free). This variation is effective when the children vary in their ages and physical condition, because it gives younger or the weaker children an equal chance.

Instead of actions plans, you could use balls of different colours that each camp needs to get hold of. For example, the Orange group has 15 orange balls and the Blue group has 15 blue balls. To win, they need to get 6 balls from the opposite camp. The Purple group wins if they get 6 balls of the same colour. Balls cannot be thrown but must be passed hand to hand.

You could also allow members of the Blue and Orange teams to 'free' their team members imprisoned in the castle. They need to enter the Purple castle and touch the team member.

# Card Games

*Let's just play cards*



Complexity



5-13 years



30 minutes



4-30



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Simple games using cards from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

## Overview

Children “play” with the CRC cards and familiarise themselves with their rights.

Note: The cards for printing or copying can be found at the end of the manual.

## Memory game

### Materials and Preparation

- 1 set of CRC cards with articles only for each group of players
- 1 set of CRC cards with images only for each group of players

### Instructions

1. Briefly run through the CRC picture cards with the children, checking that they know what each one represents. Show them that for each picture card there is a corresponding card with the CRC article. Give the children a little time to recall the article and the corresponding image – particularly if they have not used the cards before.
2. Divide the children into two or three groups, each with the same number of people. In each group, shuffle the two sets of cards together, and place them all on the floor with the texts and drawings face down. Tell the children that they should collect as many pairs as possible: a pair consists of an article with its corresponding image.
3. Groups take it in turns to turn over two cards. If they turn over a pair, they keep this pair and have another turn. If the cards don't “match” and there is no pair, they should put each card back, face down, in the same place; the turn then passes to someone from the next group. Groups should work as a team, but make sure that all the children have a go. The winning team is the one with most pairs. When all the cards have been paired up, ask each group to read their cards aloud.

### Adaptation

For younger children, you could print two sets of CRC cards with images. They need to match identical images and try to describe the right it represents. Depending on the number and age of the children, you may decide to use just a selection of articles to make the game easier. For a large group, you may want to run two memory games parallel. You will have to prepare another set of articles and images in order to do this.

## Human Rights pairs

### Materials and Preparation

- 1 set of CRC cards with articles only
- 1 set of CRC cards with images only

(These can be found at the end of the manual)

### Instructions

Shuffle the packs together. This will be enough for one group of five children (maximum). If you have more children, you will need to create more groups, and make another set of articles and images for each group.

1. Briefly run through the CRC picture cards with the children, checking that they know what each one represents. Show them that for each picture card there is a corresponding card with a CRC article. Give the children a little time for them to recall the article and the corresponding image – particularly if they have not used the cards before.
2. Divide the children into groups containing a maximum of five children per group, and ask them to sit in a circle. Hand out four cards to each child and place the rest in a pile in the middle of the group, face down. Tell the children that the object of the game is to collect pairs of Children's Rights cards, consisting of an article and the corresponding image.
3. Players take it in turns to ask another player in their group for a specific card – but they must already be holding its pair in order to ask. For example, if they hold the text of Article 3, they can ask another player for the corresponding image. If they hold the image of the article, they can ask for the corresponding text.
  - If the second player – the one who is asked – has the card, he/she hands it over to the first player – the one making the request. The first player then has another turn and can ask any player for another card.
  - If the second player does not have the card requested, then the first player picks up a card from the pile in the middle. The turn then passes to the second player, and he/she can now ask any other player for a specific card.
4. Play continues in this way until all the cards have been paired up. The player with the most cards wins.
5. At the end of the game, ask each player to read their cards aloud.

### Adaptation

For younger children, you could print two sets of CRC image cards, and they need to ask for the same image to make a pair.

## Pictionary

### Materials and Preparation

- Print out a set of CRC cards with just the articles. Shuffle them.
- Paper and markers for each group

### Instructions

1. Show each of the articles to the children, briefly explaining what they mean if they don't already know.
2. Divide the children into groups of three or four, and give them paper and markers. Tell them that one person in each group will be asked to communicate an article of the CRC to other members of his/her group without speaking. They can draw or write on the paper, and members of the team need to guess what it represents. The person communicating can nod or shake their head, but must not speak! All groups will be given the same article to guess.
3. Invite one person from each group to come up to you. Show them all a card to communicate. When you signal the start, those children should go back to their groups and start drawing while the rest of their team guesses.
4. When one team finishes, they score a point and all teams have to stop guessing for that article.
5. Each team should then send up another child to receive the next card, which they need to communicate to members of their team.
6. The team which has guessed the most articles after the set has been used up, wins.
7. At the end of the game, stick the drawings up on the wall.

### Adaptation

You could run the same activity using gestures or mime instead of drawing.

For younger children who can't read yet, you could read the article out to them instead, making sure it is not audible for the team members who will be "guessing". You could also choose a selection of articles to focus on instead of going through the whole set of cards.

### Evaluation and Debriefing

Discuss the activity using questions such as these:

- Was it fun playing the game(s)? Why or why not?
- Did you prefer competing as a team or as an individual? Why?
- How was the winner decided? Was it based on skill, strategy or luck? Did you need to know the CRC to play the game?
- Are some of the articles harder to express in a picture or image? Which ones and why?
- Are human rights something that you or other children "win"? What are they?
- Did you learn anything new about the CRC by playing the game? Are there any of the rights that you would like to know more about? Which ones and why?



## Follow-Up

These card games are good activities for the children to familiarise themselves with the different articles of the CRC; however, to understand the articles further and how the rights on them are violated or enjoyed by children everywhere, other activities from *Compasito* should be used afterwards. Check the summary of activities to find some which relate to the themes you or the group want to explore further.

## Tips for Facilitators

These cards can be used for the following activities, and for many others in *Compasito*. Some activities require the pictures and text, some require picture only, and some require text only. Depending on which activities you are planning to run, you may need to create various sets of cards.

## Ideas for Action

Ask the children to look at board games or card games they already play at home or in the community to see if there are any that don't respect human rights. You could ask the children to rewrite the rules or adapt the material and contents of the game to make it respect human rights, and then to invite other children to play the 'new' game together with them. Alternatively, the children can create their own new CRC card game and invite other children to play it with them.

# Compasito Reporter

*With their cameras, the Compasitos defend Human Rights!*



Complexity



8-13 years



90-120 minutes



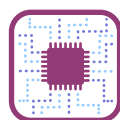
4-30



Environment



Health



Digital  
Environment

## Type of activity

Neighbourhood walks, reporting, photography

## Overview

Children report on human rights conditions in their community by taking photos of relevant examples and creating and exhibition.

## Objectives

- To develop awareness of human rights in everyday life
- To understand how rights can be both violated and defended
- To develop collaborative skills for defending rights and ending violations of rights

## Preparation

Make a list of a few public places or systems relating to health, safety and the environment (e.g. public toilets, restaurants, recycling provisions).

Ensure you have appropriate permission and adult/child ratio to take children into the community.

Make copies of maps or plans of the community.

## Materials

- Copies of child friendly CRC for each group, and/or large copies to display
- One camera (digital, mobile phone or instant camera) for each group
- 'Reporter' badges for all children
- Notepads and pens for taking notes
- Copies of local maps or plans of the community
- Printer for printing digital photographs and/or a video projector to project them

## Instructions

1. Discuss with children what reporters do, both in print or digital media, and on TV. Explain that the children are going to become photo reporters and take pictures of how the rights to health, safety and a good environment are experienced in their community. They may find examples where these rights are respected and enjoyed or they may find cases where they are violated.
2. Display, or hand out copies of the child friendly CRC. Ask the children to find Articles 6, 24, 27 and 33, read them out and discuss their meaning together. Explain that these are the rights that they are going to report on and give some examples of where they might be observed in the community (e.g. fire safety at school, healthy conditions where food is grown, sold, or prepared, notices in their community about clean air, water and the environment). To check understanding, ask the children to provide some of their own examples.
3. Divide the children into groups of three or four. Ensure you have an adult to accompany each group. If there aren't enough adults per group, you will need to make the groups slightly larger so that all groups are accompanied by an adult. Give each child a 'reporter' badge and ask them to write their name on the badge. Give each group a camera and a specific assignment.

Assignment examples:

- Group A might check safety conditions at school and in other public places. (For example: Where are the fire extinguishers? Are the emergency exits easily accessible? Do children know what to do in case of an emergency?)
  - Group B might check traffic safety. (For example: Are there safe pavements? Safe places to cross streets? Are the streets and pavements in good repair? Are there controls on drivers' speed? Are there street lights at night?)
  - Group C might check food and eating conditions. (For example: the cleanliness of markets and restaurants, nutritional quality of food and drink, health-related information for customers, safety checks on water supply)
  - Group D could concentrate on environmental issues. (For example: Does the air seem free from pollution? Is anyone checking this? Are there green places nearby? Are streets and public places clear? Is rubbish collected regularly? Are bins provided for recycling plastics, paper or glass?)
4. Give the groups time to discuss their assignment and plan how they will look for evidence. Check where they want to go, and make sure they know how to receive any necessary permissions to enter particular areas (e.g. teachers or the caretaker for school or park). The children should all know how to use the camera. Each group should also assign the following roles:
    - taking notes and writing up captions for the photographs
    - relating the photos to specific human rights
    - writing up the group's responses to each issue.
  5. Tell each group that they will have to report back briefly on their plans afterwards and set a specific time or deadline for completing their reporting assignments.
  6. After groups have taken their photos, give them time to prepare a mini exhibition, either by printing their photos or preparing them to be projected. Emphasise that they should choose only the best pictures to display. A small number of quality images will be more interesting for everyone else: you could suggest that they select 6-10 photos. Every exhibition should include:
    - A title
    - The names of the children in the group
    - Captions for each picture, stating when and where it was taken and what it shows
    - Comments on which human right(s) is/are being enjoyed, promoted or violated
    - Recommendations for addressing any violations observed and comments or praise for any good examples.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How was it to be a reporter?
  - Was it difficult to find the examples you needed? Why?
  - Was it difficult to capture the example in a photograph? How about writing the captions?
  - Was it difficult to make recommendations or find something positive to say?
  - Did you learn anything about yourself or your community? Did you see anything in a new way?
  - Can a camera be a useful tool to show things in a different light? Can writing be useful?
  - Can you think of other ways you could have communicated the same messages?

2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as:
  - What did you learn about human rights in your community?
  - What were some positive examples where human rights were being protected and enjoyed? What about where they were being violated?
  - Can you suggest anything concrete you could demand to improve human rights or children's rights in your community? Who could you demand this from? (e.g. school administration, parents, mayor, local council, media, teachers)
  - The CRC guarantees children the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them. How do you make use of this right? How could you use it more effectively? Which skills do you need for that?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Putting Rights on the Map' also surveys how rights are implemented in the community. 'Picture Games' looks at the interpretation of images and using images for communication.

## Ideas for action

Ask the children to choose at least one of the examples they found that they would like to try to improve. Discuss their reasons for choosing this example and the possible ways of addressing the problem.

The display of this work to the whole school or neighbourhood would also be an interesting and important activity in itself. Try to arrange to display the exhibition in a public place (e.g. post office, town hall, school, youth centre) and invite the public to attend. You could also create a page on social media or website for the group and upload the exhibition to the internet in virtual form.

Help the group write letters congratulating institutions that are doing an especially good job protecting health and safety or expressing disappointment at the failure to maintain these standards.

If you have not done so already, invite local community representatives (e.g. the mayor, school principal, town council members, local associations) to meet and discuss these issues with the children. Encourage the children to ask questions and make constructive proposals which could be taken up by the representatives to create real change.

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity can easily be adapted to report on other human rights themes (e.g. violence, gender equity, disabled or minority children, information, play and leisure).

If children are reporting on schools or other institutions, try to obtain the approval and support of those in charge. Their involvement in the children's work is important in creating change. Emphasise that this reporting is not only to find violations, but is also to evaluate what is going well. Stress the importance of acknowledging and praising those who are protecting and providing good health, safety and environmental standards.

You may need to give children basic instructions on operating the cameras, and tips on how to take good photographs. Make sure that all children have learned how to use the camera and have an opportunity to take photos. Note also that sometimes an old-fashioned camera can be better than a digital one as the children need to think more carefully about each picture before taking it.

## Variations

Get the children to take pictures they associate with particular feelings (e.g. where you are afraid, where there is an air of mystery, where you feel relaxed, happy, uncomfortable, etc.).

# Cookie Monster

*Give me, give me, give me!*



Complexity



8-13 years



40-60 minutes



6-16



Peace



Poverty



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Game of group negotiation

## Overview

Two groups negotiate between each other to share snacks in a series of rounds, using the game to discuss the relationship between what is 'fair', equality and human rights.

## Objectives

- To explore the process of negotiation
- To discuss equality in the framework of human rights
- To explore issues relating to fairness and equality

## Preparation

Print the handout at the end of the activity or write the instructions for each separate group on a board or flipchart.

Prepare snacks.

## Materials

- A supply of at least 42 (healthy) snacks (e.g. cookies, pieces of fruit). Be aware of any food allergies or special diets.
- Optional – printed copies of the group instructions to hand out

## Instructions

1. Divide the children into two equal groups and explain that they will play a game where they decide on how to divide snacks between each other. Give each group a copy of the instructions and 21 snacks.
2. Ask the groups to read through their instructions and clarify any questions they might have on how the game works. Run through an example of how each round will work and ensure the children understand that in each round they have two opportunities to divide the snacks and if they do not agree on the number of snacks to share within the two chances they have, then the snacks are returned to you.
3. Before you start the game, explain that each group has 21 snacks in total and that there will be six rounds – Group A will lead the first one and then Group B will lead the next one. The pattern continues until the six rounds are completed.
4. Start the game. For each round, record the results on a board or flipchart, showing the number of snacks each group received. At the end of the activity, add up the total scores of each group. The chart will end up looking something like this, depending on the results from each round:

	GROUP A	GROUP B	FACILITATOR
ROUND 1: A leads	4	3	0
ROUND 2: B leads	2	3	0
ROUND 3: A leads	0	0	3
ROUND 4: B leads	5	6	0
ROUND 5: A leads	6	5	0
ROUND 6: B leads	0	0	5
TOTAL	17	17	8

## Debriefing and Evaluation

To avoid distraction, collect the snacks received by groups at the end of each round, and explain that they will be returned for eating later on.

Use a few of the questions in each category below to debrief the activity:

- Discuss how the activity went, using questions such as these:
  - What happened during this activity? How did you feel?
  - What was most exciting? Most frustrating?
  - Did you have a strategy? How did you develop your strategy?
  - Did anyone negotiate with the other team? Was it successful?
  - If you played this activity again, would you act differently?
  - Was the final result fair?
- Discuss the implications of the activity, using questions such as these:
  - Did you trust the other team to divide their snacks with you fairly? What do you think was their aim when they made a proposal?
  - What do we mean when we say “fair”? What do we mean by “sharing”?
  - Can you think of situations in life where children need to share? Is it important that people get equal shares? What happens when things are shared unfairly?
  - Can you think of situations in life where adults need to share? What happens when adults do not share things fairly?
  - Can you think of examples in life where people do not get a “fair share” of things that they need?
  - What can we do in our daily life to make sure that everybody has a fair share?
- Relate the activity and discussion to human rights:
  - Human rights are based on what everyone needs, not only to survive but also to live a life of dignity with an adequate standard of living. What happens when people don’t have the basic things they need (e.g. enough food, shelter, education, family)?
  - Can you see a connection between having a “fair share” of necessities and human rights?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Capture the Castle' involves co-operating against a common 'enemy' and involves elements of strategy and negotiation between groups.

## Ideas for action

Ask for examples of ways the children can improve sharing within their group, at home and in the community (e.g. sharing opportunities to speak, use of toys and equipment, adult attention, acting as a leader).

Contact local or national NGOs working on fair trade. Invite them to explain to your group what they do. Organise activities to support these NGOs.

## Tips for the facilitator

The relationship between human needs and human rights is fundamental to human rights education. If this concept is not already established, you may wish to precede this activity with another activity such as 'Sailing to a New Land', which focuses on this concept.

This activity can be run a second time. In this case, use different and more desirable snacks to maintain interest.

You can have several groups playing this activity at the same time. However, be aware that the behaviour of one group can influence another. To encourage this interaction, you could make a common score board so that all groups can see how snacks are being shared. Discuss this in the debriefing.

If they wish to, allow children to re-divide the snacks after the activity.

## Adaptations

To reduce the level of complexity, the total number of snacks to be divided is deliberately uneven in order to make the negotiation more difficult. However, if this is too complicated for your group, make the numbers even for both groups in every round.

To increase the complexity, include an extra rule that puts Group A in a different power position. If Group B refuses a proposal, they get nothing, but Group A gets to keep three snacks anyway. However, if Group A refuses a proposal from Group B, Group B does not get anything.

To emphasise the relationship of the activity to human rights, if you have more than one facilitator, consider breaking the children into two or more smaller groups in order to debrief about the last section, concerning the relationship between human needs and human rights. The smaller the group, the deeper the discussion is likely to be on this important topic. Conclude by bringing the small groups together to share their discussion. Add another 30 minutes to the activity for this adaptation.



## Handout

### Instruction cards

#### Group A

Your group has a total of 21 snacks that you need to divide between yourselves and Group B.

There are 3 rounds in total. Within each round, you will have the chance to share your snacks with Group B; they will then have a chance to share theirs with you. In each round you need to share the following number of snacks.

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
7 snacks to divide	3 snacks to divide	11 snacks to divide

You have two chances to share your snacks in each round.

- If Group B accepts your initial proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept the proposal you can make a new one.
- If Group B accepts your second proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept your second proposal then neither group receives anything and you have to give your snacks for that round to the facilitator.

#### Group B

Your group has 21 snacks that you need to divide between yourselves and Group A.

There are 3 rounds in total. Within each round, you will have a chance to share your snacks with Group A; they will then have a chance to share theirs with you.

In each round you need to share the following number of snacks.

Round 1	Round 2	Round 3
5 snacks to divide	11 snacks to divide	5 snacks to divide

You have two chances to share your snacks in each round.

- If Group A accepts your initial proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept the proposal you can make a new one.
- If Group A accepts your second proposal then you share the snacks as proposed. If they don't accept your second proposal then neither group receives anything and you have to give your snacks for that round to the facilitator.



# Dear Diary

## Walk a kilometre in my shoes



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes



6-30



Discrimination



Health



Poverty

### Type of activity

Storytelling, discussion

### Overview

Children read three different accounts of the same experience and discuss mistaken judgments about people.

### Objectives

- To discuss the right to education, to play and to healthcare
- To practise communication and observation skills
- To develop empathy with other people
- To become aware of judgmental attitudes

### Preparation

Adapt the stories in the handout to the reality of your children and/or your learning objectives.

### Materials

- Copies of the three stories

## Instructions

1. Explain that three children have permitted us to read their diaries from camp last summer. Divide the children into three groups and give each group one of the stories to read.
2. After they have read the stories, bring the children together and go through the events of the campers' day (e.g. solving puzzles, lunch, playing football, building a raft, crossing the river). Stop at each event and ask the children what their character was doing, thinking and feeling at this point. At this stage, avoid getting the children to explain the reasons for the campers' different reactions and feelings.
3. Ask members of each group to describe the child whose story they read. Discuss how three children could have such different experiences of the same events, asking questions such as these:
  - Why did the children misunderstand each other?
  - Do you think the children would have behaved differently if they had known more about each other's lives?
  - What specific misunderstandings did they have about each other?
  - Why did they make these mistakes?

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity with questions such as these:
  - What do you think about the three stories?
  - Would you enjoy a day like that? Why or why not?
  - Are these stories realistic? Has anything like this ever happened to you?
  - Can you identify with any of these children? Which? Why?
  - Is it possible to have friends, even when you are poor and unable to read? Why, or why not?
  - What does 'friendship' mean?
  - Are there some people who are more disadvantaged than others in your community? How are they disadvantaged?
  - What can we do to help people who are disadvantaged?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Which human rights were the children enjoying at camp?
  - What human rights do they enjoy at home?
  - Are all these children's rights properly respected? Name any rights which are not fully respected.
  - What happens when we misjudge other people?
  - What can we do to avoid making mistakes about other people and their lives?

## Suggestions for follow-up

Make drawings of the events described in the stories – either the events of the Great Adventure Day, or, for example, the children in their home environment. The activity 'Sailing to a New Land' addresses the contrasting responses and priorities in the same situation.

## Ideas for action

In order to avoid similar misunderstandings within your own group, help your children to develop a Code of Conduct for being together. Check the example in the activity 'A Constitution for our Group'.

## Tips for the facilitator

The stories may seem very unrealistic or unfamiliar to some children. Adapt them to reflect your children's reality and concerns and be careful not to embarrass individual children with stories that are too close to their own realities.

Especially when working with financially disadvantaged children, be sensitive to the attitudes children have about themselves and others in their community. Allow the children to discuss the issues of disadvantaged children, but balance this by building their confidence and reassuring them that all children should have opportunities to live the life they want and to have their rights respected.

Because some children may identify with the characters in the stories, the activity requires sensitive debriefing. Be aware of stereotypes and judgmental behaviour that these stories might provoke in some children, both in assumptions about privileged children (e.g. "They don't have any problems"; "They are snobs") and about disadvantaged children (e.g. "They don't have supportive families"; "They are lazy"). The importance of these stories is to encourage the children to ask why others act as

they do, rather than jumping to conclusions based on **False** assumptions.

Make a clear distinction in discussion between what the character was doing and what he or she was feeling and thinking.

This debriefing assumes that the children have been introduced to human rights previously. If they haven't, you may want to include a brief introduction to human rights before the start of the activity, or adapt the debriefing questions accordingly.

## Variations

Start with Margaret's story and read the stories aloud to the children or ask the children to read them in a big group. Then discuss, as in Step 3 after each story. You may want to ask the debriefing questions after each story.

Get the children to act out what the three campers did at each phase of the day. Then ask them to explain how each was feeling at the time. Alternatively, ask two children to act the part of each child, one who performs the child's outward words and actions and the other who speaks for the child's inner thoughts and feelings.

## Adaptation

Younger children may need some visual material to remember what happened during the day at camp. Too much information might cause a loss of attention and will make the debriefing very difficult. Make sure the children have understood one story before moving on to the next one.



## Handout

### The stories

During the summer months, many children go to summer camp. The following stories are taken from the diaries of three children who met for the first time at the same summer camp. They are the same age and are involved in the same activities. One day, the youth leaders organised 'The Great Adventure Day'. In the evening, all three children wrote about the day in their diaries.

## STORY 1

### Margaret wrote under her bedcovers by torchlight.

Dear Diary,

Oh, what a great day it was. We did many crazy things and I believe it could have been one of the best days in my life. But I was never afraid. It was a pity Elsa and Ricardo were so strange today.

But to start at the beginning... When we woke up, the leaders divided us into different groups. I was with Ricardo and Elsa. I like both of them because yesterday we were also in the same group and we laughed so much at all the jokes we were telling each other. The leader gave us 3 messages written in secret codes and we had to find the solutions. I was the first one to find my solution. After a while Ricardo also had his solution, but Elsa was very slow. When I asked her if she needed help, she said she didn't like the activity and that solving the secret code was a boring thing to do. Then I saw that she was holding the paper upside down and I laughed at her saying that she would never find it like this. She gave me an angry look and threw the paper away. "I want to play, not read stuff", she said. I don't think she is very clever. I wonder if she can read at all – strange, because all kids my age can read and write!

Well, we finally managed to discover the meaning of the 3 messages. Then we went down to the river where we played football against another group of children. That was fun. We almost won but it's all Elsa's fault that we lost. Every time the ball came close to her, she touched it with her hands, kicked the other children, and made a lot of mistakes. It was like she had never played football before. Next time I want to be in a different group from Elsa.

After lunch – the meals here are really disgusting – we had to build a raft to cross the river. And that was cool because we had to look for wood and then make all kinds of knots with ropes. Elsa and I were looking for good strong logs, but Ricardo was always bringing in these skinny sticks. I told him that since he was a boy he should work as hard as us. He said he was dizzy and his back hurt. When we finished, our raft was the best ever – even the leader said this! Then the leader counted "1, 2 and 3" and we had to jump on the raft and cross the river together. I jumped first, but I fell in the water. Brrr... the water was very, very cold and I screamed. Luckily the leader helped me out and then we all started laughing. When I told my friends how cold the water really was, Ricardo said he didn't feel like going in anymore. I think he was afraid of the cold water. I didn't know before that Ricardo was such a loser! When I told him he should be braver, he ran away crying. I will ask the leader to put me in another group next time because Elsa is stupid, and Ricardo is just a sissy.

I didn't speak to Elsa and Ricardo again after that and ...oops, I think the leaders are coming to our room. Sleep well, my dear diary.

Love, Margaret

**STORY 2****The following diary was written for Elsa, with the help of a leader.**

Hello Diary,

You are my first own diary and I am Elsa. I hope you will stay with me for a long time. I asked the leader to write this page for me. He says when I get older, I can read about what I did at camp. I like the idea. We are sitting away from the other children because I don't want anybody to know that the leader is helping me.

Today was a full day of activities. In the morning I had to be in the same group as Margaret and Ricardo. I like Ricardo more than Margaret. She always thinks she knows better than anybody else!

It all started with the messages in secret code that we had to solve. I don't like those things because I still can't read very well, and Margaret was always shouting to hurry up. I wish I could read better. But since my daddy left, I have to stay home and take care of the little kids while Mum goes to work. I really want to go to school, but Mum always says that it's more important to be able to have food than to be able to read a book. I didn't want Ricardo and Margaret to know that I cannot read, so I tried to pretend that I was solving the secret code. But then Margaret laughed at me and I was sad and angry at the same time.

And then it was the same story with football. I really wanted our team to win, but everything I did seemed to be wrong. Everybody knows the game except me. I see the other children always play football when they come back from school. But my mother says, "If you have to time to play, you have time to work".

After the lunch we went to build a boat to cross the river. And here I think I was better than Margaret and Ricardo. I know how to make knots and knew what kind of wood we needed to make a strong boat. But Ricardo acted so strange. He was almost wetting his pants after Margaret told him how cold the water was.

I hope tomorrow we are again in the same group. I want to prove to them that I can do many things! And I really like the leaders at the camp!

Bye, Diary, till tomorrow.

Elsa

### STORY 3

**Ricardo has a big diary that he has been writing in for years. This is what he wrote.**

My dearest Diary,

Again I am writing to tell you how sad and disappointed I am. In the morning we did activities that I liked. The secret code is easy for me as I do them all the time at home. But my friend Elsa seemed a bit stressed and I didn't know why. In football I played the goalie – like I always do.

The lunch was great, probably the best I have ever eaten. I eat a lot here, unlike at home where I always have to wait till my younger brothers and sisters have eaten.

But the afternoon was terrible. We had to get very heavy wood and then go in very cold water. I don't like that because I will get ill, for sure, and I don't want that anymore. A girl called Margaret made jokes about me because I didn't want to go in the water. I felt terrible. My father has told me that the day he finds a new job, he will take me to the hospital and make me healthy again. He says that then I will be able to do all the activities I want and not have to stay in bed all the time. I wish my father could have a new job tomorrow: I don't want to tell the other children at camp because then they will know we don't have any money at home and they will tease me about it.

Dear Diary, when will I be healthy again? I want to be like the other children. I want to play and run and jump. I hope it happens soon, but I'm afraid it may never happen.

Sleep well, my dearest Diary.

Ricardo

# Every Vote Counts

*But do they all count for the same?*



Complexity



8-13 years



90 minutes



8-30



Democratic  
Citizenship



Participation



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Discussion, planning, simulation

## Overview

Children design a democratic voting process and then hold a mock vote.

## Objectives

- To understand the meaning of fair and democratic elections
- To practise holding a fair election and learn the mechanics of democratic voting
- To recognise the importance of civic participation

## Preparation

Print a copy of the Situation Card for each group

## Materials

- One copy of the Situation Card for each group
- Paper and pencils for ballots
- Board or flipchart and markers

## Instructions

This activity consists of two parts. In Part One, the children discuss and decide on a democratic voting process they will use to make a decision about how to spend a sum of money. In Part Two, the group will hold a mock vote using one of the suggested processes.

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights guarantees everyone the right to participate in government, either by holding an office or by electing someone that represents them, and that “governments should be elected regularly by fair and secret voting” (Article 21). Ask the children what they think this means by asking questions such as these:
  - What is a ‘fair’ election?
  - Why does voting need to be secret?
  - Who gets to vote? Who cannot vote?
  - What does it mean for someone to ‘represent’ you? What are their responsibilities?
  - What do we call people who represent all of us – at national level and at local level?
2. Point out that, although children may not be allowed to vote for government yet, they may still participate in various forms of elections to decide things in their own lives.
  - Do you have examples of where you can decide or influence decisions?
  - Are these processes ‘fair’?

- Is there any secret voting?
- Who decides whether you should have a vote or take part in the decision?

## Part One

3. Divide the children into small groups of four or five, and give each group a Situation Card. Explain that they will have 10 minutes to design a democratic decision-making process about how to use money that has been gifted to a group.
4. After 10 minutes, ask each group to present the decision-making process they propose. After each presentation, ask the rest of the children to discuss the proposal. Use some of the following questions:
  - Is it fair? Why, or why not?
  - Is everyone concerned able to influence the outcome?
  - If there is going to be voting, is it secret? Is this important?
  - Is it clear to everyone how the decision will be taken?
5. Explain that they are going to hold a mock vote in the larger group, using this scenario. However, to do so, they need to choose one voting process that the whole group will follow. Ask them to compare the different processes they developed:
  - What are the similarities between the processes? What are the differences?
  - Can we use any of these processes for our mock vote? Will it be fair?
  - Would you like to make any changes?
  - What 'roles' or people are involved in the voting process, besides those casting a vote?
6. Write a title or summary of the various group proposals on a flipchart or board, and ask the group to decide on which proposal they would like to use in the mock vote. To do this you can use a majority vote where the proposal with the most votes wins. If there is a tie, you can include the facilitator in the vote and run it again until there is a majority for one of the proposals. This should not be a secret ballot.

## Part Two

7. After the voting process has been decided on, assign the various roles, according to the process that was chosen, to different people in the group and hold the mock vote. One of the roles needs to include someone leading the process (an Election Manager or Group Leader); ensure the person who is assigned this role is comfortable leading the process.
8. Hold the mock vote.

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Bring the group back together and discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Do you think the vote in the simulation was fair? Why, or why not?
  - Are you happy with the result?
  - Was the example familiar: can you think of similar examples in real life?
  - Was the Election Manager / Group Leader fair? Are there other roles that would be needed to



ensure a fair process?

- How are decisions like this usually made? Are the children able to express their opinion, or influence the final decision? Do you think that is fair?
- Are there any decisions that only adults should be able to make?
- What can you do to ensure that decisions that affect you are made in a fair way?
- How did you feel about making a decision on which proposal to use in the mock vote? Could this have been done in a fairer way? How?
- Where there any new terms used during the activity that you are still unfamiliar with? Which ones?

2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking some of the following questions:

- What do we mean when we talk about 'government'? What do we mean by 'democracy'?
- What are some of the ways in which people can participate in their government?
- How old must you be in your country before you can vote?
- How are the mayor and the city council elected?
- Why do you think that the right to participate in government is a human right?
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees children the right to have their own opinion and for it to be taken into account. Are there ways in which this also applies to the governance of your school or public facilities for children in your community / city / town?
- Why is it important to use your human rights?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'A Constitution for Our Group' provides a real-life opportunity to practise voting skills and take part in a democratic debate about how the group will behave. The activity 'Who Decides?' looks at the evolving capacity of children and how they participate in decisions affecting them.

## Ideas for action

Take every opportunity that arises with your group to model democratic decision-making, whether about small matters (e.g. what kind of snacks to have, whether to play inside or outside) or large matters. Children learn democratic procedures best by practising them. They also benefit from being asked to consider whether everyone concerned by a particular decision has had a chance to be consulted.

You could organise a mock election process to run in parallel with elections at local, national, or regional level. See, for example, [www.u18.org/en/the-project-u18](http://www.u18.org/en/the-project-u18).

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity can bring up terms that may be unfamiliar to children (e.g. nominations, candidates, campaign speeches, debates, run-off election, proportion of the vote, ballot). Make sure you explain what these terms mean.

For younger children, use simpler terms where relevant – for example, use 'more than half' or 'a simple majority' rather than speaking about 'proportional representation'.

Make up other situations based on decisions faced by the children in your group, and adapt the simulation accordingly.

## Adaptations

To focus on the issue of who gets to vote, you could pose additional questions, such as those below. Read these out at the beginning of the simulation and ask the children to debate whether these children should have a vote. This decision itself might be the basis of a decision by vote, and will extend the time needed for the activity.

### Optional Roles

You are 6 years old and in the first grade. You can't read yet and don't know much about the group. Should you have a vote?

You are 13 and have a learning disability, so your reading age is only 9. Should you have a vote?

You have just moved to this area and don't really know anyone yet. Should you have a vote?

You are a bully. You push younger children around outside and encourage your friends to join you in calling some people nasty names. Should you have a vote?



## Handout

### Situation Card

There are 30 children in your group; the group has been given a gift of about EUR 500. You should propose a method for deciding democratically how to use this money. Some children want to have a party with nice food. Others want to go on a field trip. Some want to buy new games and art supplies. One person wants to put it aside for emergencies. Another wants to buy an electric keyboard. How should you decide democratically?

Consider, for example:

- Will all the children in the group vote or decide, or just some of them? Who will vote?
- Will all suggestions be voted on or just some of them? How many will you vote on?
- How will you decide which ones?
- How many votes in favour must a proposal have to be decided? Can people abstain?
- What happens if two proposals get the same number of votes?
- Will all the money be spent on one suggestion or can it be split up proportionally?
- How will everyone know who or what suggestions they are voting for? Will you ask people to make campaign speeches or have debates?

# From Bystander to Helper

*But what can I do?*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



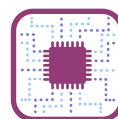
4-30



Peace



Violence



Digital Environment

## Type of activity

Personal narratives, discussion

## Overview

Children tell stories about times when they have been a victim, abuser, bystander, or helper in instances of violence.

## Objectives

- To explore the different ways that people deal with violence
- To encourage responsibility for respecting and defending others from violence
- To reflect on what it means to be a 'helper'

## Preparation

Make copies of the Discussion Guides for each group or have a larger copy that can be displayed.

## Materials

- Flipchart paper and markers or blackboard and chalk
- Copies of the Discussion Guides for each group or a larger copy to be displayed

## Instructions

1. Remind children that violence and abuse, not only physical but also verbal and psychological, is a human rights violation. Ask for examples of different kinds of violence and abuse.
2. Divide the children into small groups of three or four people. Hand out the Discussion Guides to each group or put a larger copy up on display. Explain the activity, making sure that the children understand the instructions and that everyone feels comfortable about expressing themselves honestly.

### Discussion Guide

In your groups, discuss each of the following, and try to find examples of each of these:

- A time when you saw someone being hurt or treated unjustly
- A time when you saw someone being hurt or treated unjustly and no-one helped them
- A time when you saw someone help a person who was being hurt or treated unjustly

3. Tell children that they have 15 minutes for this part of the activity. Let them begin by sitting quietly for a few moments and thinking about what they want to say.
4. After 15 minutes, bring the children back into one group to discuss their observations. First, ask for some of the examples of people being hurt or abused, without distinguishing those in which someone helped or did not help. List these on a board or flipchart.
5. Then ask for examples in the 'Helper' category.
6. Finally, ask for examples in the 'Bystander' category. Ask, "What could someone have done in some of these examples to be a helper, not a bystander?" Record their responses on a board or flipchart.

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Debrief the activity using some of the questions such as these:
  - Why are some people violent towards others?
  - Why are some children violent towards other children?
  - What can we do to protect ourselves and others against forms of violence?
2. Read aloud the helpful actions suggested earlier in the activity. Discuss how people can become helpers to protect human rights, asking questions such as these:
  - Which of the suggested actions would be hard to do? Which ones would be easier?
  - Are there any actions on the list that you think you could take?
  - What stops people from becoming helpers?
  - If more people became helpers rather than bystanders, would this help to improve respect for human rights?
3. Discuss how we can help each other, asking questions such as these:
  - Which qualities and abilities does a person need to be a 'helper', i.e. take action for human rights?
  - What can we do to support people taking action for human rights?
  - How can we encourage people in our group to become 'helpers'?
4. Conclude by acknowledging that any abuse or violence towards children, including those children who commit violence against each other, is a human rights violation. Violence occurs in every culture and every region of the world. Emphasise that learning about human rights also involves learning how to take action to protect each other's rights. Perhaps we cannot put an end to all violence and abuse, but we can still help each other in our own communities.

Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) obliges governments to ensure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them. Invite children to reflect how this right is being observed or violated in their environment.

## Suggestions for follow-up

Activities such as 'Bullying Scenes' and 'Words that Wound' address bullying and children's behaviour, and help to relate these discussions to real life.

## Ideas for action

If your group has developed a set of rules for their interactions, discuss how ‘helper behaviour’ can be part of those rules.

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity should only be done with children you have worked with previously. It is very important to create a ‘safe space’ in the group before you begin the activity.

Remind children that they can include examples of online abuse. You could even limit the activity to exploring examples of online hate speech or cyberbullying.

Circulate among the groups to make sure that everyone understands the task, that they are taking each category in turn, and that everyone is getting an equal chance to speak.

Protect children’s privacy by encouraging them to speak about what they have observed, rather than what they have experienced directly.

Be very vigilant throughout the activity, and make sure that, at the end, you let children know that there are possibilities to seek help or advice if they wish to and share information on how the children can do so.

## Variations

If you know the group well and you are able to work more with them after this activity, you could add a fourth category to discuss:

A time when you participated in hurting someone else, or treated them unjustly.

You could use some of the examples given by the children to organise a mini forum theatre in order to explore alternative solutions to the issue. This might also motivate them to act and become a ‘helper’ when they witness violence.

## Optional discussion guide

A time when you saw someone being hurt	A time when you saw someone help a person who was being hurt
A time when you saw someone being hurt and no-one helped them	(Optional/Variation) A time when you participated in hurting someone else, or treated them unjustly

# Human Rights in the News

*No news is good news - or is it?*



Complexity



10-13 years



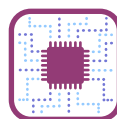
45-60 minutes



4-30



Human Rights



Digital Environment



Participation

## Type of activity

Scanning media, making a poster, discussion

## Overview

Children scan the news for different human rights that are enjoyed, violated or defended, and make posters to display their findings.

## Objectives

- To enhance awareness of human rights in the media and everyday life
- To examine how the media covers human rights issues

## Preparation

- Collect newspapers of several kinds or print out a variety of news articles from online media
- Prepare poster templates for each group

## Materials

- Newspaper pages or news article print outs
- Flipchart paper
- Sticky tape or glue and scissors
- Markers
- Copies of the child-friendly Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

## Instructions

1. Explain that this activity is about human rights in the news. Remind the children of previous activities and discussion of human rights and reintroduce the UDHR.
2. Divide the children into small groups. Give each group a newspaper or some pages of news articles printed out, scissors, sticky tape or glue, a marker and a sheet of flipchart paper prepared as in the sample below.
3. Ask each group to create a poster with the following three categories with space to glue news stories in each:
  - Human rights being practised or enjoyed
  - Human rights being denied or violated
  - Human rights being protected
4. Explain that each group should look through their newspapers or news stories and cut out articles that relate to human rights and paste them in the relevant category. Remind children that features other than news stories, such as sports announcements and advertisements might also relate to human rights and that they should look through these as well.
5. When each group has found something for each category, ask the children to select one story to analyse, answering these questions:

- Which human rights were involved in the story? List the rights at the bottom of the poster.
  - Find the article(s) of the UDHR that relates to each right and write the article number(s) next to the right. If necessary, draw arrows from the rights to the story that it relates to.
6. Ask each group to present their poster. Ask them to choose one or two stories from each poster and explain their analysis of the story in terms of the UDHR.

## Debriefing

1. Discuss the activity, using questions such as these:
  - Was it difficult to find stories for each of the categories?
  - Which human rights stories were easiest to find? Why?
  - Which human rights or UDHR articles were relevant?
  - How many of the stories about human rights issues explicitly mentioned human rights? Why do you think human rights were not mentioned in some stories?
  - Were children's rights mentioned in any of the stories?
  - As a child, or young person, which rights concern you most?
  - Based on these news stories, what seems to be the state of human rights in the world today? In Europe? In your community?
  - What is being done to protect human rights in these stories? Who is taking these actions?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activities 'Putting Rights on the Map' and 'Compasito Reporter' ask children to look at their own communities from a human rights perspective. 'Compasito Reporter' also engages children in reporting on what they observe.

## Ideas for action

Leave the posters hanging, and encourage the children to bring in other newspaper clippings or articles. Reassess the posters when several new items have been added.

Choose one human rights issue of particular concern to the group and do an awareness-raising campaign (for example, the right to property may be linked with poverty; the right to education, especially quality education, may be important to the group). Allow them to choose the level they wish to campaign at – for example, local, national, or international.

## Tips for facilitators

Children will need an understanding of what the UDHR is before doing this activity. You might want to start the activity with an introduction, if they haven't already been introduced to the UDHR.

Give children a selection of newspapers, print-outs of news articles and media and news magazines, including local and advertising papers. They do not need to be recent. If children have access to the Internet whilst doing the activity, they could also use online news sites directly, and print out the relevant articles.

At the start of the activity, circulate around the groups to make sure they have understood the task.

Encourage the children to consider parts of the newspaper or online news media other than new stories: e.g. advertisements: right to property; marriage or funeral notices: right to culture, to marry,

to thought, conscience and religion; sports: right to leisure; personal ads and notices of meetings: right to association.

In order to save time, or to simplify the activity for younger children, you could make a selection of articles yourself, rather than giving them whole newspapers or collections of news print-outs. Children will then not need to spend time looking, they only need to read the articles, understand them, and classify them.

## Adaptations

All groups could contribute to three separate posters, one for each category, combining articles they find and creating a series of class posters.

Adaptations for younger children: Ask for only two categories: rights enjoyed and rights denied. Omit the analysis in Step 5 and ask them to simply present what their group found. Ask debriefing questions that focus on the child’s experience of human rights in daily life.

Adaptations for older children: Invite children to compare coverage of the same human rights stories in different newspapers and/or different media outlets. Which differences can they observe in the importance given to the story? Is there a difference in emphasis on particular aspects of the story? Are there alternative versions of the same event? Did any version of the story explicitly mention human rights?

Ask the children to watch a news programme on TV or online, and write down the topics covered and the amount of time given to human rights related issues.



## Handout

### Sample poster

RIGHTS ENJOYED		RIGHTS DENIED		RIGHTS DEFENDED	
Analysis		Analysis		Analysis	
Right	UDHR article	Right	UDHR article	Right	UDHR article



# If the World was 20 People...

... how many would be children?



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes



4-24



Poverty



Discrimination



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Group discussion, making structures out of paper cups

## Overview

Children use paper cups to represent all the people in the world, and then build structures according to how they think a number of basic services and qualities are distributed.

## Objectives

- To develop an awareness of how resources and opportunities are divided up in the world
- To develop an understanding of fairness and equality
- To stimulate ideas and actions to address poverty, injustice and discrimination in the world

## Preparation

Draw different faces on 20 paper cups. Draw them with the cup upside down – as in the image.



## Materials

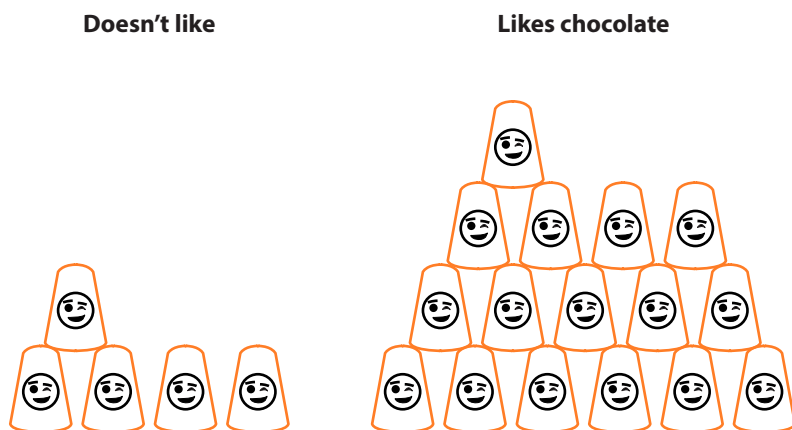
- About 100 paper cups, depending on the size of the group. 20 are for you to draw on, and each small group will need 20 other 'clean' cups to work with.
- Permanent markers
- Statistics at the end of the activity

## Instructions

1. Ask the children if they know what the word 'population' means. Ask them to think of ways of dividing up the population – e.g. according to where people live, their age, gender, etc.
2. Divide the children into groups of three or four and give each group 20 paper cups and markers. Tell them that they should imagine, in their groups, that their 20 cups represent the total population in the world. Show them the cups you have drawn, and ask them to draw faces on their cups, as you have. Make sure they draw them with the cups upside down.
3. When the children have finished, explain to them that you will ask them a number of questions about the world's population, and they will answer using pyramids of cups. Give them an example, using your own set of 20 cups:

*e.g. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would like chocolate, and how many would not?*

Ask them what they think, then make pyramids to represent their answer. For example, if they say they think 4 people don't like chocolate, and 16 do, make pyramids as in the illustration.



4. Choose a few of the questions below for building the pyramids. Read out each question, and then give groups time to discuss and present their answer.
5. When the groups finish building their pyramids, ask them to look around at those of other groups, and compare with their own. Get each group to read out their numbers while you add them to a general chart (see the example at the end of the activity). Then build your own pyramids with the correct numbers and add these to the chart as well.
6. Repeat this process for each question you have chosen.

## Questions:

- a. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would be men and how many would be women?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of men and the number of women.*
- b. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would be children and how many would be adults?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of children and the number of adults.*
- c. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would be living in Asia, how many would be living in Europe, how many would be living in the Americas, and how many would be living in Africa?  
*Make 4 pyramids to show the number of people in each continent.*
- d. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would know to read and write and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people who know how to read and write, and the number that don't.*
- e. If all your cups were all the males in the world, how many would have been to primary school and how many would not? Divide your cups between males who have (or have had) primary education, and males who haven't.  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of males with and without primary education*
- f. If all your cups were all the females in the world, how many girls would have been to primary school and how many would not? Divide your cups between females who have (or have had) primary education, and females who haven't.  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of females with and without primary education*

- g. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have access to the Internet and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people with access to the Internet, and those without.*
- h. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have a mobile phone and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people with mobile phones, and those without.*
- i. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would be undernourished and not have enough food to grow healthily?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number who are undernourished and the number who have enough food to grow healthily.*
- j. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have a place to shelter them from the wind and the rain, and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people with shelter and those without.*
- k. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have clean, safe water to drink and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people with clean, safe water, and those without.*
- l. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would live in a city and how many would live in the countryside?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people living in the countryside, and those living in towns.*
- m. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have electricity and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people with and without access to electricity.*
- n. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would live on more than 1.5 Euros per day and how many would not?  
*Make 2 pyramids to show the number of people living in extreme poverty, on less than 1.5 Euros per day, and those living on more.*
- o. If all your cups were all the people in the world, how many would have good sanitation, how many would have inadequate sanitation, and how many would have no sanitation at all?  
*Make 3 pyramids to show the number of people with good, inadequate, and no sanitation.*

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - What did you think of this activity?
  - Was it difficult to agree on how the cups should be divided?
  - How did your results compare with the real answers? Which ones were similar and which ones weren't?
  - Which information surprised you most?
  - If we did this activity again in five years, do you think any of the results would change? Which ones? Why?
2. Relate the activity to issues of equality and human rights, asking questions such as these:
  - What can we learn, looking at the results of our pyramids, about equality in the world? Why do you think there are such big differences between different groups of people?

- Do any of the inequalities concern you? Why?
- What can we do to change some of these inequalities?
- Which of the questions relate to human rights?
- If human rights were respected everywhere, how would that change some of your pyramids?

## Suggestions and follow up

The activity 'What if...' could be used to investigate the consequences of some of the inequalities in this activity.

## Ideas for action

Take pictures of the different pyramids and use them to run a small campaign in the children's school or neighbourhood. Instead of using pyramids of cups, you could use the children themselves to represent the world population.

You could create a short drama around the issue and present it to members of the community. The book *If the world were a village* by David J. Smith, illustrated by Shelagh Armstrong, is a good starting point if the children do not know how to build a story.

## Tips for the facilitator

The activity and data have been adapted from the website '100 People: A World Portrait' (<https://www.100people.org/statistics-100-people/>). The statistics have been scaled down from 100 to 20, but you could use more cups and scale the numbers differently if this is more suitable. Because data regarding population is constantly changing, you may also like to do your own research to find more recent statistics on some of the questions.

Do not feel you need to use all questions: select those which show differences more relevant to your group. You may find it is more useful to discuss a few questions in detail rather than looking at all of them.

If you have a small group, you can do the activity as a single group and build a common pyramid.

If you cannot access paper cups, you may like to run the activity using other objects. Make sure the cups are recycled after the activity if the possibility exists to do so.

## Adaptations

Use children instead of cups. You will need to scale the answers differently: for example, if you have 22 children, divide the numbers in the column 'Official Data' by 20, and multiply by 22. Then round to the nearest whole number. You could place images or objects on the floor to represent the different categories (women, men; children, adults; continents, etc.), and ask children to form groups around the images to represent their best guess.

## Resources

### Table for collecting group data

Draw a table on the board or flipchart using the model below and the questions you have selected. Do NOT write up the data in the last column! This should be included only **after** the children have built their pyramids.

QUESTIONS	GROUP 1	GROUP 2	GROUP 3	OFFICIAL DATA
<b>MEN AND WOMEN</b>				
MEN				10
WOMEN				10
<b>CHILDREN AND ADULTS</b>				
CHILDREN				5
ADULTS				15
<b>CONTINENTS</b>				
ASIA				13
AFRICA				4
AMERICA				3
EUROPE				2
<b>READ AND WRITE</b>				
Can read				17
Can't read				3
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR BOYS</b>				
Go to school				16
Don't go to school				4
<b>PRIMARY SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS</b>				
Go to school				15
Don't go to school				5
<b>INTERNET</b>				
Have internet				8
Don't have internet				12
<b>MOBILE PHONE</b>				
Yes				13
No				7
<b>FOOD</b>				
Undernourished				1
Not undernourished				19
<b>SHELTER</b>				
Yes				15
No				5
<b>WATER</b>				
Clean, safe water				18
No clean, safe water				2
<b>CITY OR COUNTRYSIDE</b>				
City				11
Countryside				9
<b>ELECTRICITY</b>				
Yes				16
No				4
<b>POVERTY</b>				
Extreme poverty				2
Not in extreme poverty				18
<b>SANITATION</b>				
No sanitation				3
Inadequate sanitation				4
Adequate sanitation				13

# Once Upon a Time...

*See what happens when you reverse the sexes of characters in a well-known story*



Complexity



7-13 years



40 minutes



4-30



Democratic  
Citizenship



Discrimination



Gender Equality

## Type of activity

Story telling, discussion

## Overview

Retelling a familiar story with the characters' gender reversed, leading to discussion of gender stereotypes.

## Objectives

- To recognise stereotypical gender roles and characteristics in stories and everyday life
- To discuss traditional and non-traditional gender roles
- To encourage gender equality

## Preparation

Revise or rewrite a well-known short story (e.g. novel, fairy tale, film), reversing the gender of most of the characters. If necessary, change their names and other details as well. Choose a story where male and female characters behave in a stereotypical way. (See the example of 'reversed' Cinderella below.) The revised story should not take longer than 10 minutes to retell.

## Materials

- Board or flipchart and marker
- A copy of the reversed story to read out

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to sit comfortably in a circle. Explain that you are going to tell them a story, and they are to listen carefully and take notice of anything unusual in the story. Read the modified story to the children. Stop from time to time to ask, "Do you notice anything unusual about this story?" Once all the children have understood the role reversals, it may be unnecessary to read the rest of the story, or you may wish to jump straight to the conclusion.
2. Discuss the story, asking question such as these:
  - How did you like the story?
  - When did you realise that something was unusual? Ask for examples.
3. Point out that something seems unusual when it differs from our everyday experience and expectations. Ask the children to think of characteristics and activities that they consider typical of males and females in their everyday life. List their suggestions on a table such as the one below.

<b>Chart 1: stereotypical gender roles</b>		
	Men / Boys	Women / Girls
Usual Characteristics		
Usual Activities		

- Compare this chart with the familiar version of the story. Do the characters in Cinderella have “typical” characteristics, like those in the table? (e.g. Cinderella stays at home, cries, is abused, and gets pretty clothes, while the Prince takes action to find a wife, and executes a clever plan to find Cinderella.
  - Ask the children if they can think of other stories where the characters have “typical” characteristics or where they engage in “typical” activities. Make a list of these stories as they are mentioned, and ask the children to explain their suggestions.
4. Ask the children if they think that in real life, women and men or boys and girls always have the kinds of characteristics we have listed as “typical”.

Make a chart, like the one below, and ask the children to record their observations of unusual behaviour, first in the story and then in real life.

<b>Chart 2: non-stereotypical gender roles</b>		
	Men / Boys	Women / Girls
Usual Characteristics		
Usual Activities		

5. Compare and discuss the two charts, asking questions such as these:
- Can you think of other stories where the characters have “unusual” characteristics, or where they take part in non-typical activities? List these stories as they are mentioned and ask the children to explain their suggestions.
  - Do you know of any men and women who have non-typical characteristics, or who do non-typical things?
  - Ask the children to describe any “non-typical” examples from real life and explain how they differ from what people expect.

6. Define the word 'stereotype' and give some examples.
7. Ask the children to look at the first chart they made, of typical characteristics and activities. Ask them to identify any characteristics or activities which express physical or biological facts about men or women, as opposed to beliefs, attitudes or stereotypes.
8. Are there *any* characteristics or activities in the list which are not stereotypes?
9. Point out that roles such as making money, raising children, and doing housework are common responsibilities of both men and women in most societies of the world today.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How are people treated when they do not behave in a way that is "typical" for their gender? Why are they treated like this?
  - Have you ever acted in a way not typical for your gender? If so, how have other people reacted when you did this?
  - Why are some stereotypes unfair to men and boys? Why are some unfair to women and girls?
  - What can you do to act against unfair stereotypes?
2. Relate the activity to human rights asking questions such as these:
  - Can you make any connection between the expectations placed on boys and girls and human rights?
  - Everyone has a human right to be free from discrimination, including discrimination based on sex or gender stereotypes. Why is this important?
  - The CRC guarantees that boys and girls have the same rights and cannot be discriminated against because of their sex. Is this **True** in our group / school / society? Are there examples when equality is not respected?

End the debriefing by asking the children how they felt about the activity, and reflecting on the feelings everyone had, before closing.

## Suggestions for follow-up

Ask the children to look for other stories or films where girls and boys have non-traditional roles and characteristics.

The activity 'Boys Don't Cry' also addresses gender stereotypes and their effects.

## Ideas for action

Ask the children whether people in this class or community are discriminated against because they do not act in the way that people think men / boys or women / girls should act.

Ask the children to roleplay what they might say or do in such a case. How could they oppose or transform the discrimination?



## Tips for the facilitator

The Cinderella adaptation can be used as an example, but you should select a fairy tale likely to be very well known by all the children in your group. Instead of Cinderella, you could use a modern fairy tale, a folk story from your own culture, or even a film that everyone is likely to have seen.

Your goal in this activity should be to promote gender equality and encourage the children to question their own and others' assumptions about gender roles. Some children are likely to use the terms 'normal' and 'not normal' to refer to typical or non-typical roles. Discuss with them what we mean by 'normality', and whether what is 'normal' is always right! For example, it used to be normal for children even under the age of 10 to carry out hard labour for very little pay.

Point out that expectations about how males and females should behave can vary from country to country, community to community, and even within a family. Emphasise that equality does not necessarily mean 'the same'. It means being treated similarly, having their rights and dignity equally respected. Throughout the activity, be sensitive to the fact that some children may already be being teased and excluded for non-traditional gender behaviour. Do not let the discussion cause them discomfort. On the other hand, be careful not to force opinions on the children if they are not ready to accept them: for some of them, it may be very difficult to understand and accept that a boy can play with dolls or enjoy ballet, and that girls may want to play football. Try to find examples in real life of men and women who have 'non-typical' roles or professions.

You do not need to use terms such as 'gender' or 'gender roles' with young children; however, developmental research shows that even pre-school children already understand different gender expectations.

## Adaptations

For a large group: After reading the story, create small groups of four or five. Give each group a copy of Chart 1 and ask them to record the typical activities and characteristics of men and women. Invite the groups to present their findings and then discuss traditional and non-traditional roles with the whole group. Ask the children to go back to their small groups and complete the second chart with the non-traditional characteristics and activities of men and women, both in stories and in everyday life. End the activity with a discussion with the whole group.

For older children: Instead of a fairy tale, choose a novel or well known film. Start the story with the gender roles reversed and let the children continue telling it themselves. Some older children may be able to retell a familiar story on their own. Then invite each small group to share their story and their reflections with the whole group.



## Handout

### Sample reversed fairytale

#### Cinderella

Once upon a time, there lived an unhappy young **boy**. His **father** had died, and **his mother** had brought home another **man**, a **widower** with two **sons**. His new **stepfather** didn't like the **boy** one little bit. All the good things, kind words and special privileges were only for his own **sons**. They got fashionable clothes, delicious food and special treats. But for the poor unhappy boy, there was nothing at all. No nice clothes but only **his stepbrothers'** hand-me-downs. No special dishes, but only leftovers to eat. No privileges or even rest, for **he** had to work hard all day, shopping, cooking, washing clothes and keeping the whole house clean. Only when evening came was **he** allowed to sit for a while alone by the cinders of the kitchen fire.

During these long evenings alone, **he** used to cry and talk to the cat. The cat said, "Meow", which really meant, "Cheer up! You have something neither of your **stepbrothers** have, and that is beauty".

What the cat said was quite **True**. Even dressed in rags with **his** face grimy from the cinders, **he** was an attractive young **man**, while no matter how elegant their clothes, **his stepbrothers** were still clumsy and ugly, and always would be.

One day, beautiful new clothes, shoes and jewellery began to arrive at the house. The Queen was holding a ball and the **stepbrothers** were getting ready to attend. They were constantly posing in front of the mirror. The **boy** had to help them to dress up in all their finery. **He** didn't dare ask, "What about me?" for he knew very well what the answer to that would be: "You? My dear **boy**, you're staying at home to wash the dishes, scrub the floors and turn down the beds for your **stepbrothers**. They will come home tired and very sleepy".

After the **brothers** and their **father** had left for the ball, the poor **boy** brushed away **his** tears and sighed to the cat. "Oh dear, I'm so unhappy!" and the cat murmured, "Meow".

Just then a flash of light flooded the kitchen and a fairy appeared. "Don't be alarmed, **young boy**," said the fairy. "The wind blew me your sighs. I know you are longing to go to the ball. And so you shall!"

"How can I, dressed in rags?" the poor **boy** replied. "The servants will turn me away!" The fairy smiled. With a flick of **his** magic wand, the poor **boy** found **himself** wearing the most beautiful clothing, the loveliest ever seen.

"Now that we have settled the matter of what to wear," said the fairy, "we'll need to get you a coach. A real **gentleman** would never go to a ball on foot! Quick! Get me a pumpkin!" **he** ordered.

"Oh, of course," said the poor **boy**, rushing away.

Then the fairy turned to the cat. "You, bring me seven mice!"

The poor **boy** soon returned with a fine pumpkin and the cat with seven mice **she** had caught in the cellar. "Good!" exclaimed the fairy. With a flick of **his** magic wand – wonder of wonders! – the pumpkin turned into a sparkling coach and the mice became six white horses, while the seventh mouse turned into a **coachwoman**, in a beautiful dress and carrying a whip. The poor **boy** could hardly believe **his** eyes.

"I shall present you at Court. You will soon see that the **Princess**, in whose honour the ball is being held, will be enchanted by your good looks. But remember! You must leave the ball at midnight and come home. For that is when the spell ends. The coach will turn back into a pumpkin, the horses will

become mice again, and the **coachwoman** will turn back into a mouse. And you will be dressed again in rags and wearing clogs instead of these splendid dancing shoes! Do you understand?"

The **boy** smiled and said, "Yes, I understand!"

When the **boy** entered the ballroom at the palace, a hush fell. Everyone stopped in mid-sentence to admire **his** elegance, **his** beauty and grace.

"Who can that be?" people asked each other. The two **stepbrothers** also wondered who the newcomer was, for never would they ever have guessed that the beautiful **boy** was really their **stepbrother** who talked to the cat!

Then the **Princess** set eyes on **his** beauty. Walking over to **him**, **she** curtsied and asked **him** to dance. And to the great disappointment of all the **young gentlemen**, **she** danced with the **boy** all evening.

"Who are you, beautiful young **man**?" the **Princess** kept asking **him**.

But the poor **boy** only replied: "What does it matter who I am! You will never see me again anyway!" "Oh, but I shall, I'm quite certain!" **she** replied.

The poor **boy** had a wonderful time at the ball, but, all of a sudden, **he** heard the sound of a clock: the first stroke of midnight! **He** remembered what the fairy had said, and without a word of goodbye **he** slipped from the **Princess'** arms and ran down the steps. As **he** was running, **he** lost one of **his** dancing shoes, but not for a moment did **he** dream of stopping to pick it up! If the last stroke of midnight were to sound... oh, what a disaster that would be! Out **he** fled and vanished into the night.

The **Princess**, who was now madly in love with **him**, picked up **his** dancing shoe and proclaimed that **she** would marry the **man** whose foot the slipper would fit. **She** said to **her** ministers, "Go and search everywhere for the **boy that** fits this shoe. I will never be content until I find **him**!" So the ministers tried the shoe on the feet of all the **boys** in the land.

When a minister came to the house where the **boy** lived with **his stepfather** and **stepbrothers**, the minister asked if **he** could try the shoe on the young **men** in the household. The two **stepbrothers** couldn't even get a toe in the shoe. When the minister asked if there were any other young **men** in the household, the stepfather told **her**, "No". However, just then the cat caught **her** attention, tugging at **her trouser** leg and leading **her** to the kitchen.

There sat the poor **boy** by the cinders. The minister tried on the slipper and to **her** surprise, it fit **him** perfectly. "That awful untidy **boy** simply cannot have been at the ball," snapped the **stepfather**. "Tell the **Princess she** ought to marry one of my two **sons**! Can't you see how ugly the **boy** is! Can't you see?"

Suddenly **he** broke off, for the fairy had appeared.

"That's enough!" **he** exclaimed, raising **his** magic wand. In a flash, the **boy** appeared in a beautiful outfit, shining with youth and good looks. **His stepfather and stepbrothers** gaped at **him** in amazement, and the minister said, "Come with me, handsome young **man**! The **Princess** awaits to present you with **her** engagement ring!" So the **boy** joyfully went with him. The **Princess** married **him** a few days later, and they lived happily ever after.

And, as for the cat, she just said "Meow!"

Source of the fairy tale: [Cinderella stories www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/cinderella.html](http://Cinderella%20stories%20www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/cinderella.html)

# Our Flag

*This is who we are!?*



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes



6-30



Democratic  
Citizenship



Discrimination



Gender Equality

## Type of activity

Discussion, drawing

## Overview

Children develop a group flag expressing their values and identity as a group.

## Objectives

- To understand the meaning of flags and their uses
- To underline the importance of participation in the creation and protection of values and principles
- To decide on a set of values and principles that the group want to defend
- To discuss the dangers of group identification as a source of discrimination

## Preparation

Do some brief research into the history of flags by searching online or using the library.

Print out or project a selection of flags or symbols, where you can explain the meaning / origin / colours to children. Include general flags not linked to countries, e.g. the Rainbow flag, Red Cross, Peace flag, flag of the United Nations, etc.

## Materials

- Coloured pencils and A3 paper for each small group
- Flip chart and markers
- Examples of flags printed out or projected onto a screen

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to give some examples of flags they know, and record these on a board or flipchart. Ask them to describe the design of the flags and see if they can explain the meaning of the colours and symbols. Add to their list using some examples you prepared, particularly of flags that are not linked to specific countries. Remind them that flags are most often used as an official symbol for a group – for example, a group of people from a particular country, or members of a club, or supporters of a sports team. They provide something which people in that 'group' can identify with and gather round. They are normally designed to communicate a particular message about the group.
2. Explain that the children will make a flag to represent their group as a whole and to send a strong message about their values and principles and the rights they want to defend. You could use examples such as the Peace flag or Rainbow flag, to show how a single message can be incorporated into a flag.
3. Divide the children into small groups and ask them to think about the message they would like to communicate about the whole group. Tell them that the message should be positive, because the flag will represent and be associated with the group as a whole. Everyone should be able to identify with it.

4. Give the small groups a few minutes to decide on key messages, then ask each group to select one colour and one symbol to represent the most important idea that they have come up with. They should be able to explain why they have chosen the colour and symbol – it should not be just because they like it!
5. Bring the small groups back together, and ask each to present their results, briefly. Allow for any questions or clarifications if other groups wish but try to prevent lengthy discussions at this stage. Make a record of the different results so that all the symbols and colours are visible to everyone.
6. Check that all children are happy with the messages, colours and symbols chosen by the other groups: remind them that this is to be a joint flag for the group as a whole. Explain that the next stage will be to put these symbols and colours together to make a single flag.
7. Mix up the original groups and form the same number of small groups, but with different participants in each. Give each group a set of coloured pens and some A3 paper, and ask them to draw their version of the flag, using the agreed symbols and colours. Remind them that they must respect the decisions already made by the whole group about colours and symbols.
8. Ask each small group to present and explain their flag to the rest of the group. When all the groups have presented, place all the flags together to create one big flag for the whole group.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - What do you think of the final flag for the group? Are you happy for it to symbolise your group?
  - What did you think about the process of creating it? Was it easy to agree on the key messages? Was it easy to agree on symbols and colours?
  - Were any of your ideas for the flag not agreed on by the whole group? Why not?
  - Did you discuss all the proposals from other children fairly?
2. Relate the activity to issues of human rights and citizenship, asking questions such as these:
  - Did you identify any human rights in the messages for the group flags?
  - Why do people need flags or symbols to represent their groups?
  - Do you think there can ever be any problems in having strong attachments to particular flags?
  - How does having a flag make you feel about the people who have a *different* flag – for example, people from different countries, or different teams?
  - Do you know any groups of people who are treated badly because they have a different ‘flag’?
  - What could we do to make sure that we do not treat people badly, just because they have a different ‘flag’?
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) guarantees children the right to be legally registered, to have a name and nationality. Do you know of cases where this right is not respected? Should children be allowed to have more than one nationality (for example if their parents have different nationalities)?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activities ‘Our Constitution’ and ‘Every Vote Counts’ both engage children in the process of democratic decision making. ‘Words that Wound’ explores stereotyping and abuse or bullying based on stereotypes.

## Ideas for action

Ask the children to investigate familiar flags and symbols – e.g. the school flag, city flag, national flag, any sports teams, etc. Encourage them to think critically about these flags and arrange a session to discuss why they like them or why they don't. Be aware that in certain countries or cultures, it is not permitted to transform or play with the national flag / symbol – so some participants may be resistant to take this as a point of discussion. Most participants will probably approve of their flag on an emotional level. You could raise the question with them why we have such strong emotional attachments to little pieces of cloth! Why are some flags sometimes considered to be “sacred”?

## Tips for facilitators

It may be difficult for children to think of the values or principles they want to communicate, but you can give them examples using existing flags and could even ask them to think about what they associate with the flags they already identify with – for example, their country's flag or the school / club emblem.

Remind the children that the whole group must like and be proud of the flag they produce – partly because they will have created it, but also because it should show the positive side of the group.

If children struggle to think of symbols to associate with their values, give them some examples – e.g. hands, hearts, animals, particular objects or shapes.

## Adaptations

You could ask children to draw one big collective flag on a flipchart instead of A3 flags in small groups. This works well if you have a small group of children. You could also use a large piece of white tissue or material so that by the end, the group will have a “real” flag.

# Picture Games

*A picture says a thousand words – and more!*



Complexity



8-13 years



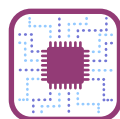
30 minutes



4-30



Discrimination



Digital Environment



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Playing with pictures

## Overview

Children work with pictures to explore stereotypes, different perspectives, and how pictures can inform and misinform.

## Objectives

- To raise awareness of human rights in everyday life
- To develop 'visual literacy', listening and communication skills
- To promote empathy and respect for human dignity

## Preparation

Do some brief research into the history of flags by searching online or using the library.

Print out or project a selection of flags or symbols, where you can explain the meaning / origin / colours to children. Include general flags not linked to countries, e.g. the Rainbow flag, Red Cross, Peace flag, flag of the United Nations, etc.

## Materials

- Coloured pencils and A3 paper for each small group
- Flip chart and markers
- Examples of flags printed out or projected onto a screen

In these activities, you will find three different ideas on how to work with pictures on various human rights themes. Try the one that suits your group of children best.

## Captions

### Overview

Children make captions for a group of pictures and compare their different impressions.

### Preparation

- Select 8-10 interesting pictures. Mount each one on a sheet of paper and give them a number.
- Make caption strips by cutting paper into strips. You will need 2 or 3 for each child.

### Materials

- Numbered pictures
- Caption strips, and pens
- Glue or tape and scissors

## Instructions

1. Arrange the mounted pictures on a table or on the floor. Explain to the children that they are going to write captions for the pictures. Be sure that children understand what a caption is.

2. Divide the children into small groups of four or five, give them a number of empty caption strips and ask each group to select one or two pictures. Ask everyone to write captions for the pictures. Explain that they may have different views and can write their own captions or complete what others write. Encourage them to write neatly because others will need to be able to read them.
3. When everyone has finished, hold up the pictures in turn and ask a few volunteers to read out their captions.
4. Stick all the posters (pictures and captions) on the wall.
5. Briefly tell the children about any relevant background information for each picture, such as the context or where you took it from.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Was it difficult to write the captions? Why or why not?
  - What makes a good caption?
  - If “a picture is worth a thousand words”, why do they need captions?
2. Relate the activity to diversity and human rights:
  - Were there differences in the way people interpreted the picture? Why do you think this happened?
  - Do you think any of the captions were “wrong”?
  - Why is it important to have different interpretations of the same event? Why can it be dangerous?
  - The CRC guarantees all children freedom of thought, freedom of expression and access to information and media. When should this freedom be limited and by whom?
  - Can you think of any times when other children have not been able to enjoy this right?

## Tips for the facilitator

Look for pictures that are both interesting and diverse, perhaps also ambiguous about what is going on. You could use some of the pictures from the New York Times website: [www.nytimes.com/column/learning-whats-going-on-in-this-picture](http://www.nytimes.com/column/learning-whats-going-on-in-this-picture). This is an interactive site where young people are invited to submit comments for a weekly picture.

Use coloured paper and pens to make the posters more attractive.

## Speech Bubbles

### Overview

Children analyse pictures and give the characters cartoon speech bubbles. They use their speech bubbles to compare and discuss their impressions.

### Preparation

- Copy some pictures: you can use pictures from the Internet, magazines, or the illustrations of the human rights themes in Chapter 4. Make sure there is at least one character (person or animal) in each picture and attach speech bubbles to each character.
- Display, or write up on a board or flipchart, the following question words: Who? What? Where? When? How?



**Materials**

- Paper and a pen for each pair
- A worksheet (empty paper larger than the pictures, for example A3 size)
- Selected pictures
- Glue

**Instructions**

1. Divide the children into pairs. Give each pair a picture, worksheet, paper, pen and glue. Make sure that for each picture, at least two pairs work on it separately.
2. Give the children the following instructions:
  - Glue the picture onto the worksheet.
  - Look at the picture carefully, and try to answer these questions about it:  
*Who? What? Where? When? How?*  
Write down your answers on the paper.
  - Now think about what the characters in the picture might be saying. When you have decided, write it down in the speech bubbles to show this.
3. When pairs have finished, hold up the pictures in turn and ask volunteers to read out what the characters are saying.
4. Ask the pairs to post their pictures on the wall, placing the same pictures side by side for comparison. Ask the children to look at all the pictures and read the speech bubbles.

**Debriefing and Evaluation**

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How hard was it to answer the questions about the pictures?
  - Was it hard to write speech bubbles? Why or why not?
  - How did your analysis of the same picture compare with the analysis of the other pair(s)?
2. Relate the activity to stereotypes and human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Did you find any stereotypes represented in the pictures? Did any of the speech bubbles show stereotypes?
  - The CRC guarantees children the freedom of expression and access to information. When should this freedom be limited and by whom?
  - Are there situations in which children may abuse or violate the rights of other children by what they say? Can you give examples of that, for example through social media?

**Tips for the facilitator**

In addition to pictures of people, use some pictures with animals. This can be effective in discussing stereotypes. Start out by pointing out how often animals are cast as stereotypes in cartoons and then get the group to look for examples of stereotyping in their pictures and speech bubbles.

For a younger group it may be difficult to answer all the questions. Ask them to speak generally about the picture, explaining how they see it, and then to imagine the speech bubbles.

## Half of the picture

<b>Overview</b>	Children discuss and react to pictures, developing interpreting and critical thinking skills.
<b>Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select a picture from the Internet. You should know the source of the picture and the story behind it. Some Internet or media sites have the rubric “Picture of the day”, which you could use. Other interesting pictures can be found at: <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/spotlight/learning-multimedia">www.nytimes.com/spotlight/learning-multimedia</a></li> <li>• Print out a copy of the picture for each small group. Cut each one into two pieces, so that certain important elements are missing in each of the pieces.</li> <li>• Stick one piece from each picture onto its own sheet of A3 or flipchart paper ensuring there is still space around the picture to write words. Do this so that all small groups have a copy and keep the other piece from each picture aside.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A suitable picture, printed and copied for each small group</li> <li>• Scissors and glue</li> <li>• A3 or flip chart paper for each small group</li> <li>• Markers</li> </ul>

### Instructions

1. Divide the children into small groups of three or four. Give each group one of the pieces of flip-chart paper with part of the picture stuck in the middle. Ask children to look at the picture and try to imagine the story behind it, then to write key words around it on the paper. To prompt their imagination, use questions such as these:
  - What is happening in the picture?
  - Who are the people in the picture?
  - Where was the picture taken?
2. Give them time to discuss the ‘story’ behind the picture and write up key words.
3. Hand out the other half of the picture to each group. Again, ask them to comment and write up key words on the paper.
4. When they have finished, collect all the ‘stories’ together and place them on the floor or wall so that the children can see them all. Give the whole group a few minutes to walk around and look at the words other groups wrote down.
5. Ask them to react to other groups’ interpretations before telling them the “official” story behind the picture.

### Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How did you find the activity?
  - Was it hard to imagine the story behind this picture? Why, or why not?
  - Did you alter your story after you saw the second piece of the picture? Why?
  - Why do you think that different groups had different stories?
  - What do you think about the images or videos you see on TV or the Internet: do they always tell the ‘whole’ story? Can you think of any examples in life where something important was missing?

2. Relate the activity to media literacy and human rights, by asking questions such as these:
  - Who writes the stories about images we see online? Can we always trust them to give us the *whole* picture?
  - Why does it matter if we don't know the real story behind some pictures? Can you think of examples where it might matter?
  - How can we make sure we always try to see the whole picture?
  - The CRC guarantees children freedom of expression and access to information. Can you think of situations where news and information only tell part of the story? What can we do when we notice partial news or views?

## Suggestions and follow-up

The activities 'Compasito reporter', 'Advertising Human Rights' and 'Human Rights in the News' are useful as follow-up activities.

## Ideas for action

Children can produce a newsletter or bulletin about something that happened in their school or community. They could experiment with different media: for example, an online blog or article, a short radio programme or video reportage.

Try to arrange a visit to a local newspaper, or see if you can invite a local journalist to talk to your group.

## Tips for facilitators

Selecting the picture is the key to the activity. Try to find pictures that will be both puzzling and stimulating for children. Encourage them to ask questions and use their imagination.

Be careful not to choose pictures that may reinforce stereotypes, or which may raise sensitive issues for some of the children. Children are very observant and may even perceive things in the picture that you had missed. Try to select the pictures in part using 'their' eyes.

In the debriefing, build on what they say, and try not to correct them according to what you "know" about the picture. It is less important that they arrive at the "right" answer, but that they learn to analyse what they are seeing, and why they are drawing certain conclusions. As Augusto Boal said, "The most important thing in an image is not the image of the reality, but the reality of the image".

## Adaptation

You could repeat the activity with a second – and even third – picture. See if the children's powers of interpretation change from one picture to the next, or whether they become more cautious about jumping to conclusions. You could also try using different pictures in the different groups. For younger children, you could ask them to react to the picture while you write down key words.

Activity adapted from *Compass: A Manual on Human rights education with Young People*, Council of Europe, 2002

# Picturing Ways Out of Violence

*Now I see what I could do!*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Violence



Peace

## Type of activity

Creating human statues, discussion

## Overview

Children illustrate a conflict or violent situation with a 'human statue' and then illustrate how it could be resolved without violence.

## Objectives

- To raise awareness of different types of violence
- To develop non-violent approaches to resolving conflict
- To explore why violence occurs

## Preparation

None

## Materials

None

## Instructions

1. Discuss the topic of violence with the group. Encourage the children to extend their understanding of violence beyond the physical to include verbal and psychological abuse and threats of abuse. You can use questions like the following:
  - What is violence? What hurts or harms people?
  - Does violence always need to be physical?
  - Is pain always visible?
  - Can a kind person also use violence?
2. Divide the children into groups of four to six. Explain that each group should spend 15 minutes discussing examples of violence that they have observed or experienced (e.g. at school, in the family, with friends). The group should choose one example of violence that they have discussed and then they should create a 'human statue' to show this example to others in the group. The 'human statue' should include all the people in the small group and should be still, without any sound or movement. The children's pose and facial expression should express their role in the statue (e.g. as a victim, perpetrator or witness). Ask each small group to present their 'human statue'. The rest of the children should comment on what they think is going on in the statue. The group that is presenting should not comment at this stage.
3. After all the groups have presented their 'statue', explain that now they should return to their small groups and discuss how the violence or conflict in their presentation could be resolved peacefully. They should then create another human statue to show how the situation was resolved.

4. Ask each group to present their 'conflict resolution statue' to the rest of the group. This time there should be a short discussion after each presentation, during which the rest of the group can first comment on what they have seen, and then the presenting group can explain what the situation was and how it was resolved. Ask the group to suggest other possible resolutions, then ask the children to assess these resolutions in terms of their real-life experience. Remind them that there is usually more than one way to resolve violence.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How did you find the activity? Was it difficult to think of an example and portray this in a 'statue'? Why?
  - How did you come up with your peaceful solution?
  - Did you feel better presenting the first statue or the second one? Why?
  - Why do people act violently?
  - What are some of the ways that *you* could help to reduce or avoid violence in difficult situations?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Is there a human right to non-violence? Which human rights are related to non-violence?
  - Why are the human rights protecting us against violence so important?
  - How can we make sure these human rights are respected?
  - The CRC obliges governments to ensure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them. Do you know of situations in your environment when this right is violated?
  - What can you do if you witness violence against children?

## Suggestions for follow-up

This activity provides opportunities for discussing violence within the group. The activity 'A Constitution for Our Group' invites children to set standards for behaviour within their group and to co-operate in their enforcement. The activity 'From Bystander to Helper' also addresses the many roles involved in abusive behaviour. 'Words that Wound' deals with verbal violence (including on the Internet).

Arrange a training session on violence prevention or anti-aggression techniques.

Check if any campaigns or activities against violence are going on in your region.

## Ideas for action

Create stickers or posters related to violence and anti-violence and put them in public places. Indicate a number or address where people experiencing violence can turn to.

Organise a theatrical performance or make a short movie based on the stories presented by the children.

Take real photographs of the groups presenting their human statues and organise a small exhibition or post the photos onto a blog or social media page if you have permission to do so.

## Tips for the facilitator

Be very sensitive towards children who have already experienced violence. As you may not be aware of the violence some children have experienced, you should watch out for any unusual reactions during the activity itself.

The children can also choose a 'typical' situation; they do not have to talk about themselves if they do not want to.

When you introduce the activity, you may want to demonstrate a 'human statue' with one small group.

The children may have difficulty developing realistic solutions to violent situations, especially those involving adults. Be prepared to suggest possible sources of support and protection, including local child protection agencies. Ensure that you have relevant phone numbers to support services to give out to children.

Younger children may find it difficult to pose as human statues for a long time. Taking a (real) photograph of the groups as they present can motivate and support them to stay still without moving. It also provides a good record of the activity and can be used for actions afterwards.

# Puppets Tell the Story

... but you create the happy ending!



Complexity



8-13 years



90-120 minutes



4-30



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Drama with puppets, discussion

## Overview

Children create a puppet show based on a familiar story with a human rights violation. The group creates a new conclusion that responds to the violation.

## Objectives

- To recognise human rights themes in familiar stories
- To practise finding solutions for human rights violations
- To have fun and work together

## Preparation

Prepare a model puppet to use as a demonstration.

## Materials

- Puppets, dolls, or materials for making puppets (see also some ideas below in Tips for facilitators)
- Puppet theatre or a piece of material to make a stage

## Instructions

1. Arouse the children's interest by asking them to think of stories they know which are about injustice or unfairness. Help them to see that these stories, and the characters within them, often reflect a somewhat exaggerated version of real-life situations. You could suggest some ideas and/or access to stories for stories (e.g. a folk or fairy tale, a scene from a children's book, a film or TV programme).
2. After recalling a few stories, list a number of them on a flipchart, summarising them in a few words.
3. Divide the children into small groups and give each group a different story to work on. If you don't have enough stories, you can give some groups the same story to use. Tell them to begin by retelling the story, in case others in the group do not know it, and then make a list of all the characters in the story. Each group should also name any children's rights or human rights which have not been respected in the story.
4. When the groups have drawn up a list of all the characters, tell them that they need to prepare a puppet show to present their story to the rest of the group. Explain that they have 45 minutes to create their puppets and rehearse their presentation. Every child in the group should have at least one role in the presentation. If there are not enough characters in the story, allow them to create new ones! Show them how to make the puppets, according to the method you have chosen.
5. Invite each group in turn to present their puppet show. When they reach the point where a human rights violation happens, you or the presenters should shout, "Freeze!" The puppet show

stops and the children discuss:

- What is happening in the story? Which human right is not being respected?
  - What can be done to protect the characters involved?
6. Ask the presenting group to improvise a conclusion to their puppet show, using one or more of the endings recommended in the discussion.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How do you feel about your puppet show?
  - Were you happy with the way you presented the story?
  - What was difficult? What was fun?
  - How did your group work together as a team?
  - How did you feel while performing your role?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Have you ever experienced or observed people being treated unfairly or badly, like in the puppet shows?
  - What is the link between these situations and human rights? Were any rights violated? Were any rights defended or enjoyed?
  - Did you manage to resolve the rights violations in the stories? How? Were there other possible ways of protecting the characters or making things better?
  - What could you do in real life to address a problem like this?
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees the human rights that every child is entitled to. What can you do if you see children's rights being violated or disrespected?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The stories, and attempts to find solutions, may raise questions about human rights where children need and want more information. Help them find answers to their questions, especially in the CRC. Consider inviting speakers from relevant organisations to talk about their work and suggest ways that children can become involved or support this work.

## Ideas for action

Perform the plays for other children, parents or other members of the community. Ask the children to explain the human rights context of their plays and the violations they represent to the audience.

## Tips for the facilitator

Rather than being general, the topic of the stories can be focused on a particular problem or theme being addressed by the group (e.g. bullying or cyberbullying, gender discrimination, hate speech or verbal abuse).

The facilitator must be aware of the human rights issues in the stories in order to help the children



make the link between the story and human rights.

The facilitator should not intervene in the group work unless the group is facing difficulties in creating a presentation from a story.

Younger children may need help in thinking of appropriate solutions. Where several solutions are offered, the children may need help in deciding which to choose. Help them weigh up the advantages of each and possibly play through several endings. If you have different groups presenting the same story, you could ask each to play through a different ending.

If the children choose a long work, such as a novel or film, help them select a single scene to present that shows the injustice or unfairness.

This activity could easily be run over two or three days.

Puppets can be made in a variety of ways: use existing puppets, dolls or action figures; decorate socks; decorate paper tissue tubes or paper cups. The easiest way is perhaps to make paper cut-outs mounted on a stick. However, do not spend too much time on the puppets: the presentation is what matters. You should choose one method which will be used by all groups so that they do not waste time choosing.

Suggested children's classics: Cinderella, Peter Pan, Hansel and Gretel, The Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, The Ugly Duckling. Suggested stories in other *Compasito* activities include: 'Dear Diary', 'Modern Fairytale', 'Once Upon a Time...' and 'Zabderfilio'.

## Variations

With older children, encourage the creation of stories that involve issues based on the children's personal experiences, or problems being addressed by the group (e.g. bullying, discrimination, violence, or conflict management).

Ask the children to change some feature(s) of a familiar story (e.g. to make the wolf in 'Little Red Riding Hood' the victim of hurtful gossip; reverse gender roles, as in the activity 'Once Upon a Time...').

## Further information

This activity could also be done with families at home.

# Putting Rights on the Map

*Where do human rights begin? In small places close to home!*



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes  
several days



4-30



Human Rights



Democratic  
Citizenship



Environment

## Type of activity

Drawing, analysis, discussion

## Overview

Children work co-operatively to create a map of their community and identify the children's rights associated with major institutions.

## Objectives

- To develop familiarity with children's rights
- To build associations of children's rights with places in children's daily life
- To assess the children's rights climate in the community such as health and environment

## Preparation

For younger children: prepare map outlines beforehand.

Make copies of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) cards: enough for one set per small group.

## Materials

- Art supplies, flipchart paper
- Copies of CRC cards

## Instructions

1. Divide the children into small groups and give them some flipchart paper and art supplies. Ask them to draw a map of their own neighbourhood (or town, in the case of smaller communities).  
They should include:
  - their homes
  - major public buildings (e.g. post office, town hall, schools, places of worship)
  - public services (e.g. fire department, police station).
  - places that are important to their health, such as the hospital, pharmacy, doctor's surgery or public health clinic, or other places they can go to if they are sick or need help
  - places of environmental importance, such as rivers, beaches, the woods or parks
  - places that are important to them, their friends, families and community (e.g. grocery stores, cemetery, cinemas, etc.)
2. When the maps are complete, ask the children to analyse their maps from a children's rights point of view. Give each group a copy of the CRC cards with articles and ask them to try to link as many articles as they can to places on the map. Which human rights do they associate with places on their maps? For example, a place of worship can be associated with freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; the school with the right to education; the post office with the right to privacy, and to self-expression, the library or Internet café with the right to information or the hospital with the right to health. Tell the children to place the relevant CRC card next to the place on the map which it corresponds to. They can draw in their own duplicates if they need to repeat cards.

3. Ask each group to present their map to the whole group with a brief summary of children's rights in their community.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Was it hard to draw a map of your neighbourhood?
  - Did you learn anything new about the neighbourhood?
  - Were you surprised to discover children's rights in your neighbourhood?
  - How did your map differ from the maps of other groups? Were there any similarities?
2. Relate the activity to children's rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Did any parts of your map have a high concentration of rights? How do you explain this?
  - Did any parts have very few or no rights associations? How do you explain this?
  - Are there any articles of the CRC that are used more often than others on your map? How can this be explained?
  - Are there any articles of the CRC that no group included on their map? How can this be explained?
  - Are there any places in this community where children's rights are often violated?
  - Are there any particular children in this community whose rights are frequently violated?
  - Did you include in your map aspects related to the diversity of your community, such as religious sites, associations or cultural institutions of minority communities? If not, do you think there are no such places? Or there might be, but you are not aware of them?
  - The CRC also guarantees the right to health, including access to clean water and environment. What are the situations in your community where this right is violated? Which children are affected most?
  - What can you do improve access to a clean environment in your community?

## Suggestions for follow-up

Use your maps to take a walk around the neighbourhood, to observe rights in action. The activity 'Compasito Reporter' also asks children to evaluate their community through a human rights lens.

## Ideas for action

Invite a neighbourhood social worker, long-time resident or local activist to talk to the group about how they see the neighbourhood, how it is changing and what needs to be done to make it a better place to live. Help the children explore how they can contribute to this change.

Make pictures of the maps and post them online with the children's explanations. These maps are a kind of human rights "diagnosis" made by children of the territory where they are living. Ensure you have the proper permission before posting children's work online.

Ask the children to create an "ideal" map of their city or neighbourhood, keeping the parts they like, changing or adapting the parts they do not like and drawing in anything they would like to see there, for example, to make the natural environment better and protect the right to health. Discuss with the children about the indivisibility of rights, to ensure that they do not propose to remove certain parts of the neighbourhood just because they think certain rights are more important than others. For example, the children might propose to remove an old synagogue from an area where very few Jews live and replace it with a new playground; or moving social housing buildings from the city centre to the outskirts and replace the buildings with a school.

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity assumes that the children are already familiar with children's rights, and helps them to put that conceptual learning into a well-known context. However, the children may still need some assistance in connecting everyday places with their rights, for example, a grocery store with the right to health or an adequate standard of living.

Remind them that they are looking at how the places on their maps protect the rights of *children*. Of course, their rights are also likely to be affected by those of adults. Use questions to prompt them, if children cannot see connections themselves.

This activity has a very positive message: we enjoy rights every day in our own neighbourhood. You may want to discuss the presence of violations on a different day, to allow for this positive impact to be appreciated.

Younger children may have little experience of reading a map and may need time to assimilate the concept. You might begin by mapping the room, playground or building where you meet the children.

## Variations

Carry out each part of the activity on a different day, allowing the children time to become accustomed to reading the map and to consider the make-up of the neighbourhood.

Assign each group a particular rights theme to consider when drawing the map.

Focus on a single rights theme, such as freedom from violence or an adequate standard of living, and see how that theme finds expression in the neighbourhood.

After drawing a map, ask the children to identify "good places for children" and "bad places for children", or the places they like or they do not like – and then to explain their choices. The link with human rights can be made through the debriefing, by looking at their reasons.

## Adaptations

### With younger children

Work with an area that is familiar to the children, such as the immediate neighbourhood, school or home. The younger the children, the smaller the area you should select.

Create a three-dimensional map using cardboard, boxes and art materials.

To save time and reinforce the map-making process, provide children with a prepared map or aerial photograph of the area that they can fill in and label. Close-up aerial views of most parts of Europe are available on Google Earth: <http://earth.google.com/download-earth.html>

Omit Step 2, where the CRC articles are matched with the right. Just ask about the places the children like and do not like, ask for their reasons, and discuss what they can do to improve things.

### With older children

Draw the maps to scale.

Divide the children into groups and give each group a part of a common map to work on.

In the debriefing, ask questions about whether the rights the children have noted are civil and political rights, or economic, social and cultural rights. Did one type of right predominate on the map? Did one kind of right predominate in certain areas (e.g. more civil and political rights associated with the court house, city hall, or police)?

# Rabbit Rights

*We have a right to be happy, safe and healthy!*



Complexity



5-13 years



30 minutes



4-30



Human Rights



Health

## Type of activity

Imagining, brainstorming, discussion

## Overview

Children think about the care a pet needs and extend that to the needs of children and their right to survive and develop.

## Objectives

- To introduce the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)
- To show children that they are instinctively aware of human rights
- To connect human needs with human rights

## Preparation

Make copies of the CRC cards and cut them out. You will need 2-3 cards for each child.

## Materials

- Flipchart paper and markers
- CRC cards
- Optional: Simplified version of the CRC

## Instructions

1. Ask the children if they have pets to care for or if they would like to have one. Ask them each to think about a real or imaginary pet. Then ask them what their pet needs to be happy, safe and healthy. The children may suggest things such as a hutch, straw, food, water, exercise, attention, love, or perhaps another animal for company.
2. As a group, choose one “pet” for the class. Give the pet a name, and write ‘OUR PET’ at the top of the left hand column on a chart such as the one below.
3. Then ask, “Who is responsible for ensuring that our pet gets all the things that it needs?” Note down the children’s responses, which may be that they or whoever owns the pets is responsible.
4. Confirm the things the pets need to survive and develop, such as food, water, and a hutch. Then ask questions such as these:
  - If the pets really need these things to survive, then should the pets have a right to them?
  - Who is responsible for ensuring that the pet’s rights to these things are met?
5. Then write ‘CHILDREN’ at the top of the right-hand column and ask the group to brainstorm: “What are the things that children need to develop and have for a happy, safe and healthy life?” List the children’s responses, helping to elicit such things as home, food, water, family, friends, toys, education, love and attention. You could ask them to compare it with the list they did for the pets. Some items will be the same.
6. Ask who they think is responsible for ensuring that children get all the things they need to be

happy, safe and healthy. Try to elicit responses such as adults, parents, family, caregivers, and even the Government.

7. Ask questions such as these to expand the focus of children's rights, adding additional needs to the table:
  - What do children need to be protected, to survive, to develop and to participate?
  - If children need these things, should children have a right to them?
  - Who is responsible for ensuring that children have these rights?
8. Ask the group if they have ever heard of the CRC. Give each child two or three CRC cards. Explain that these cards represent rights from this Convention. Explain that the Convention is a document that lists the things to which every child in the world has a right.
9. Invite the children to compare the CRC cards in their hands with the list they made in point 4. They could pair up with a neighbour and try to link the cards with the needs, sticking each card next to the need (or right) which it matches most closely. Leave a space on the flipchart, or on another piece of paper, so that the children can stick up cards which do not match the rights they included in their list.
10. Point out the similarities between the cards and the list created by the children. Tell them that they have managed to create a list of children's rights!

## Debriefing and Evaluation

Use a few of the questions below to debrief the activity.

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy the activity? Why or why not?
  - Was it hard to imagine what a pet needed? What about what children needed?
  - Why do you think you were able to think of so many of the rights by yourself?
  - What would happen if children didn't get what they needed in order to grow and develop well?
  - What can children do if their rights are not being respected? Who can they turn to?
2. Point out that the group knew from the beginning what children needed to develop and grow, without adults having to tell them. They are experts on their own lives! Explain that the CRC is there to support children's rights, to protect them, to provide for them and to ensure that they can participate in the world around them.

## Suggestions for follow-up

This is an excellent introduction to children's rights, and it makes a strong connection between needs and rights. It leads directly to other activities that explore children's rights further, such as 'Sailing to a New Land'.

## Tips for the facilitator

Because this activity requires little or no reading skills, it can be run with very young children. They only need to have the idea of 'rights' defined, in simple terms. The CRC can be introduced later. When you list the needs of children, you could draw a small picture or icon near the word, so that younger children or children with reading difficulties can remember more easily.

Instead of creating a chart, you could draw a large picture of a rabbit for the first part of the activity, and a large picture of a child for the second part. The needs could be written in and around the pictures, and the CRC cards also can be taped to these images in the appropriate places. The image of the child, in particular, makes a nice visual aid and can be used in future activities.

You could choose the pet beforehand – for example, ask all children to imagine a rabbit or a cat in the first stage.

Some children have difficulty distinguishing between needs and wishes. They may include things like bicycles or mobile phones in the list of needs. Be careful not to judge them and try to help them link these objects to a real need so that they can see that the most important thing is not really the object itself.

## Adaptations

If appropriate to the group, you could conclude by reading the child-friendly CRC aloud, with each child reading a different article.

Adaptation for older children: when comparing the children's list with the CRC, invite discussion of rights that they did not include in their list. Use questions such as these:

- Which needs and rights are in the CRC, that were not on your list?
- Why do you think these rights are in the CRC? Do you think we need them?
- Why do you think you did not include these needs and rights in your list?



## Handout

### Sample Chart

OUR PET: [Name]	CHILDREN

# Reading the Label

## Our T-shirts can talk!



Complexity



10-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Environment



Poverty



Human Rights

### Type of activity

Group discussion, drawing, writing

### Overview

Children look at the labels on their clothes and personal belongings, and discuss what lies behind them.

### Objectives

- To develop an understanding of trade, globalisation and the environment
- To encourage responsible and sustainable consumption
- To develop ideas on how to promote human rights

### Preparation

Make copies and cut out the cards at end of this activity. You will need one set of cards for each small group.

Optional: Internet research regarding the life cycle of a T-shirt, or read the handout of the activity 'Beware, we are watching!' in [www.coe.int/compass](http://www.coe.int/compass).

Prepare some images to support the children's understanding of growing, picking and making cotton. These can be displayed on an overhead screen or given as handouts.

### Materials

- Flipchart or board, paper, markers
- A map of the world
- A plain T-shirt
- Cards at the end of this activity (Life Cycle of a T-shirt)

## Instructions

1. Tell the children that in this session, the group will try to use the labels on their clothes, personal belongings and other objects in the room to investigate the story behind them. Ask the children if they know what a label is, and why it is useful. List their ideas on a flipchart or board. If necessary, explain that a label is a form of identification for an object: it tells us where it is made, from what material, and so on.
2. Divide the children into small groups of four or five people each, and give them a piece of paper and a marker. Ask them to look at all the labels they can find in their group – for example, on their clothes, shoes, or on other personal belongings, on food, etc. Ask them to find out the country of origin of each item. They should write down all these countries on the piece of paper.
3. When each group has finished writing down the countries, bring the large group back together and mark on a world map each of the countries the children have identified.
4. Now show them a plain T-shirt and explain that this is one of the most commonly worn items of clothing around the world. Almost everyone has a T-shirt! In their groups, ask the children to



imagine the different stages needed to make a T-shirt, up to the point where someone buys one in a shop.

5. After a few minutes' discussion, distribute the handout 'Life Cycle of a T-shirt' to each group. Ask the children to think about what needs to be done at the different stages and to make an illustration for each card. Finally, they should think about all the natural resources that are needed to complete each step – for example, soil and water for growing the cotton. Ask them to use their imagination!
6. When the groups have finished, ask them to present their results. Draw up a general list on the flipchart or board of all the resources needed at the different stages. Then ask for the children's reactions to the list, such as:
  - Did you know that so many things were needed to make a T-shirt?
  - Are you surprised?
7. Give the children some information about how T-shirts are made and tell them that different stages in the process are often carried out in different countries, partly because companies often want to find the cheapest labour possible so that T-shirts cost less to produce. Often this means using children as part of the labour force.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy this activity? Did you find it difficult?
  - Before this activity, had you ever looked at the labels in your clothes?
  - What do you think about the number of countries that your clothes and other possessions are likely to have visited?
2. Relate the activity to issues of human rights and the environment, asking questions such as these:
  - Why are these products made in these countries?
  - Do you think it's important to know how, and where, your clothes are made? Why?
  - What are some of the human rights or environmental problems connected with the clothing industry? How could we make sure that our clothes are not produced under conditions that violated human rights?
  - What can we do to make sure that we (the children) do not inherit the environmental problems being caused today, such as climate change?

## Suggestions and follow up

The activity 'Modern Fairytale' can be used to explore the questions of child labour. 'Take a Small Step Forward' looks at the conditions of children in different countries around the world.

## Ideas for action

You can support children in organising a small campaign at school or in the community to encourage fair and sustainable consumption. They could visit local producers or fair-trade shops and produce their own report of what they find.

Children could write letters to the companies of their favourite brands, asking for assurance that no children are exploited or used as part of the labour force, and that environmental rights are respected. There are a number of international campaigns that children could find out about, and then become involved with:

- Clean Clothes Campaign: <https://cleanclothes.org>
- Fashion Revolution – Who made my clothes: [www.fashionrevolution.org](http://www.fashionrevolution.org)
- Change your shoes Campaign: <https://labourbehindthelabel.org>

Tell the children about the annual Fair Trade Week organised in Belgium, at the Trade for Development Centre. In 2017, children from the primary school of Rosières in Rixensart, Belgium, in partnership with artists, spent some time learning about fair trade, and then created a short video available on YouTube ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsUQ7Z6dEgQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsUQ7Z6dEgQ)). Use this to encourage your group to write their own song!

## Tips for facilitators

You may want to show children some images – for example, of cotton plants – to assist them in understanding the stages. Angel Chang's TED-Ed video on the life cycle of a T-shirt is an excellent resource with subtitles in 25 languages ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiSYoeqb\\_VY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BiSYoeqb_VY)). You might want to show this clip to the children during the activity at Step 5 if you can.

When the groups list the things necessary at each stage, prompt them in case anything has been missed out. For example, they may say that a boat is needed to transport the T-shirts, but they may forget the fuel needed to power the boat.

Be aware that labels are not always easy to understand, and sometimes they may be in a foreign language or countries may be unfamiliar – for example, PRC, for the People's Republic of China. Even though it is common to label clothing with the country of origin, it is not mandatory in Europe to do so!

## Adaptation

You could choose other products to discuss. For example, chocolate is a 'globalised' food, as are many children's toys and technological gadgets – which also have enormous environmental and human rights footprints. You could contact fair-trade organisations or a network in your country to get more information and products with a "different" story.



## Handouts

### Life cycle of a T-shirt

<b>Growing</b>	<b>Picking</b>
<i>How is the cotton grown?</i>	<i>How is the cotton taken from the plants?</i>
<b>Turning it into thread</b>	<b>Weaving</b>
<i>How do you make the long threads of cotton?</i>	<i>How do you make the thread into sheets of cotton?</i>
<b>Making T-shirts</b>	<b>Transporting</b>
<i>How do you turn the material into T-shirts?</i>	<i>How do you get the T-shirts to the shops?</i>
<b>Selling</b>	<b>Using</b>
<i>How do the T-shirts reach the customer?</i>	<i>How do we look after them at home?</i>

# Sailing to a New Land

## What will you throw overboard?



Complexity



7-13 years



45 minutes



8-30



Health



Migration



Human Rights

### Type of activity

Prioritising, discussion

### Overview

The children imagine they are sailing to a new continent, but to get there they must choose to cast non-essential items overboard.

### Objectives

- To evaluate what is essential for survival and development
- To differentiate between wants and needs
- To connect human needs and human rights

### Preparation

Copy and cut out a set of 'Wants' and 'Needs' cards for each group; place together in one envelope for each group.

### Materials

- Envelopes
- Copies of 'Wants' and 'Needs' cards, including 1 larger copy for the facilitator
- Glue or sticky tape, and sheets of scrap paper

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to imagine that they are about to set sail to a new continent. There are no people living there now, so when they arrive, they will be pioneers establishing a new country.
2. Divide the children into small groups and give each group an envelope with all the 'Wants' and 'Needs' cards, explaining that these are the things they are packing to take with them for life in the new country. Ask the groups to open their envelopes, spread out the cards and spend a few minutes looking over them.

**Variation:** Provide a few blank cards and give the children an opportunity to add some additional things they think they might need or would like to have.

3. Explain that the boat is setting sail now and begin a narrative like this:

*At first, the trip is very pleasant. The sun is shining, and the sea is calm. However, a big storm suddenly arises, and the ship starts rocking. In fact, it's about to sink! You must throw three of your cards overboard to keep the boat afloat.*

Ask each group to decide what to give up. Explain that they won't be able to get these things back later. Collect the cards which have been "thrown overboard" and put them together in one pile. If some groups choose the same cards, use your large copy of the card to emphasise that this need was chosen by more than one group.

- Return to the narrative:

*At last the storm is over. Everyone is very relieved. However, a weather report comes that a Category 5 hurricane is heading straight for the ship. If you are going to survive the hurricane, you must throw overboard another three cards! Remember: don't throw away what you may need to survive in your new country.*

As before, collect these cards and keep them in a separate pile.

- Return to the narrative:

*That was a narrow escape! We are almost at the new continent, and everyone is very excited. But just as we sight land on the horizon, a giant whale crashes into the boat and makes a hole in the side. You must make the ship even lighter! Throw away three more cards.*

Collect and put these cards into a pile.

- Announce that, at last, we have reached the new continent safely and are ready to build a new country. Ask each group to glue their remaining cards onto a piece of paper so that everyone can remember what they are bringing to the new continent.
- Ask each group to hang their sheet at the front of the room and explain what they are bringing to the new land. After each description, ask the rest of the group, "Are they missing anything they will need to survive? Do they have everything they need to grow and develop?"

## Debriefing and Evaluation

- Discuss the activity by asking questions such as these:
  - How did you find this activity? What did you like about it?
  - Was it difficult to decide which cards to take? How did you choose?
  - Did you – as a group – always agree? Give some examples of what you agreed on, and when you could not agree.
  - What do you think about your final choices? Will you be able to survive in the new country? Will you be able to grow and develop well?
  - If you had to do this activity a second time, would you throw away different things?
- Remind the children that human rights are about what humans *need* to survive, grow and develop well and live a life of dignity. Human rights are not about what would be nice to have! Make the connection with the cards children decided to keep or throw away. Then ask questions such as these:
  - Did your group keep what you need to survive?
  - Did you keep what you need to grow and develop your potential?
  - Which things did you want to keep, but you decided were not essential?
  - Does everyone have the same needs?
- Emphasise that everyone has the same human rights, and read out some from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Some are necessary to stay alive, such as food, medical care, clean water and shelter. Others are essential for people to be able to live well and develop not just physically, but also emotionally and culturally. Human beings need more than mere survival. Ask the group:
  - Which cards represent things we might want but don't need for survival?

- Which cards represent things we need for physical survival?
- Which cards represent things we might need to grow and develop well?
- What would happen in this new country if you didn't have any human rights? (Choose several different examples of human right from the cards.)

## Suggestions for follow-up

As a follow-up activity, or if you have time at the end of this one, show the children the CRC cards and ask them to link the cards to their 'Needs' cards.

This activity works well as a complementary activity to 'Rabbit Rights', which introduces human needs as a basis for human rights.

Follow-up activities could include 'A Constitution for Our Group', which discusses democratic rule-making with the children.

## Ideas for action

This is good activity to transform into a theatre play or short movie. You could present it to parents or to others in the community.

As children often prefer happy endings, you could think about how they could recover the cards that they had to throw overboard.

## Tips for the facilitator

It is very important that the children do not assume from this activity that some human rights are less important than others and can be abandoned. In the debriefing, emphasise the interdependence of rights.

Emphasise that the things they discard cannot be regained and that the things they keep are needed to build a new country – not just to survive until they are "rescued".

Some items are deliberately ambiguous to stimulate debate about what defines an essential item (e.g. a mobile phone might be seen as a luxury by some and a necessity for communication by others).

Young children may have difficulty distinguishing what they want from what they need. Help them by reminding them that they need to think about what is essential to build a new life in a new country.

To shorten or simplify the activity, you could use fewer cards: select those that are most interesting or relevant for your group.

If you are working with refugee children, or have refugee children in your group, be very careful not to trigger memories of possibly traumatic events, such as a sea crossing. You could adapt the story and use a hot air balloon, or a journey to a new planet as the setting.

You could make the story more dramatic by using noises or music, or altering the setting of the room. The children could also be encouraged to mime the actions as you are telling the story.

## Variations

In the debriefing, compare the cards "thrown overboard" at each crisis. Ask the children what differences they see in people's choices.

After the activity, you could also ask what we could do to "recover" the cards the children threw overboard.



# Handout

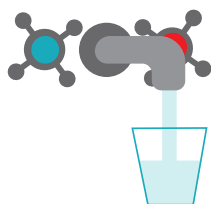
## Wants and Needs cards



opportunities to share my opinion



money to spend as I like



clean water



bedroom of my own



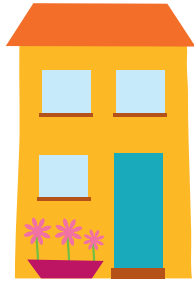
computer and access to the internet



fair treatment and non-discrimination

 <p>clean environment</p>	 <p>mobile telephone</p>
 <p>coke and hamburger</p>	 <p>opportunities to rest and play</p>
 <p>television and newspaper</p>	 <p>opportunities to practise my religion</p>





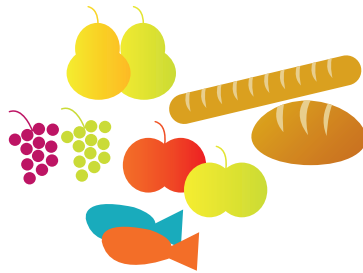
comfortable home



fashionable clothes



holiday at the beach



nutritious food



protection from abuse



education



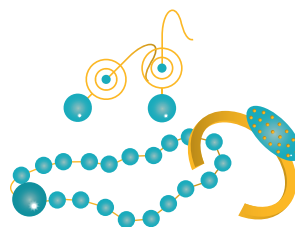
doctors



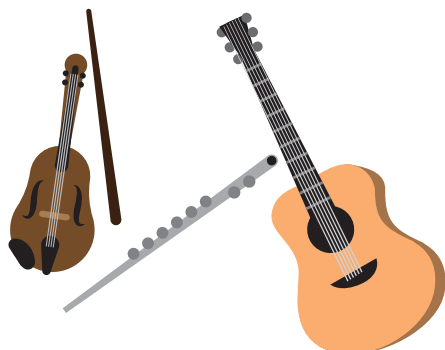
bicycle



sweets



jewelry



music instruments



warm clothes



parents



toys and games



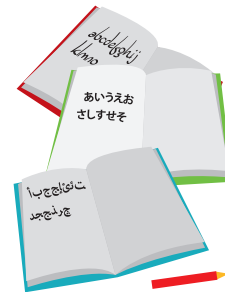
medicine and immunisation against disease



democratic elections and rules



watch



opportunities to practice my culture and language

# Silent Speaker

*Read my lips!*



Complexity



9-13 years



45 minutes



4-30



Discrimination



Health



Participation

## Type of activity

Role-play, guessing game

## Overview

Children read an article from the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) without making a sound; their team members try to identify the article by lip reading.

## Objectives

- To understand the difficulties experienced by people with a hearing disability
- To understand the skill of lip-reading and the conditions that favour it
- To review the articles of the CRC

## Preparation

- Copy a set of the CRC cards.
- Cut a box to make a frame to represent a TV screen or use an existing puppet theatre.
- Copy the child-friendly CRC for every child.

## Materials

- Cards with CRC articles
- Copies of the child-friendly CRC
- Some kind of "TV frame" for the speakers
- A bag or basket to hold the CRC cards
- A bell or other sound to introduce the speakers

## Instructions

1. Explain that this activity needs a scorekeeper and ask for a volunteer to play this role. Divide the remaining children into teams of three or four. Give each child a copy of the child-friendly CRC. Review the CRC with them to ensure that everyone is familiar with the articles.
2. Explain the activity:

One child from each team will be a "silent speaker". The speaker takes a CRC card from the scorekeeper, and after the starting bell has rung, stands in the frame and reads the article, starting with the number and name of the article and continuing to read the whole text without stopping. However, the speaker should make no sound: s/he only moves his/her lips while reading the card. Members of the speaker's team have to try to guess which article is being read, by lip-reading the "silent speaker". The scorekeeper writes down the score for each team at the end of every turn. Teams can earn points in the following way:

  - If a team can give the name and text of the article before the "speaker" has finished, they get three points.
  - If the team can give an example of the right being violated, they get one point.
  - If the team has not guessed the article by the time the reader has finished, the reader's team gets a point.

3. Start the activity. When one member from each team has been the “silent speaker”, announce the score at the end of the first round. The team with the highest score in each round starts the next round. Continue until each child has had a turn to be the speaker.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as:
  - Was it difficult to guess the article? Was it fun? Was it tiring?
  - Which was easier: reading the lips or being the silent speaker? Why?
  - Was there anything which made lip-reading easier? Were some people easier to understand? Why?
  - What did you do as the silent reader to help others understand?
2. Relate the activity to people who are hearing-impaired by asking questions such as these:
  - Some people in our community lip-read all the time. Who are they?
  - Do you know anyone who is hard of hearing or has a hearing impairment?
  - Because of the position of your mouth when you make sounds, lip-reading only allows for about one third of the information you need to decode a message. What do you think it would be like to have to lip-read all the time? Would it be tiring? Would it be fun?
  - What are some everyday situations that would be especially difficult for people with hearing disabilities?
  - Some people who are hearing-impaired prefer not to lip-read but use sign language to communicate instead. Why do you think this might be?
3. Relate hearing impairment to human rights by asking question such as these:
  - What are some of the ways that you could support a child who is hearing-impaired?
  - What are some of the ways that the school or community could support such a child?
  - Do people with disabilities have a right to have their needs met? Why?
  - Explain that Article 23 of the CRC clearly states that children with disabilities have a right to assistance to enjoy their human rights. How does society prevent children with disabilities from enjoying their human rights? What can we do to support children with disabilities to enjoy their rights?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity ‘Blindfolded’ deals with the special needs of people who are blind or have a vision impairment.

## Ideas for action

The children can conduct a “sound survey” of their school and community to identify places or activities where children who are hard of hearing or hearing-impaired are likely to have particular trouble. They can then investigate what could be done to improve these situations.

The children can learn that there are sign languages that are now recognised as languages. Introduce them to the sign language used in their country. Charts illustrating finger spelling are widely available and provide children with a useful and interesting skill.

The children can help make materials for children who are hard of hearing or hearing-impaired by imagining visual solutions for sound messages (e.g. to start a race, flags could be used instead of a sound, finding cartoons or visual stories, and by reading a text at the same time as an interpreter “says” it in sign language). Check for suggestions of other actions the children can do with a local association for people who are hard of hearing or hearing-impaired.

## Tips for the facilitator

This activity should be adjusted to the children’s age, reading skills and previous knowledge of human rights. If the children are not skilled readers or have not been introduced to human rights before, you could simplify the game by asking them to read the names of the rights but not the full articles.

Do not overemphasise the scorekeeping: it might detract from the main objectives of the activity. Announce the score for each round at the end of that round and allow the team with the highest score to go first in the next round. Avoid keeping a cumulative score for the activity, even though children may pressure you to do so.

To familiarise children with the method of the game before starting, you could ask them to practise by saying the name of another person in the group without making a sound and asking the others to guess whose name is being said.

Clarify whether miming and body gestures are allowed. Younger children may need these extra clues.

The facilitator can facilitate the activity and be the scorekeeper at the same time. All the children should take part in the activity.

# Take a Small Step Forward

*We are all equal – but some are more equal than others!*



Complexity



9-13 years



60 minutes



8-30



Discrimination



Poverty



Family and Alternative Care

## Type of activity

Role play, simulation, discussion

## Overview

Children imagine themselves in the role of other children around the world, and compare the difficulties involved in daily life.

## Objectives

- To promote empathy with others
- To raise awareness about equality in dignity as a basis of universal human rights
- To foster an understanding of the challenges often faced by members of minority groups

## Preparation

- Make a role card for each child: copy the page of role cards, cut out the strips and fold each one over.
- Select the roles and cases which are most relevant to your group. Create new roles, if necessary.

## Materials

- A large space so the children can line up next to each other, and take steps forward in a row
- Role cards
- List of situations
- Optional: art materials to make name tags and/or pictures

## Instructions

1. Introduce the activity by asking the children if they have ever imagined being someone else. Ask for examples. Explain that in this activity they will imagine that they are someone else – another child who may be quite different from themselves.
2. Explain that everyone will take a slip of paper with their new identity. They should read it silently and not let anyone know what is on their paper. If a child does not understand the meaning of a word in his/her role card, they should raise their hand and wait for the facilitator to come and explain.
3. Discourage questions at this point. Explain that even if they don't know much about a person like this, they should just use their imagination. To help children get into role, ask them to do a few specific things to make their person seem real to them. For example:
  - Give yourself a name. Make a name-tag with this name to remind yourself of who you are imagining yourself to be.
  - Draw or imagine a picture of yourself.
  - Draw or imagine a picture of your house, room, or street.

- Walk around the room pretending to be this person.
4. To further enhance their imagination, play some quiet music and ask the children to sit down and close their eyes and imagine in silence as you read out a few questions, such as the following:
    - Where were you born? What was it like when you were little? What was your family like when you were little? Is it different now?
    - What is your everyday life like now? Where do you live? Where do you go to school?
    - What do you do in the morning? In the afternoon? In the evening?
    - What kind of games do you like playing? Who do you play with?
    - What sort of work do your parents do? Do you have a good standard of living?
    - What do you do in your holidays? Do you have a pet?
    - What makes you happy? What are you afraid of?
  5. Ask the children to remain absolutely silent as they line up beside each other, as if on a starting line. When they have lined up, explain that you are going to describe some things that might happen to a child. If the statement would be true for the person they are imagining themselves to be, then they should take a step forward. Otherwise they should not move.
  6. Read out the situations one at a time. Pause between each statement to allow the children time to step forward. Invite them to look around to see where others are.
  7. At the end of the activity, invite everyone to sit down in his or her final position. Ask each child in turn to describe their assigned role. After the children have identified themselves, ask them to observe where they are at the end of the activity.
  8. Before beginning the debriefing questions, make a clear ending to the role-play. Ask the children to close their eyes and become themselves again. Explain that you will count to three and then they should each shout out their own name. In this way, you conclude the activity and ensure that the children don't stay caught up in their role.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - What happened in this activity?
  - How easy or difficult was it to play your role?
  - What did you imagine the person you were playing was like? Do you know anyone like that?
  - How did you feel, imagining yourself as that person? Was the person like you in any way? Do you know anyone like that person?
2. Relate the activity to issues of discrimination and social and economic inequality, asking questions such as these:
  - a. How did you feel stepping forward – or not stepping forward?
  - b. If you often moved forward, when did you begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as you were?
  - c. Which people moved furthest or fastest? Why? Which ones barely moved?
  - d. Did you feel that this was unfair?
  - e. Why do some people in our community have more opportunities than others? Why do some



have fewer opportunities?

- f. Who in your community is likely to stay behind more often? Why?
- g. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) asks governments not to separate children from their parents against their will. In which cases do you think this is acceptable or needed? What can we do to support children with no parents to enjoy all the rights in the CRC?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The concept of the stereotypes is not easy for many young children to grasp. Reinforce the learning of this activity with others that also develop this idea, such as 'Picture Games', 'World Summer Camp' and 'Zabderfilio'.

## Ideas for action

Discuss with the children whether there are groups in this community or country who have more opportunities than most people. Are there groups with fewer opportunities? How could we make opportunities more equal for everyone?

## Tips for the facilitator

Make your own role cards! Those offered here are meant to serve as samples. The closer your role cards reflect the world in which your children live, the more they will learn from the activity.

Make sure you adapt any roles which might embarrass any of the children, for example if their personal situation mirrors that of one of the roles.

Because the facilitator cannot always be aware of every child's personal life situation, there is a possibility that a child may be very disturbed or emotionally caught up in one of the roles. The facilitator needs to be very sensitive in this exercise and pay particular attention to children who do not manage to drop out of the role afterwards, or who display unusual behaviour. In such a case, the facilitator should try to speak to the child individually. You could also have a fewer roles in reserve, in case a child does not feel comfortable with his/her assigned role.

It is very important that the children keep silent as they receive their roles, and that they understand the importance of imagining the life of the person they will represent, and then move forward as if they were that person. Not only is suspense created about the children's identities, but keeping silent will help them to maintain concentration and makes distractions less likely, such as people acting out of role.

Make sure that every child gets a chance to speak during the debriefing. This activity can evoke strong emotions, and the more the children can express themselves and their feelings, the more they will gain from it. Spend more time on the debriefing if needed.

This activity can easily be run outside or in a large room. Keep the children in their final positions when they reveal their roles, as young children need visual reinforcement to recognise the disparity, and associate this with the people behind the roles. However, to make sure that the children can hear each other in the debriefing discussion, either draw them into a circle or move inside.

The power of this activity lies in the impact of actually seeing the distance increasing between the participants, especially at the end. To enhance the impact, choose roles that reflect the realities of the children's own lives but don't mirror them exactly. Adjust the roles so that only a few of the people can take steps forward (i.e. can answer, "Yes") in the majority of situations and events.

During the Debriefing and Evaluation, explore how the children knew about the lives of the person whose role they had to play. Was it through personal experience or through other sources of information, such as other children, adults, books, the media, or jokes? Challenge them to question whether their sources of information were reliable. In this way you can introduce how stereotypes and prejudice work.

Children are generally aware that others have materially more or less than they have. However, children are often unable to recognise their own privileges. This activity can help the children to put their lives into a larger perspective.

## Variations

The cards and situations can be adapted to address any issues you want to discuss with the children. You could focus more on gender, for example, giving similar cards to a boy and girl. You could also give two similar cards to different children, to explore how each child imagines their role and any differences in the way they deal with the situations.

You could also have a second round of statements after the debriefing to illustrate that children with fewer opportunities may become more competent at certain tasks. Compare the differences between the first round by marking the children's positions after the first round, and then using statements such as the following. You can also ask the children to add their own suggestions to the list.



## Handout : Role cards

Note to facilitator: Make your own cards! The closer they reflect the experiences of your children, the more effective they will be! These are intended only as samples.



**You were born in this town, but your parents moved here from Asia. They run a nice restaurant, and you live in rooms above the restaurant with your sister. You and she help in the restaurant after school. You are 13 years old.**

**You are 10 years old. You live in a farmhouse in the country. Your father is a farmer and your mother takes care of the cows, geese and chickens. You have three brothers and one sister.**

**You are an only child. You live alone with your father in an apartment in the city. Your father works in a factory. You are very good at music and dancing. You are 9 years old.**

**You are a child of 12 years old. Your family belongs to the local Roma community. You live at the edge of a small village in a small house where there is no bathroom. You have six brothers and sisters. You have to walk 4 km to school every day.**

**You were born with a disability and have to use a wheelchair. You live in an apartment in the city with your parents and two sisters. Both your parents are teachers. You are 12 years old.**

**You are 11 years old. You have lived in an orphanage since you were a baby. You don't know who your parents were.**

**You are 9 years old and have a twin. You live in an apartment in the city with your mother, who works in a department store. Your father is in jail.**

**You are 9 years old and an only child. You live in an apartment house in a town with your parents. Your father is a construction worker and your mother delivers mail. You are very good at sports.**

**You and your parents came to this country to find safety from the war going on in their home country, Somalia. You are now 11 years old and have been here for three years. You don't know if you can go back to Somalia again.**

**You are 13, the oldest of six children. Your father drives a truck and is usually away from home. Your mother is a waitress who often has to work at night. You often have to take care of your younger siblings.**

**Your parents divorced when you were a baby. Now you are 12. You live with your mother and her girlfriend. At weekends, you visit your father and his new wife and their two small children.**

**You are 11 years old. You have lived with different foster parents since you were a small child because your parents couldn't take care of you. Your foster parents are nice. Four other foster children also live in the same small house as you.**

**You are 8. You and your sister live with your grandparents in a small town out in the country. Your parents are divorced, and your mother works as a secretary in the city. You rarely see your father.**

**You have a learning disability that has kept you two classes behind at school. You are 10 years old and taller than all the other kids, who are only 8. Both your parents work, so they don't have much time to help you with homework.**



**Your mother died when you were born. Your father remarried and you live with him and your stepmother and her two daughters. You are 8 and they are teenagers. Your father is a lawyer.**

**You are 8 years old and the youngest of three children. Your family lives in a small apartment in a big city. Your father is a mechanic but he is out of work right now, so you don't have much money. But your father has more time to play with you.**

**You moved to this country from another country when you were a baby. Now you are 10. Many other immigrants live in your neighbourhood, where your parents have a shop. You speak the languages of both your new and old countries and often translate for your mother and grandmother.**

**You are 11 years old. You live in a village in the country with your parents and a younger brother and sister. Your parents run a bakery. You are overweight and your colleagues often make fun of you about it.**

**You have asthma and have to miss a lot of school because you are often sick, especially in winter. You spend a lot of time at home watching TV and playing online. It's lonely because both your parents go out to work. You are 13 years old.**

**You are the child of the American ambassador in your country. You go to the international school. You wear thick glasses and stammer a little. You are 11 years old.**

**You and your older brother are very talented at mathematics, physics, languages and, in fact, most things. Your parents are university professors. They send you to special courses and training camps all the time to prepare for competitions.**

## Situation and events

Read the following situations out loud. After reading out each situation, give the children time to step forward and also to look to see where they are, relative to each other.

1. Your family always has enough money to meet your needs.
2. You live in a decent apartment, with your own room and easy access to the Internet.
3. You are not teased or excluded because of your appearance or disability.
4. The people you live with ask what you think about major decisions that concern you.
5. You go to a good school and belong to after-school clubs where you can do sports.
6. You take extra lessons after school in music and drawing.
7. You are not afraid of being stopped by the police.
8. You live with adults who love you and always have your best interests at heart.
9. You have never felt discriminated against because of where you come from, your religion or culture.
10. You have regular medical and dental check-ups, even when you are not sick.
11. You and your family go away on holiday once a year.
12. You can invite friends for dinner or to sleep over at your home.
13. When you are older, you will be able to go to university or choose any job or profession you like.
14. You are not afraid of being teased or attacked at school or in the streets where you live.
15. You usually see people on TV or in films who look like you and live the same sort of way that you do.
16. You and your family go on an outing to the cinema, the zoo, a museum, the countryside or other fun places at least once a month.
17. Your parents and grandparents and even great-grandparents were all born in this country.
18. You get new clothes and shoes whenever you need them.
19. You have plenty of time to play, and friends to play with.
20. You are proud of having a really expensive smartphone.
21. You feel appreciated for what you can do and are encouraged to develop all your abilities.
22. You think you are going to have a happy future when you grow up.

# Telephone Call!

*It's for you!*



Complexity



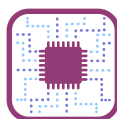
7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Digital Environment



Discrimination



Participation

## Type of activity

Group discussion, drawing, writing

## Overview

This is an adaptation of the traditional children's game, where children whisper a message from ear to ear, and then compare the result with the original message.

## Objectives

- To develop awareness about media and communication
- To develop ideas about the right to freedom of expression and to access information

## Preparation

Write or print a short sentence at the top of a piece of A4 paper and repeat this so that you have one A4 sheet, with a sentence, for each child. See 'Tips for Facilitators' for a few sample sentences. Sentences can be duplicated if you have a number of small groups.

## Materials

- One piece of A4 paper for each child, with a short sentence
- Different colour markers (one for each child)

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to place themselves in a line. Tell them that you will whisper a message in the ear of the first child in the line, who will then whisper the message to the next person in line, and so on, until the last child receives the message. S/he will then announce the message out loud to the whole group. Tell the children they should not repeat the message, even if the person they are whispering to says they did not hear it.
2. Repeat the activity, changing the order of children in the line. Briefly discuss what happened and the children's reactions:
  - How did you find the activity?
  - Why did the message change on its way around the circle? What happened?
3. Divide the children into groups of three or four. Give each child one of the pieces of A4 paper with a sentence. The children in one small group should all receive different sentences, but you can duplicate sentences between groups. This will be more interesting at the end for comparing results.
4. Tell children that they need to illustrate the sentence with a simple drawing – without taking up too much space! Explain that there needs to be room on the paper for each child in their group to add a contribution, the drawing should be the size of a small post-it or something similar. When they have finished their drawing, they should fold over the top of the paper so that only the drawing is visible, and not the original sentence. Tell the children to work alone, and not to show their piece of paper to anyone else in the group, except the person they later pass it to, after they have folded it again. They then pass this to the child on their left. The next child writes a sentence based on the drawing they see, and then folds the paper again, so that only their sentence is

visible. Again, they pass it to the left – this child illustrates the sentence they see and so on. This continues until all the children have had a turn and they have their original piece of paper back.

5. Ask everyone to unfold their paper. Give them a minute or two to look at all the sentences and pictures on their piece of paper, and especially to notice any similarities and differences. Wait to discuss these, however, until the Debriefing. Display the drawings and sentences for the discussion.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy the activity? Why or why not?
  - Were you surprised by the results of the drawings? What happened?
  - Why do you think the message changed so much between the first version and the last one?
  - Do you think that in real life, messages change like in this activity? Can you give some examples?
2. Relate the activity to human rights and to the influence of media, including social media, using questions such as these:
  - What can the consequences be of transmitting **False** or imaginary stories about people? Can you think of any examples?
  - Which rights might be violated when this happens?
  - What can we do to address **False** or incomplete messages, gossip, lies – and so on – from spreading online, or offline?
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees children the right to freedom of expression. Does this mean that children are free to spread **False** messages, gossip, lies – and so on – online, or offline if they want to?

## Suggestions and follow up

The activities 'Compasito reporter', 'Advertising Human Rights', and 'Human Rights in the news' are useful for working on issues related to the media. 'World Summer Camp' can be used to look further at discrimination and prejudice.

## Ideas for action

Support children in producing their own news on issues they consider important for their lives and communities. This could be printed as a newsletter or posted online. Ensure you have proper permission before posting children's work online.

Invite the children to create their own charter for online behaviour (see 'A Constitution for our Group' as an example).

## Tips for the facilitator

Be aware of the reading and writing abilities of your group. Use simple sentences, for example:

*This cat doesn't like fish. - The girl is going to school. - The boy likes biking. - The man is climbing a mountain.*

## Adaptation

Use the first of the activities as an energiser, or as an introduction to another activity on communication or the media. With a large group, you can run the first activity with two or three sub-groups.

# The Battle for the Orange

*Can this be a win-win situation?*



Complexity



5-13 years



30 minutes



4-30



Peace



Violence



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Group competition and discussion

## Overview

Children compete for possession of an orange and discuss how to resolve conflicts.

## Objectives

- To discuss the need for communication in instances of conflict
- To reflect on strategies for resolving conflict

## Preparation

None

## Materials

- One orange

## Instructions

1. Explain that the group is going to play 'the Orange Game'. Divide the children into two groups. Ask Group A to go outside (or to a corner of the room where they won't hear you) and wait for you there.
2. Tell Group B that in this activity their goal is to get the orange because they need its juice to make orange juice.
3. Go to Group A and tell them that their goal in this activity is to get the orange because they need the peel of the orange to make an orange cake.
4. Bring both groups together inside and ask them to sit in a line facing each other.
5. Tell the groups that they have three minutes to get what they need. Emphasise that they should not use violence to get what they want. Then place one orange between the two groups and say, "Go".

*Usually someone will take the orange and one group will then have it. How the groups deal with the situation may be a surprise: sometimes they will try to negotiate to divide the orange in half; at other times they will not negotiate at all. Sometimes the groups will communicate further and realise that they each need different parts of the orange. Someone from one of the groups may even peel the orange, taking the part they need. Do not interfere.*

6. After three minutes say, "Stop" or "Time's up".

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Discuss the activity by asking question such as these:
  - What happened in this activity? How do you think it went?
  - Did your group get what it wanted before the three minutes were up?



- What was your group's goal?
  - What was the outcome of the conflict over the orange?
  - What did you do to achieve this outcome?
  - Is it important for people to communicate in order to resolve conflicts? Why?
  - Do people always want the same thing in a conflict?
  - Have you ever experienced a similar situation to the "orange conflict"? What happened?
  - Would you do anything differently if you were in the same situation again? Why?
2. Relate the activity to human rights with the following questions:
- What are some of the human rights of children that are violated in a conflict?
  - What do you think should be done so that human rights are not violated in conflicts?
  - Does the Convention on the Rights of the Child protect children from armed conflict? Should it do so?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Picturing Ways Out of Violence' also deals with resolving conflict. Several activities also require negotiation, for example, 'Capture the Castle' and 'Cookie Monster'.

## Ideas for action

Develop ideas about how to deal with conflict within the group. List these ideas on a chart and hang it somewhere in the room.

## Tips for the facilitator

After you have given the groups three minutes, remove the orange, or what is left of it, to avoid distraction during the debriefing. At the end of the activity you could give the children some orange juice, or segments, or a piece of orange cake prepared before the lesson (bearing in mind that some children may have dietary restrictions or allergies).

During the conflict, you should try not to influence the results, but be careful to emphasise to the children that there should be no violence in order to get what they want.

For younger children, or children who have not been introduced to the concept of human rights previously, you can keep to the first part of the debriefing.

## Adaptation

For larger groups, you could: create four groups instead of two and have two "Orange battles" taking place at the same time. Simply form two Group 'A's, and two Group 'B's and give the same instructions as indicated above. Have one Group A sit opposite one Group B, and the second Group A sit opposite the second Group B. Place one orange between each set of groups. Start and stop the activity at the same time. It may be interesting to discuss the different processes and results in each "Battle".

# Waterdrops

*Water, water everywhere and not a drop to drink*



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Environment



Migration



Democratic  
Citizenship

## Type of activity

Experiential learning, prioritising, discussion

## Overview

Children decide how they can use water so that they do not waste it. They discuss the importance of personal action in order to preserve one of the most important resources for the environment.

## Objectives

- To raise awareness of the need to use natural resources in a sustainable way
- To discuss ways of looking after water supplies and the environment in general
- To help children become aware of their rights
- To encourage individual action for the sustainable use of resources, including water saving

## Preparation

Prepare sets of six glasses for each small group of children. The glasses in each set should be labelled: Drinking, Cooking, Washing yourself, Washing Clothes, Flushing the toilet, Other.

Fill 1-litre bottles with water: you will need one bottle for each small group.

## Materials

- A 1-litre bottle for each small group of children
- 6 glasses for each small group of children
- Flipchart or blackboard
- Paper and pens

## Instructions

1. Ask the children to think of as many reasons as possible why water is important (e.g. for plants, animals, human beings, industry, agriculture, recreation), and introduce the idea of water conservation, asking questions such as these:
  - Where can you find water on Earth? (the ocean, ice caps, rivers, etc.)
  - How much of the water on Earth can be used as drinking water? (Tell them that 97% of all water is to be found in the oceans; 2% is held in the ice caps, and only 1% of the Earth's water is fresh water available for drinking)
  - What would life on Earth be like without water? What if there was less water?
  - Is fresh water equally available everywhere on Earth?
  - What do you think about fresh water in the future? Will the climate crisis have an impact on the amount of fresh water that will be available?

2. Brainstorm the different ways that children use water every day (e.g. for cooking, for having a bath or shower, flushing the toilet, washing clothes) and list these on a board or flipchart paper. Then ask them to guess how much water they normally use in a day. Tell them that in Europe, the average is approximately 135 litres/day; in North America, the average is about 420 litres/day; in Africa, the average is about 20 litres/day. According to the UN, the “average” person needs between 20 to 50 litres/day.
3. Divide the participants into small groups of four or five. Explain that this activity will challenge them to be more careful about looking after the scarce water resources on earth. Give each group a bottle of water and ask them to imagine that this represents all the water that one person has for a day. The group must decide how to divide it up – and they must be careful not to waste it!
4. Remind children of the list they made in Step 2 of the ways they use water. Give each group a set of six labelled glasses – and tell them that the ‘Other’ category can include things like gardening, cleaning the house, and so on. Ask them to discuss in their groups how they want to divide up their water into each of the categories. They should pour the water from their bottle into the six glasses, trying to make sure that they will be able to fulfil their daily needs. Ask them to do this task quickly. When they have finished, allow a little time for children to look at the distributions of other groups.
5. Now tell them that an emergency caused by climate change has arisen: an extreme drought has caused rivers to dry up and crop failures, and wildfires are spreading throughout the region. The fire services and farmers say they have no more water to deal with the problems. They appeal for help!
6. Ask children to return to their groups and give each group a copy of the ‘Waterdrop’. They need to find ways of saving the water they have allocated to the six different categories, and each method should be written onto the ‘Waterdrop’. Ask for a few ideas to check their understanding, and then give the groups some time to complete the task.
7. Bring the groups back together and ask each to report briefly on a few of the ideas they have had. Remind them that there are many other demands on water from the community, which need to be satisfied out of the water we have available. If time allows, ask for a few more suggestions.
8. At the end of the activity, pin up the ‘Waterdrops’ around the room, so that they are available for the children to look at later.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy this activity?
  - Were there any disagreements in your group?
  - Were you surprised by how many things we use water for?
  - Was it difficult to find ways of saving water? Where do you think we waste water most?
  - Which ideas from other groups did you like?
2. Discuss the topic of water conservation:
  - Why is it important to save water?
  - What happens when people do not have access to enough water for their needs?
  - Do you know where the water used by our neighbourhood comes from?
  - How could you make savings in the water you use in your daily life? Do you think you will try to do this?
  - Why does the climate crisis make it more important than ever that we save water?

3. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Water is essential for life and survival. What are some of the other natural resources which play a key role in life and survival?
  - According to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have the right to clean water and a clean environment. Do all children have access to these resources? What happens if the resources are available but not of good quality?
  - Who is responsible for making sure these resources are available, and of good quality?
  - What can we do to help those who are most affected by the climate crisis?
4. At the end of the debriefing, ask the children to look back at their 'Waterdrops' and add any other ideas on how to save water and how to use it in their environment. Display the 'Waterdrops' somewhere in the room so that the children can refer to them in the future.

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'What a Wonderful World' also engages children in looking more deeply into what they understand by a healthy and safe environment. 'Reading the Label' can be used to go more deeply into the question of wasting natural resources and spoiling the environment.

Take the approach used in this activity to consider other essential resources and how they affect children's lives (e.g. clean air, safe and wholesome food, electricity, gas or oil). Similarly, consider how children themselves can conserve these resources (e.g. recycling, using different bins for different types of rubbish, using public transport, using renewable resources, etc.).

Learn more about the problem of water (e.g. from films, documentaries, myths and folk tales, newspaper articles). Reinforce the links between individual action, water saving and the climate crises, and how we can protect rights to other natural resources for people across the globe.

For older children, the short animation 'Abuela Grillo', adapted from a Bolivian myth, can be used as the beginning of a discussion about water as a right for all.

## Ideas for action

Develop some group action plans for saving water. Children can measure approximately how much water they use in one day and note this down over the course of a week. Come back to the discussion after a week or so, to see if they found it hard to save water, and talk about why it is useful to do so. Before doing this, you should contact the children's parents or other adults in order to prepare them for the water-saving week.

Play 'Pollution Patrol' with the children. If there is a small pond or river near the school, take a closer look at it. Check the rubbish in the water and on the banks. Find out how people use this water, or where it goes.

Take a walk around the neighbourhood with the children and identify how rubbish is collected – and where it is not collected. Find out with the children how rubbish is processed and talk about why it is important to have a clean environment.

Build on the children's ideas for changing their behaviour towards natural resources, for example, food, water, electricity, gas, and so on. Support them in understanding that their personal actions can have an impact globally, and that individual change can make a difference.

## Tips for the facilitator

The children will need to have a basic understanding of the water cycle in order to do and understand this activity. Explain the water cycle first if they have not already been introduced to the concept previously.

Remind children that the way we look after natural resources affects the human rights and right to survival not just of ourselves, but also of others in the community and even around the world.

When the children are discussing the common resource, prompt them, if they do not realise it, to think about public buildings and services which use water. For example, the construction industry requires large amounts of water, so public housing and public buildings such as schools will have to be built out of the 'common resource'. Medical services, green public spaces, street cleaning and so on are other public resources which will need to be provided for out of this resource.

## Adaptations

For younger children, you could fill in the handout of the 'Waterdrop' instead of asking the children to do this.

With older children, expand the discussion to include general rights to resources, sustainable development, the climate crisis and the right to life. Use questions such as these:

- What can be done to respect everyone's right to water and right to other natural resources?
- Which other natural resources are limited?
- In light of the climate crisis, what can be done to allow future generations to live in a world where they have access to essential natural resources?

## Further information

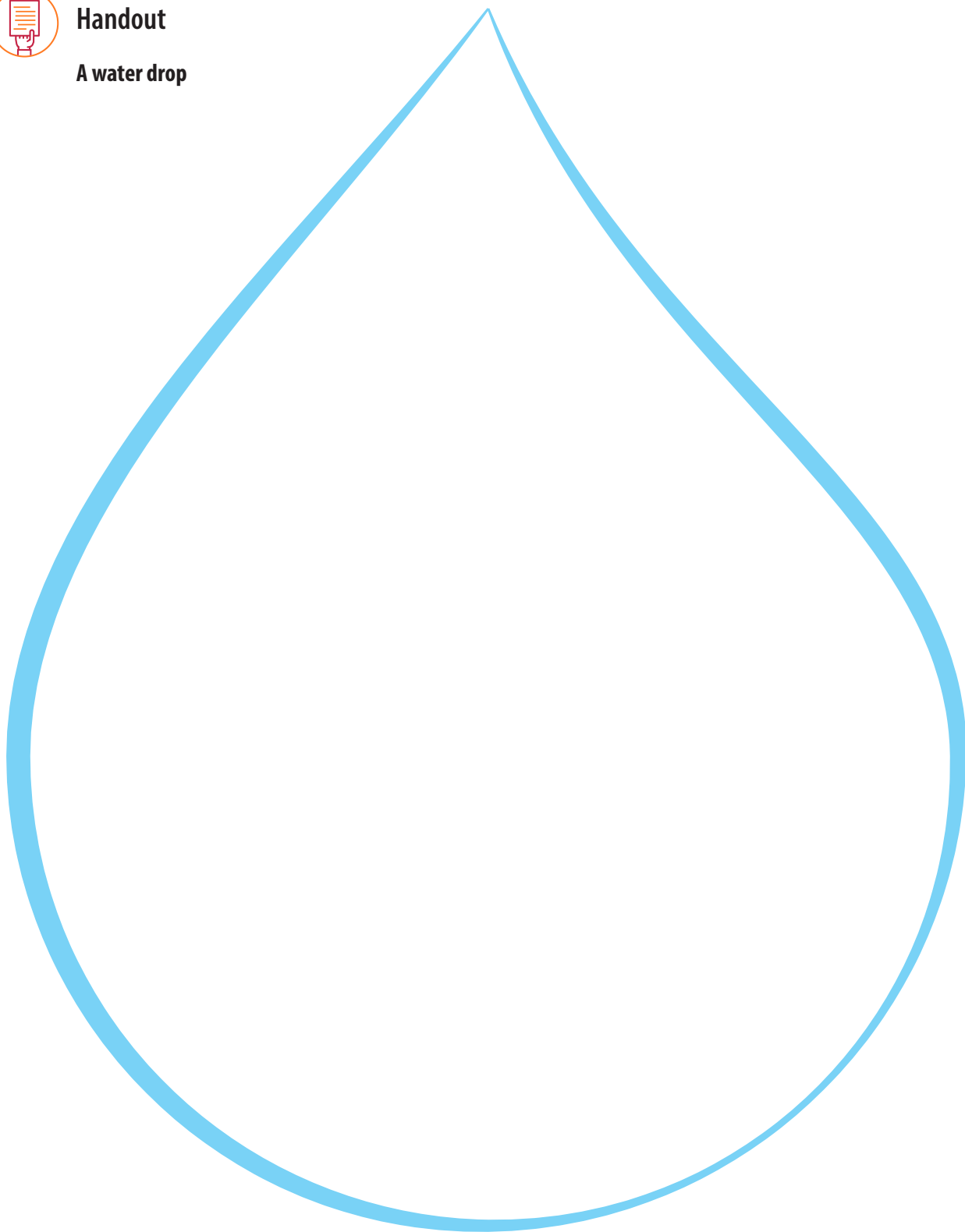
*A trip with drip – the water drop* is a workbook containing basic information and several 'learning-by-doing' activities on various aspects of water. It includes information and practical tools for studying the origin of water, the amount of water used by human beings, the way people use water for agricultural, industrial and domestic use, and the problem of water pollution. This is available at the site of the United Nations Environment Programme ([www.unep.org](http://www.unep.org)).

The 'Water Footprint Network' contains many useful resources, including statistics and interactive tools on water footprints: <http://waterfootprint.org>



## Handout

### A water drop



# We are Family

*Every family has a story to tell*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Discrimination



Family and  
Alternative Care



Gender Equality

## Type of activity

Drawing, discussion

## Overview

Using pictures and drawings, children discuss concepts of family and different family structures.

## Objectives

- To encourage thinking about different ways of raising children and different notions of 'family'
- To address discrimination against children with non-typical family compositions
- To explore the link between family and human rights

## Preparation

Prepare a set of illustrations / photos representing different family schemes for each small group (e.g. single-parent, 'classical family', 'patchwork families', same-sex couples, adopted children, big families including various generations).

## Materials

- Copies of all pictures for each small group of children

## Instructions

1. Introduce the activity by explaining that this activity explores the many different ways that we identify the people we consider our family. Emphasise that not all children live in the same kinds of families.
2. Ask each child to draw the family they live in (i.e. as opposed to the family they may be separated from, or once had). Encourage them to include details about their family if they want to (e.g. name, age, sex of each person).
3. Ask the children to discuss types of families that they know about. Ask them to present their drawings of their own family.
4. Together, brainstorm and list as many types of families as possible. Mention some that have not been spoken about already.
5. Divide the children into small groups of four or five, and give each group a copy of the illustrations / photos you prepared earlier. Ask each group to discuss what they see in each picture, including any differences between the images they drew of their own families.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy this activity?
  - How easy or difficult was it to draw and represent your family?

- Were you surprised by other children's drawings? Why?
  - What did you learn about families?
  - What is a 'family'?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees the right for children to live with their parents and the right to a family. Why is this right so important?
  - Are there children who do not live in a family? Where do they live?
  - Who ensures that the rights of children who do not live in a family are respected?
  - Can families also violate their children's rights?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Who Should Decide?' addresses questions about how families live together and make decisions. Several activities also deal with stereotyped expectations: 'Picture Games' and 'World Summer Camp'.

## Ideas for action

If possible, with older children, arrange a visit to a local orphanage or care home and create discussion or friendship groups with the children there.

If there are any 'Adopt a grandparent' or 'Adopt a parent' initiatives in the local community, some children in the group may like to get involved in their activities.

Some children may like to start their own 'Adopt a brother or sister' initiative, which can be introduced in a local school or community.

## Tips for the facilitator

Make sure that the children feel comfortable and will not be teased for presenting family styles that are unusual or different. Throughout the exercise, emphasise tolerance, empathy, and other values which are related to what makes a family.

It is important to be aware of the family backgrounds of the children in your group and to adapt the activity so as not to embarrass them, or make any of them feel uncomfortable. No child should feel pressured to disclose details of their family life.

Before running this exercise, read the background information on Family and Alternative Care. You will find information in this chapter which may be useful for this activity – for example, about different types of families or family structures.

## Adaptations

To shorten this activity, consider running it without using the pictures of families. When dividing the children into smaller groups, you could ask them simply to discuss and reflect on their own family. However, it is still important in the debriefing to discuss or refer to other types of families that may not be present in the groups.

You could also do the activity as a whole group. Put a large piece of paper on the floor and ask the children to sit down around it. Write 'Families' in the middle of the paper, and then do steps 1 to 4 using the sheet of paper for their drawings. At step 5, show them the pictures you have collected, and add them to the large sheet of paper, while discussing them. At the end, you will have a picture representing all possible kinds of family structure.



# What a Wonderful World

*How do you want to live?*



Complexity



7-13 years



50 minutes



4-30



Environment



Discrimination



Poverty

## Type of activity

Drawing, discussion

## Overview

Children draw contrasting pictures of environments where they would and would not like to live. They discuss which factors make a difference and how they can influence their own environment.

## Objectives

- To discuss the concept and different components of 'environment'
- To assess the good and bad in different environments
- To discuss ways to protect and/or change our own environment and that of others

## Materials

- Paper
- Colouring materials, e.g. paints, markers, crayons, pencils
- Drawing pins or sticky tape to hang up the drawings

## Instructions

1. Ask children what they understand by 'the environment'. Make sure that everyone is clear about the meaning.
2. Lay out the paper and colouring materials. Invite the children to imagine an environment in which they would like to live. This can be a fictional or invented environment, or a real one. Ask them to draw their ideal environment.
3. Now ask the children to imagine an environment in which they would not like to live. Ask them to draw this environment.
4. When the drawings are finished, hang them up and invite the children to view the mini-exhibition.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Was it easy to imagine the two different environments?
  - Which of the drawings and environments do you like the most? Why?
  - Which of the environments do you like the least? Why?
  - If people were living in one of the environments that have been drawn, how do you think they would feel?
  - What about the environment where you are living now: is it similar to any of the drawings? What do you like or not like about it?

2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - The environment is more than just the physical space around you: which other things make our environment positive or negative? If necessary, prompt the children to think about things like opportunities, non-violence, non-discrimination, freedom and human rights.
  - How would you describe the human rights environment where you live?
  - What could you do to make your environment more like the ideal one you drew?
  - Do all the children in the world live in an environment that respects their rights?
  - What do you know about climate change? Are you worried about it? How is it likely to affect children's rights?
  - The Convention on the Rights of the Child recognises that children have the right to health. This includes clean water and a clean environment. What can we do to promote a healthy environment for all the children in the world?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activities 'Compassito Reporter', 'Waterdrops', and 'Putting Rights on the Map' also engage children in evaluating their local environment. In the activity 'Dear Diary' children see the same experience from different perspectives.

## Ideas for action

Take a walk through your community and discuss the physical environment with the children, asking them what they like and don't like about it. Help them to develop some concrete proposals for changes. Then invite local officials to discuss the proposals with the children.

Make an exhibition of the children's drawings and ideas about the environment and invite others in the community. Upload their drawings to social media or a website for your group. Make sure you have parent or guardian permission before putting children's work on the Internet.

Build on the children's ideas for changing their environment. Which of these ideas can they put into practice?

Try to find ongoing projects in which the children can participate in to support other children in more disadvantaged areas than their own. Older children might initiate their own projects.

## Tips for the facilitator

Help children understand that our 'environment' is a product of concrete, physical factors as well as social or sociological factors, such as rights and freedoms. Emphasise that we need to address all of these factors for a healthy environment. Younger children may have difficulty grasping the abstract concept of environment.

If this is the first time the children have been introduced to human rights, you may want to include a short introduction of what they are before the debriefing. Alternatively, you can do an activity such as 'Rabbit Rights' or 'Sailing to a New Land' first, which deal with the relationship between human needs and human rights, before starting the activity.

## Variations

Use several different colouring techniques for the same drawing, for example, wax crayons, paint, paper mosaic.

You may prefer to focus only on certain aspects of the environment – for example, trees and green spaces – rather than approaching the entire concept.

# What if ...

... we could live without money???



Complexity



8-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Education and  
Leisure



Poverty



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Analysis, drama, discussion

## Overview

Children imagine the consequences that might arise from a given scenario, and then present their results as a short drama piece.

## Objectives

- To consider the impact and interdependence of rights
- To consider rights in our daily life.

## Preparation

- Choose, adapt or create examples to suit the children's experience
- Copy and cut out the cards attached at the end of this activity (you will need enough for each small group)
- Copy the Effects Cascade (you will need enough for each small group)

## Materials

- Scenario cards for groups
- Paper and pens for presentations
- Copies of the Effects Cascade
- Optional: Cards of the CRC

## Instructions

1. Introduce the activity, reminding children that we all try to imagine "What if...?". Sometimes we imagine good scenarios (e.g. "What if there were no more wars?") and sometimes bad scenarios (e.g. "What if a war occurred in my country?"). In this activity children will be given a situation and asked to consider the effect it might have on people's lives.
2. Introduce the Effects Cascade and illustrate how one thing can lead to a chain of events. Use a simple, familiar example (e.g. What if you were not allowed to go to school? Effects: Not learning to read, not being able to follow written instructions, understand a map, write a letter, access the Internet).
3. Divide the children into small groups and give each group a card and a copy of the Effects Cascade, and pens. Ask them to work together to complete the diagram.
4. When the children have completed the Effects Cascade, explain that they are now going to prepare a short drama presentation that shows how the effects that they have imagined could arise from the situation. Give the children time to prepare their presentations.
5. Ask each group in turn to read out the card and present their short drama.
6. After each presentation, briefly ask for questions or comments, asking questions such as these:
  - Can you think of any other effects?

What if ...

- Which human rights are involved in this example?
- Have any rights been violated?
- Have any rights been protected or promoted?

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - What happened in this activity?
  - Was it hard for you to imagine the example you were given?
  - Was it difficult to think of the effects that might result?
  - Do you believe that cases like these exist in the world? Do they exist in this country or this neighbourhood?
  - What could we do to change this situation?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - When one human right is violated, how does that affect other rights? Can you think of any examples from the presentations?
  - When one right is protected and promoted, how does that affect other rights? Can you think of any examples from the presentations?
  - Can you think of how the right to education might affect the right to rest and leisure?
  - Why do we need *all* our human rights?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Sailing to a New Land' also deals with the interdependence of rights. 'A Body of Knowledge' asks children to consider the consequences of not having access to sources of learning.

## Ideas for action

The activity 'A Constitution for Our Group' engages children in improving the rights environment in their group. Having a group constitution can help to illustrate the different effects of rights' cascades' in real life.

## Tips for the facilitator

The effectiveness of this activity depends greatly on the kind of examples you offer the children. Adapt or develop new cases that relate to the children's experience and concerns, and use issues they may face in their lives or communities. Examples might address general human rights or particular rights. For example, you could develop cases which all address social and economic rights, or specific themes such as education / schooling, leisure, gender equality or the environment. Try to include both positive scenarios (e.g. What if men and women earned the same amount of money? What if everyone in our town reduced their rubbish by half through recycling?) as well as negative scenarios (e.g. What if only boys could go to school? What if every adult in our town each had their own car?).

Be prepared to give some real-life examples to illustrate the cases. These may be current or historical, for example, women being unable to own property or attend school; boys and girls forced into military service.

## Variations

Give the same card to several groups or all groups of children. Compare the different effects they come up with.

To save time, omit the drama presentations or present them in mime or as a 'tableau' or 'frozen poses'.

Instead of giving scenarios to the children, try to come up with them together, list them all, and divide the group according to the cases they would like to work on.

## Adaptations

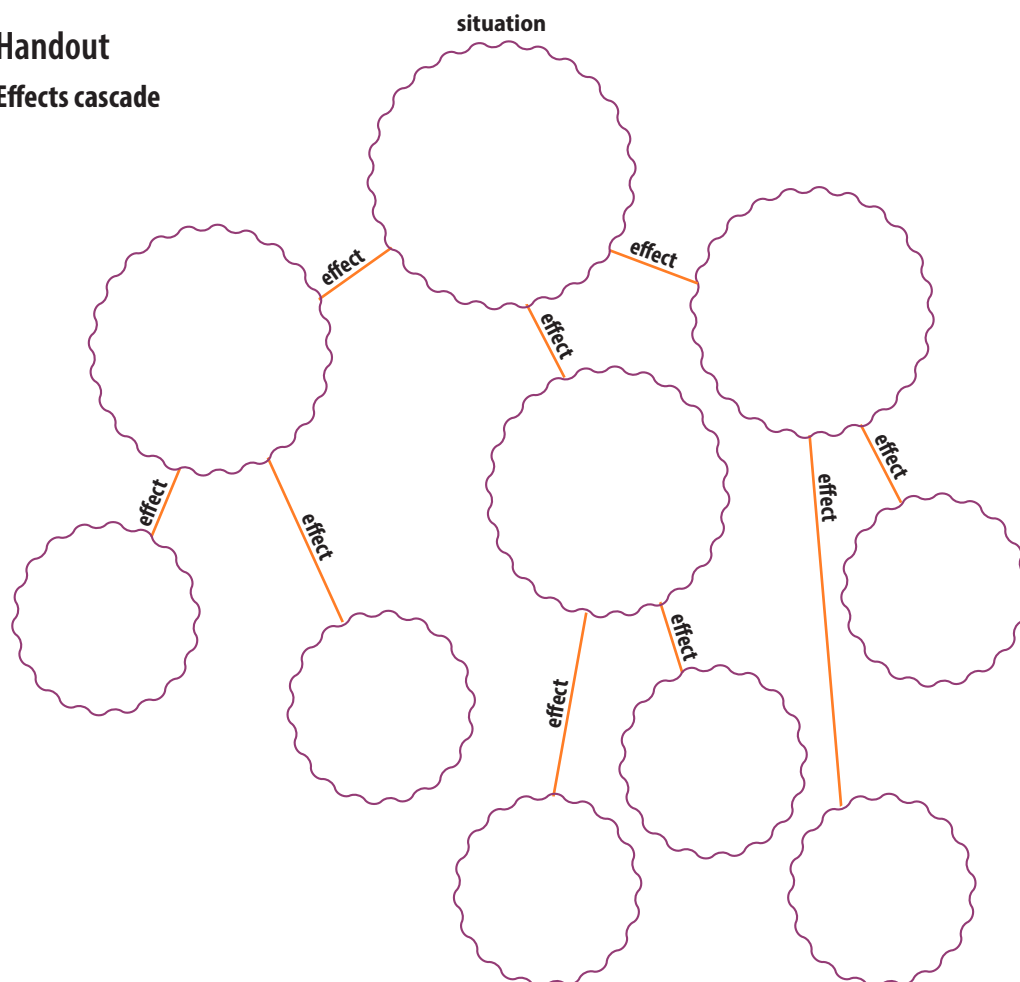
For younger children: omit the Effects Cascade and go straight to the presentations. Younger children may have difficulty grasping the interdependence of rights, so you could put emphasis instead on the importance of enjoying all our rights. You could also select one or two examples with the group, complete the effects cascade as a whole group, and then divide the children up to prepare the presentations.

For older children: ask them to relate their presentation to specific articles of the UDHR and/ or CRC. You can use the CRC cards.



## Handout

### Effects cascade





## Handout

### Cards for groups

Below are some scenarios you can use. Choose the ones most relevant to your group or create new ones. Include both positive and negative examples.

#### Scenario 1

The government has decided to close all the schools. From tomorrow, children can all do what they want, instead of going to school.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 2

The government has decided to close down all hospitals in order to save money. There will be no more doctors or pharmacies. Instead, books on herbal remedies will be offered at a low price.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?



#### Scenario 3

The government has decided that it is forbidden to play on the street, in the parks, in schools or anywhere else where people can see. All toyshops will also be closed, and nobody will be allowed to sell toys.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 4

The government has decided that from tomorrow, only girls can go to school and play in their free time. All boys have to start working in the factory.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 5

The government has decided that from tomorrow, nobody can be seen in the presence of more than two people. All gatherings of groups of more than two people are forbidden. Anyone disobeying this law will be punished by imprisonment.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 6

The government has decided to establish a Youth Council to advise the County Council on matters that concern children. Every school in the community can elect two representatives to serve on this council.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 7

The government has decided that, in order to promote international understanding, every child should have the opportunity to visit another country in Europe before they reach 13.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 8

The government has decided that children with disabilities should be encouraged to participate in the community as much as possible. Barriers to participation should be removed, and the children should be given whatever assistance they need, for example, wheelchairs, hearing aids, books in Braille and computers. As far as possible, children with disabilities should be in school together with all other children.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 9

The government has decided that from tomorrow onwards, every child that fails one test will be removed from the school. Only children who never fail a test are allowed to continue studying.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

#### Scenario 10

The government has decided that from next week only local fresh products will be served in the school canteen, that candies and soft drinks which contain sugar will be banned and that meat will be served only on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

What immediate effects would this have?

What will be the effects in the future?

# What is in my Bag?

*My dignity and dreams!*



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Migration



Discrimination



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Group discussion, drawing, writing

## Overview

Children discuss what they would pack in their bags if they had to leave their home suddenly because of an emergency.

## Objectives

- To promote empathy and solidarity with people who are suddenly forced to flee their homes
- To improve knowledge and understanding of refugees and migrants and their rights
- To discuss ideas to promote human rights, especially for child refugees and migrants

## Preparation

Prepare some key information on refugees and migrants in your country (see also the section on Migration).

## Materials

- Flipchart or board with a large drawing of a bag
- A picture or drawing of an empty bag for each small group
- Markers

## Instructions

1. Ask the children for all the reasons they can think of that force people to leave their home suddenly (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, floods, war). List all the reasons on a flipchart or board.
2. Divide the children into groups of three or four and give them a copy of the drawing of an empty bag and markers. Tell them that in their groups, they should imagine that an emergency has forced them to leave their homes with their families. They have very little time to pack a bag. Ask them: "What will you bring with you?"
3. Give them some time to discuss this in groups, and to write or draw all the items they wish to take with them inside the outline of the bag.
4. When the groups have finished, ask them to present their bags to the rest of the group. While they are presenting, record all the items in your flipchart 'bag' – but do not repeat items if they are mentioned by more than one group.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How did you find the activity?
  - Was it difficult to decide what to put in your bag? Why? Did you have to leave anything behind that you really wanted to take?

- Are you surprised by any of the things that others put in their bags? Why?
  - Do you think something like this could happen in real life? Can you give any examples, either in this country or in the world?
2. Relate the activity to issues of migration and discrimination, asking questions such as these:
- Have you heard about child refugees? Do you know why they might have left their homes?
  - If you had to leave your home and country, where would you go? Why?
  - Do you think that the rights of child migrants and refugees are respected in our country? Do children's rights apply to them in the same way as with the other children?
  - What do you think we could do to support them better? Could we do anything in our city or in our school?

## Suggestions and follow up

'Modern Fairy Tale' can be used to explore some of the reasons for migration.

## Ideas for action

Invite some refugees to meet your group of children and explain their story. You could ask them to talk about what is in their bag. They could take pictures of themselves with their bags and possessions, and you could make an exhibition for others in the community.

Support the children in carrying out some research into "famous" refugees, and do a small campaign in the school or in the wider community.

## Tips for the facilitator

Some of your children may themselves be refugees or migrants with difficult stories. Be very careful not to trigger sensitive memories. Talk to them beforehand about the activity, if necessary.

When you explain the activity, tell them that they will be leaving with their families, so they are not alone! You might want to discuss in the debriefing the case of unaccompanied child migrants and refugees, if appropriate for the age and make-up of the group.

Remind the children not to judge the decisions that other children make about what they will bring. Something can be important for one person, and not important for another.

For younger children, you could ask them just to draw and not to write what they will bring. It might take more time.

## Adaptation

Instead of doing the activity in groups, you could ask them first to do the task individually, and then to share in the group as a whole.

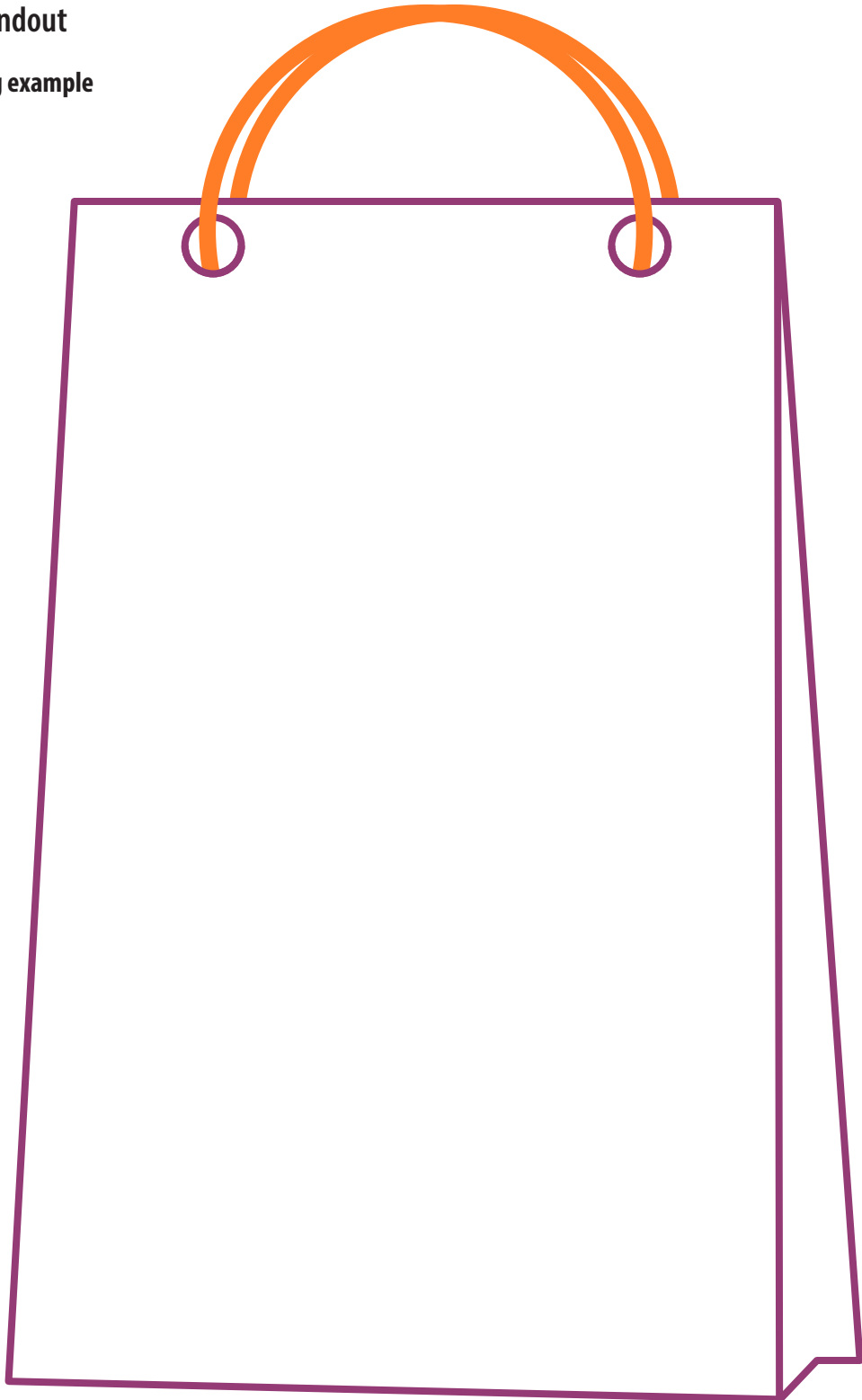
This activity was inspired by a campaign organised by the International Rescue Committee – 'What's in my bag?' <https://medium.com/uprooted/what-s-in-my-bag-758d435f6e62>





## Handout

### Bag example



# Where Do You Stand?

*Vote with your feet!*



Complexity



8-13 years



30 - 40 minutes



4-30



Democratic  
Citizenship



Participation



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Discussion, with some movement

## Overview

Children take a physical position in the room in response to a statement and then explain and justify their opinions.

## Objectives

- To deepen understanding of participation
- To develop listening skills
- To develop discussion and argumentation skills

## Preparation

- Divide the room into two sections and put up signs AGREE and DISAGREE at either end. Use string or chalk to mark the line halfway between the two signs.
- Optional: write the discussion statements on a flipchart, each on a separate page, and place them on the line down the middle of the room.

## Materials

- Flipchart or board and pens
- String or chalk
- Paper and markers
- Copy of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

## Instructions

1. Tell the children that you are interested in their opinions on some important questions. Explain that you will read a statement, and everyone has to decide whether they agree or disagree with it, and then stand in the part of the room with the relevant sign. The aim of the activity is for them to express their point of view and to try to convince other children to change their opinion and position.
  - No-one should speak until everyone has taken a position.
  - The more strongly you agree or disagree with the statement, the further away from the centre you should stand.
  - No-one can stay on the middle line, but if you cannot decide, or feel confused about a question, you can stay near the middle, on either side of the line.
2. Show the children the first statement and/or read it aloud. Then ask them to decide on whether they agree or disagree and take a position.
3. Wait until everyone has taken a position. Then ask individuals from both sides why they stood where they did. Allow them to explain and discuss their views. Encourage a few different children to express their opinion.

4. After a few minutes, ask any children who have changed their mind as a result of the discussion to move closer towards the sign that best represents their opinion. If several children change positions, ask them which arguments made them change their minds.
5. Continue this process for all the statements.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - How did you feel doing this activity?
  - Was it difficult to take a position on some of the statements? Which ones?
  - Did you ever alter your position? What made you do so?
  - Are there any statements you are still uncertain about?
  - Would you like to discuss any of these issues further?
  - Did you learn anything new from this activity? If so, what?
2. Relate the activity to the right to participation by asking questions such as these:
  - Are your opinions and ideas taken into account in decision-making at home? What about at school? What about in your community?
  - Point out that every child has the right to participation and read out Article 12 of the CRC.
  - Why do you think the right to participation is important for children?
  - Are there any areas of your life where you would like to have more of a say? Is there anything you can do to change this?

## Suggestions for follow-up

At the end of the discussion, divide the children into groups of three or four and give each group copies of the statements used in the activity. Ask each group to reformulate the statements in a way that they all can agree upon. Compare their revised statements.

The activities 'A Constitution for Our Group' and 'Every Vote Counts' explore further the idea of active participation in democratic processes.

## Ideas for action

Encourage the children to find ways of participating, for example, voicing any concerns at the school or in their peer groups, or writing letters to local political figures on issues in the community that concern them.

Ask the children to write short articles about participation in their lives (e.g. in the family, in clubs, at school, in the community). Publish these articles as a group newspaper. Print it out and display it for others or post the articles online as a newsletter, blog or social media page. Ensure you have parent or guardian permission before publishing children's work online.

## Tips for the facilitator

Make sure that all the children, even the quieter ones, have a chance to express their opinion – you may want to call on them directly. You could use a fake microphone to improve discussion and communication.

Discussion time on each statement should be limited so that the activity does not become too long. Use fewer statements, if necessary, or ask for only one or two opinions on some of the statements.

Simplify the statements, if necessary, so they are appropriate for your children.

To keep the children alert, encourage stretching or do a quick energiser between questions.

You may want to create a mock TV show with special jingles, fake microphones, a clock for keeping the time, a bell for the changing statements, and/or a poster of clapping. Children like it when activities are played as a game, and will take the challenge in a more committed way.

The human rights themes can be adapted according to the statements and the questions you want to focus on in the debriefing.

## Adaptations

### For older children:

Use four corners to incorporate more gradations of opinion (e.g. Completely Agree, Mostly Agree, Mostly Disagree, Completely Disagree).

## Variations

Simplify the statements or make them relevant to the children's local context.

Develop statements on other children's rights themes (e.g. rights to association, equality, information, environment, Family and Alternative Care).

## Sample statements

All children, even the youngest, have the right to express their opinion on matters affecting them.

---

Parents know what is best for children. Children have no right to make decisions concerning the family.

---

It can be dangerous for children to express their views on school issues.

---

Only older children should be able to take decisions relevant to their lives.

---

Every child has an equal right to participate in the school parliament / student council.

---

Children who misbehave lose their right to decide about issues relevant to their life.

---

To participate at school means to talk a lot in class.

---

If a child's parents are separating or divorcing, the children should have the right to express their views during the legal process.

---

Children should be consulted on questions that impact the environment and nature.

---

All children in school should be consulted about when school should start and when the holidays should start.

# Who Should Decide?

*When are we “old enough”?*



Complexity



7-13 years



45 minutes



4-30



Family and  
Alternative Care



Participation



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Decision-making, small group discussion

## Overview

Children respond to questions about who in the family should decide on different issues. After each question, the children position themselves next to a poster to show their response.

## Objectives

- To reflect on decision-making processes in families
- To discuss child participation in family life
- To introduce the concept of evolving capacities

## Preparation

- Prepare questions to read out: modify those at the end of the activity, if necessary.
- Make 3 signs: Children Only, Children and Adults, Adults Only.

## Instructions

1. Explain that this activity is about making decisions. Ask the group to reflect on what they ate for breakfast and ask them to discuss, with the person sitting next to them, who decided what they would eat. Was it them? Was it someone else's decision? Was it a joint decision made by themselves and an adult in the family (a parent, guardian or older sibling)?
2. Put the three signs up around the room, with space around each one for a group of children to stand. Explain that you will read out a list of decisions, and after each decision, you will ask the group to think about who ought to make the decision. Tell the children that if they think that adults should make the decision, they go to the Adults Only sign. If they think the child should make the decision, they go to the Children Only poster, and if they think that the child and adults should make the decision together, then they should go to the Children and Adults sign.
3. Read out the questions one by one, and after each question wait until everyone in the group has chosen a position next to a sign. After each question, encourage the children to look around at the responses from the rest of the group. Some children will probably want to make comments but try to discourage discussion at this point: tell them there will be an opportunity to discuss their views afterwards.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy this activity?
  - Was it difficult to respond to some of the questions? Why?
  - Which questions were easier to respond to and which ones were more difficult? Why?

- Why do you think some people had different responses?
  - Is there a right answer or a wrong answer to the questions?
  - Does the age of child make a difference to the role they should have in making decisions concerning themselves? Why or why not?
2. Introduce the concept of ‘evolving capacities’ and explain that it means that children are expected to be given more decision-making opportunities and more responsibility in personal matters as they mature. For older children, you can refer specifically to Article 5 and Article 14 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and discuss this concept further. Ask questions about the children’s own role in decision-making, such as these:
- Are you involved in making decisions in your family? If so, which decisions?
  - Are there some areas where you are the only person taking the decision? Which decisions?
  - Are there some areas where you need help and guidance from adults in order to make decisions? Which decisions?
  - Is it important for you to take decisions at home and in your family? Why or why not?
  - How could you play a greater role in decision-making at home?
3. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
- Why do you think that taking part in decisions which concern you is a children’s right?
  - Apart from in your family, where else are decisions made which impact you?
  - Who else makes decisions about children’s lives, apart from children themselves and parents?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity ‘A Constitution for Our Group’ also involves children in decision-making and negotiation.

## Ideas for action

Ask each person in the group to develop a strategy with the adults in their family, identifying ways in which each member of the family can be more actively involved in family life.

Invite parents to speak to the group about their views on children’s participation in family life, including how the child’s role in making decisions changes as they grow and develop.

## Tips for the facilitator

You may like running the activity ‘We are Family’ as a start, before this one.

Some questions may be difficult for some of the children to answer; encourage them to choose the sign which seems like the best fit. You may need to adapt the questions for your group. You also do not have to use the different age levels: each question could be asked just once, using the age of the children taking part in the activity.

You should be aware of the family backgrounds of the children in the group you are working with. Some children may not live with a parent or parents, and may live with a guardian or foster parents. Check that the questions and the way you pose the questions do not raise sensitive issues for these children. For example, refer to “your adults” or “adults in your family” rather than “parents”.

## Adaptation

For a longer and more in-depth activity, ask the children to discuss their decisions after each set of questions.

For older children: ask them to identify which CRC rights the questions refer to. Ask which human rights protect the participation of children in family life? Ask why these rights are important?

You could broaden the scope of the questions by including decisions relating to school, youth clubs, community centres, or the local community. For example: *Who should design the school curriculum? Who should decide how the playground is set up? Who should decide on activities in youth clubs? Who should decide issues such as new cycle routes in the town, new shopping centres, etc.?* Create another poster as an option for children to go to when using such questions representing the organisation, community, school or institution in the question. Broadening the scope of the questions may also make it easier for children living in alternative family arrangements.

After each question, you could also ask the children who decides in reality. This may be useful for the debriefing.

Organise the same activity with parents, or with children together with their parents.



## Handout

### Questions to read out

<p>Who should decide whether you can stay at home on your own when your family goes shopping:</p> <p>At 5 years old? At 10 years old? At 15 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can live with both your parents after they have separated:</p> <p>At 4 years old? At 9 years old? At 17 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can join the army:</p> <p>At 6 years old? At 11 years old? At 16 years old?</p>
<p>Who should decide whether you should wear a raincoat when going out in the rain:</p> <p>At 3 years old? At 9 years old? At 14 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you should be a vegetarian or not:</p> <p>At 4 years old? At 8 years old? At 13 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can smoke cigarettes:</p> <p>At 6 years old? At 9 years old? At 15 years old?</p>
<p>Who should decide whether you can stay up until midnight:</p> <p>At 5 years old? At 9 years old? At 14 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can use the Internet without supervision:</p> <p>At 6 years old? At 10 years old? At 16 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can choose your own religion:</p> <p>At 5 years old? At 9 years old? At 13 years old?</p>
<p>Who should decide whether you can stop attending school:</p> <p>At 6 years old? At 10 years old? At 15 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can join a local club:</p> <p>At 5 years old? At 9 years old? At 17 years old?</p>	<p>Who should decide whether you can have your own mobile phone:</p> <p>At 4 years old? At 8 years old? At 14 years old?</p>
<p>Who should decide whether you should be put in foster care, if that is what you want:</p> <p>At 4 years old? At 10 years old? At 16 years old?</p>		



# Words that Wound

*Sticks and stones can break my bones, and words can also hurt me!*



Complexity



10-13 years



60 minutes



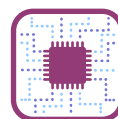
4-20



Discrimination



Violence



Digital Environment

## Type of activity

List-making, ranking, discussion

## Overview

Children consider examples of hurtful language or other online content, and assess its effects.

## Objectives

- To reflect on the causes and effects of hurtful language online (and offline)
- To understand how people may respond differently to online content
- To practise techniques for opposing hurtful language online

## Materials

- Post-its or slips of paper and sticky tape
- Flipchart paper or board and markers

## Instructions

1. Ask children if they have ever seen hurtful comments or images online. Explain that they should think about all online content, including videos, images, written comments, podcasts, etc. Take a few examples, and then hand out slips of paper to everyone.
2. Ask children to write down anything hurtful that they have seen online, including things that they might think are only slightly hurtful. For videos or images, they can write brief descriptions. Each comment or description should be written on a separate post-it or slip of paper. Give them some time to work on this individually and in silence.
3. Make a scale on the wall, such as the one below, making sure that children understand the differences between the categories. Ask the children to place their post-its or slips of paper where they think the content belongs on the scale. Encourage them not to talk during this part of the activity.

Playful	A bit hurtful	Painful	Very painful	Extremely upsetting and painful

4. When everyone has finished, ask the children to examine the wall silently. The same words will often appear several times, sometimes rated at different degrees of severity.
5. When the children are sitting down again, ask what they observed, guiding their analysis with questions such as these:
  - Did some words appear in more than one column? How do you explain this?
  - Why do you think that some people thought a word or expression was more hurtful than others did?
  - Were the hurtful comments addressed to people because of something they did or because they were perceived as “different”?

- Why do people say things like this online?
  - Do you think that hurting others in non-physical ways is a form of violence? Why or why not?
6. Ask the children if they can see any patterns among these hurtful words: can they group them according to the 'type' of person the insult is directed against? As children begin to identify and name these categories (e.g. relating to physical appearance, abilities, mental characteristics, sexuality, family or ethnic background), write down the categories on the board. Guide their analysis and prompt them to include other categories with questions such as these:
- Are some words only used against girls or only boys?
  - Are some words only used against children from different cultures?
  - Are some words only used against people with disabilities?
7. Ask the children to remove their post-its or slips of paper from the first chart and place them under the topic or category where they best fit. You may want to have one category labelled 'Other'. When the children are re-seated, ask questions such as these:
- What categories seem to have the greatest number of slips? How can you explain that?
  - Do the words considered most hurtful seem to fall into particular categories?
  - Do not answer aloud, but consider: do the words / expressions / jokes you use yourself fall into a particular category?

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
- What do you feel about this activity?
  - Has it made you look more carefully at the words and expressions you use (online and offline)?
  - Do people have a responsibility to stop hurtful speech?
  - Is there anything we can do to stop it, or to protect people who are hurt by it?
  - What can you do if you see hurtful speech online?
  - What can you do if you witness hurtful speech offline?
2. Relate the activity to children's rights by asking questions such as these:
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognises freedom of expression and access to information as fundamental children rights. Should there be limits to freedom of expression or should we be allowed to publicly say or post online anything we want about other people? Why?

## Suggestions for follow-up

Continue the discussion about what children can do to stop hurtful language online and offline. Role-play name-calling situations and let children experiment together with ways to respond.

The activity 'From Bystander to Helper' helps children to think about what they can do to intervene when others are treating someone badly.

## Ideas for action

Show children the No Hate Speech Movement campaign of the Council of Europe. This can be found at [www.nohatespeechmovement.org](http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org) and contains many ideas for addressing hate speech online. Although the campaign has formally ended, there are numerous ideas and resources on the website.

Use this activity to discuss how the children use language within this group. Are there some words that the group agrees should not be used?

If your group has already developed group rules, consider adding a clause regarding hurtful language.

## Tips for the facilitator

You can limit the examples children consider to online content, or you may also want to include offline forms of expression. You could also ask them to include text messages, including group messages. Your choice may depend on the age of your group, and the extent of their exposure to digital media.

The activity requires sensitive judgment on the part of the facilitator. Although children know 'bad words' from an early age, they seldom discuss them with adults. Steps 2 to 4 may evoke embarrassment or nervous laughter. The children may need your reassurance that in this context it is acceptable to bring these words out in public. You are not 'using' them but discussing them.

It is a good idea not to say the words aloud but keep them unspoken, in written form only, except in the debriefing Step 3, where children are determining whether a word is acceptable or not.

A central learning point of this activity is that the same words can have a very different impact, depending on the context and the people involved. A word that one child may consider playful may be perceived as very hurtful by another. Do not let the discussion undermine the feelings of a sensitive child, just because others think a word is innocuous. You may want to spend more time exploring the factors that could sensitise someone to certain words.

This activity is not recommended for groups of a wide age range. Be aware that some children will not know the meaning of some words, especially those related to sexuality. Young children may not understand that some words relate to sexual behaviour. Adapt this exercise carefully for your specific group.

The debriefing is essential for this activity. Give the children plenty of time to make their own categories and draw their own conclusions, otherwise the link to human rights will be tenuous at best. You could remind them of articles in the CRC which protect them from harm or abuse, for example, Articles 2, 13, 16 and 19. Article 13, which protects freedom of expression, is perhaps particularly worthy of note, as it explicitly states that freedom of expression can be restricted to protect "the rights or reputations of others".

Ensure you have contact numbers for support services for children who are experiencing online bullying.

## Adaptations

For younger children, you will probably want to focus the activity on hurtful speech offline. Conclude by reflecting with the group on how to prevent using words that hurt people, and perhaps by role-playing ways to respond to hurtful language. You could also ask the children to tell you the "bad words" by whispering them to you. In this way, you can collect the words for them and list them on the flipchart.

# World Summer Camp

*My favourite activity is choosing my favourites!*



Complexity



8-13 years



45 - 60 minutes



4-30



Discrimination



Poverty



Human Rights

## Type of activity

Prioritising, negotiation, discussion

## Overview

Children select people to share a tent with from a list of people with brief descriptions, and then discuss the assumptions on which they based their choices.

## Objectives

- To examine personal stereotypes and prejudices and consider their origin
- To promote equality and non-discrimination

## Preparation

- Create a list of 12 campers from the list, or create new ones suitable for your group. At least one should be from a non-existent place.
- Make copies of the activity sheet for each child, including the description of the camp, the assignment, and the 12 campers.
- Alternative: write the list on a flipchart or board.

## Materials

- A copy of the activity sheet and a pencil for each child
- Paper and markers for each group

## Instructions

### 1. Tell the children:

*You and children from all over the world have just arrived at World Summer Camp. Nobody knows anyone else. The leaders have decided that you can choose who you will share a tent with for the next two weeks. Each tent sleeps four children. You can choose three other campers to share the tent with you.*

2. Give each child a copy of the activity sheet and a pencil. Make sure that everyone understands the instructions. If it is helpful, read aloud the descriptions of the different campers.
3. Ask the children to work individually to select the three other campers that they would like to share a tent with. No-one should talk during this stage.
4. When everyone has finished making their selection, divide the children into groups of four. You can also have groups of three or five to accommodate the total size of your group. Explain the task:
  - There are four tents in your section of the camp. Each tent holds four people, so there should be 16 people in all, including yourselves and others from the list. With your group, you need to decide which campers will share each tent. You need to draw four tents on your piece of paper and write on each tent the names of the children who will sleep there. Then stick your paper on the board.
  - Note that if your group is five people and you all chose different people, you will have more than

16 people in total, so you will need to decide who to eliminate from the people you selected earlier. If your group is only three people, or if more than one of you chose the same person from the list, you will need to add more campers to make a total of 16 people.

5. Give the children time to look at the tent diagrams of other groups. Then read out the list of campers in order and find out which tent each person has been assigned to by the different groups. This will allow the children to see who else has chosen the same campers.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - Did you enjoy the activity? Was it difficult to select three children to share your tent? Why, or why not?
  - Were some children chosen more than once to share a tent? Why?
  - Were some children not chosen at all? Why?
  - Was it difficult to agree within your group?
  - Did you learn anything about yourself, or about anyone else?
2. Compare this activity with situations in real life:
  - Was this situation realistic?
  - Can you think of other situations where you have to choose between different people?
  - How does it feel to choose one person over another?
  - How does it feel – in real life – to be chosen? How does it feel not to be chosen?
  - What kinds of similar choices do you make in real life?
  - Do all children have the right to choose? To be chosen?
3. Discuss how we form ideas about others, even those we have never met:
  - How do you form ideas about people you have never met?
  - Do other people have stereotypes about you? How do you think they formed them?
  - What are the consequences of stereotypes?
  - If discrimination is one consequence of stereotypes, how do people get from stereotypes to discrimination?
  - The CRC states that no children can be discriminated against because of their 'race', colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, social or economic status, disability, birth, or any other quality of the children's parents or guardians. Would you say that, however, discrimination does happen in reality? If yes, what can we do to stop the discrimination of children in our community?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activity 'Dear Diary' contrasts different people's perceptions of the same day. The activities 'Blind-folded' and 'Picture Games' deal with stereotypes of different kinds.

## Ideas for action

The next time the group has to choose partners or teams, take the opportunity to remind the children of this exercise and what they learned about making selections.

## Tips for the facilitator

Be careful not to reinforce stereotypes in any way. That would defeat the purpose of this activity!

The ideal number of children for the small groups is four, with each child making a list of three campers. However, the activity can work for small groups of any size: they will just need to negotiate and add or eliminate campers to make 16 children in all.

Choose and/or adapt the list of campers carefully to shape the activity towards your desired learning outcomes. Be careful to ensure that no child in your group will identify with any of the campers.

If a summer camp or sharing a tent is not relevant for your children, choose another setting that involves close proximity (e.g. a shared school desk, a youth hostel or dormitory room).

Avoid answering questions about the list of campers. Explain that the children should decide on the basis of the list alone.

Some children may be unable to choose and say they don't care who they share the tent with. In that case, ask them who they do not wish to share the tent with. The results can still be compared among the children in the small group.

Some members of the group may decide to share a tent with each other and put the "foreign campers" in other tents. Do not intervene, as the results will be very revealing. Similarly, do not give the children the impression that it is bad to want to choose people like themselves. Not all choices relate to discrimination, and it is very common to feel safe with, and choose people who seem to be the same as we are.

## Adaptations

To shorten the activity: use smaller tents, so that each child must choose only one or two other campers. Reduce the total number of campers to choose from. Leave out the small group work in Step 3.

To facilitate small group decision-making, make a list of all the campers chosen by members of the group. Then each child in turn chooses one camper until all the campers have been divided.

Provide edited lists for different groups: for example, remove references to gender for one group but not for another; or remove references to country / nationality for one group but not another.

For younger children: use the suggestions above to shorten the activity. Adapt the descriptions of campers to match the experience of the younger children (e.g. a T-shirt with a skull on it may have no connotations for them).



## Handout

### Activity sheet

#### World summer camp

You and children from all over the world have just arrived at World Summer Camp. Nobody knows anyone else. The leaders have decided that you can choose who you will share a tent with for the next two weeks. Each tent sleeps four children. You can choose three other campers to share the tent with you.

#### World camp campers

Choose 3 children from this list that you would like to share the tent with!

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. A child with a broken leg and crutches
2. A Roma child from your own country
3. A child from Australia with red hair and lots of freckles
4. A Japanese child with hair dyed bright pink
5. An overweight child from the USA wearing dental braces
6. A shy child from Finland
7. An immigrant child from Zimbabwe
8. A blind child accompanied by a guide dog
9. A child with thick glasses and a spotty face
10. A child from the UK dressed in a school uniform
11. A child from Germany with a black eye, and wearing a T-shirt with a skull on it
12. A child from Peru dressed in traditional clothes
13. A deaf child who uses sign language to communicate
14. A child from Mongolia with very long black hair
15. A child from your school who is often bullied
16. A child from Palestine with only one arm
17. A child with blond hair who speaks all the time
18. A child who seems permanently to have hiccups
19. A child dressed in a jacket just like yours
20. A child who is always playing with their mobile phone
21. A child of parents from China with a guitar
22. A Jewish child who is afraid of the dark.

# Zabderfilio

*Nobody for one and one for all.*



Complexity



7-10 years



35 minutes



4-30



Human Rights



Discrimination

## Type of activity

Storytelling, reflective activity

## Overview

Children watch a puppet show about a made-up animal, and discuss the value of diversity.

## Objectives

- To discuss the concept of 'All Different – All Equal'
- To reflect on the meaning of tolerance and diversity
- To understand the principle of universality

## Preparation

- Practise the puppet show beforehand.
- Make a puppet to represent Zabderfilio – an animal with characteristics belonging to various different animals (or you can use the handout).

## Materials

- A puppet theatre or similar arrangement
- Different animal puppets, a hunter puppet, a presenter puppet, and a Zabderfilio puppet as described in the handout

## Instructions

1. Gather the children in front of the puppet theatre. Explain that they have to be quiet and stay in their seats when the puppet show is running. They should only speak when the characters ask them questions. The puppets are fragile so it's important that no-one touches them without permission.
2. Perform the puppet show. Ask the children questions regularly to make sure they are enjoying the show and so that they remain engaged with the learning objectives.

## Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as:
  - What happened during the story?
  - How do you feel about the story?
  - Which animal do you like the most? Which do you like least? Why?
  - Were the other animals fair towards Zabderfilio?
  - Why did they act as they did?
  - Why do you think that, in the end, the other animals became friends with Zabderfilio? (Was it because she was the strongest or best-looking, or something else?)



2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - Can you think of a time something like this is happened in real life? Do people treat others the way the animals first treated Zabderfilio? Can you give any examples?
  - Do people often behave like this?
  - Are we all the same or are we different? In which ways are we alike? In which ways are we different?
  - What can we do to avoid some children feeling like Zabderfilio did when no-one wanted to be his friend?
  - Do you know of any children's right that addresses situations like Zabderfilio's?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The children can perform this simple story with puppets themselves and put the show on for a different group of children. They could also make their own puppets and/or develop another story. Other stories in *Compasito* could also be turned into a puppet show (e.g. 'Modern Fairytale' and 'Once Upon a Time...').

## Ideas for action

Ask the children to think about what it would be like if a 'Zabderfilio' joined their group. Help them to develop an internal 'code of conduct' towards each other, incorporating the need to respect each individual, irrespective of their differences. Hang the Code of Conduct in your meeting space and refer to it whenever appropriate.

Use the story in different ways: for example, ask the children to draw it, or help them turn it into a short play to be performed by the children in front of parents or others in the community. Alternatively, help them make a small animation movie using the puppets.

## Tips for the facilitator

Instead of having a real puppet theatre, you can use a blanket to sit behind.

Use any animal puppets you have available. If you do not have the necessary puppets, make them using cut-out cardboard drawings. Simple colourful sock puppets are easy to make and are effective for younger children.

Adapt your Zabderfilio to suit your imagination. She might have the ears of a rabbit, the horn of a rhino, the nose and whiskers of a mouse, the mane of a lion, the pouch of a kangaroo or any other combination that fits your story. Whatever her characteristics, she needs to look weird and have at least a conspicuous nose, a loud voice and the ability to move silently. You can also adapt the story to fit a puppet you might have.

With larger groups, have a second facilitator to help with the questions and answers between the group and the puppets.

For younger children, make the debriefing shorter and more focused on how it feels to be excluded, and what it is like when someone is new to a group.

## Puppet show

### Scenario

#### Introduction: (made by a 'presenter puppet' who is not part of the story)

**Presenter Puppet:** Hello dear friends! Hello theatre lovers! I'm happy to see that everybody is ready to listen and watch today's special show!

Well, I can tell you already a little bit of the mystery of today. It all takes place in the world of the animals. And in that world, just like ours, not everything is beautiful and not everything is ugly, not everything is normal and not everything is weird. But – there are always surprises!

And this story is about one of these surprises. It is the story of a very special animal called Zabderfilio. Watch and listen carefully. Please stay where you are, otherwise the animals might run away and we will never know what happens at the end of the story. See you later!

### The story

**Summary:** Zabderfilio meets different animals, one after another. Each of the animals considers Zabderfilio a very strange animal. Zabderfilio is looking for friends, but none of the animals want to be her friend because she is ... just weird! Below is an example of one of his encounters:

**Giraffe:** (*Comes onto the stage and talks to the children*) Hello, everybody. Do you know who I am? (*Audience: You're a giraffe.*)

**Giraffe:** How do you know? Am I wearing a nametag somewhere? (*Audience: Because of your long neck, your colours...*)

**Giraffe:** Yes, you are right! I have the longest neck of all the animals in the world! I can see a very long way, and I can eat from high trees without any great effort!

(*Zabderfilio comes on stage*)

**Zabderfilio:** (*Very friendly and eager*) Hello!

**Giraffe:** WOEEEEHAAA ... you scared me there for a second, sneaking up on me like that. But wait a minute, who are you?

**Zabderfilio:** I am Zabderfilio.

**Giraffe:** Zabberdabberdilooooo-what??

**Zabderfilio:** My name is Zabderfilio and I'm looking for friends. Do you want to be my friend?

**Giraffe:** Er, um... I don't know. You look very strange to me! You are not a mouse, not a lion, not a kangaroo, but you look like all of them. All my friends are one thing or the other and not a mix like you! Excuse me, but I have to go see my friends! Tee hee hee, you are really strange and ugly!

**Zabderfilio:** (*With hurt feelings*) But, but – wait a second ...

(*Giraffe has already disappeared and Zabderfilio talks now to the audience.*)

**Zabderfilio:** This makes me sad. Why didn't Giraffe want to be my friend? Well, let me walk a little bit longer in the forest and see if I meet any other animals to play with.

None of the animals Zabderfilio meets wants to be her friend. After several encounters, a hunter comes on stage. He is hunting animals. Every time one of the animals comes on stage, the hunter tries to grab it, but they all run away, screaming for help.

Then the hunter disappears, off to look in the forest for the animals. Zabderfilio reappears. She asks the audience what all this noise was about.

After the audience explains what has happened, Zabderfilio uses her mouse-nose to sniff out the hunter ('Aha, with my keen nose I can smell a hunter nearby!'), her cat-feet to walk without any noise ('I think I can use my cat-feet to sneak up on him!') and her lion-scream to scare the hunter away ('And now I'm going to use my huge voice to roar like a lion and frighten him away. ROAR!').

After this heroic deed, the other animals come closer and apologise for their nasty behaviour. They all ask her to be their friend, and Zabderfilio gladly accepts. All the animals say goodbye to the audience and the 'presenting-puppet' appears to make the final comments.

## Conclusion

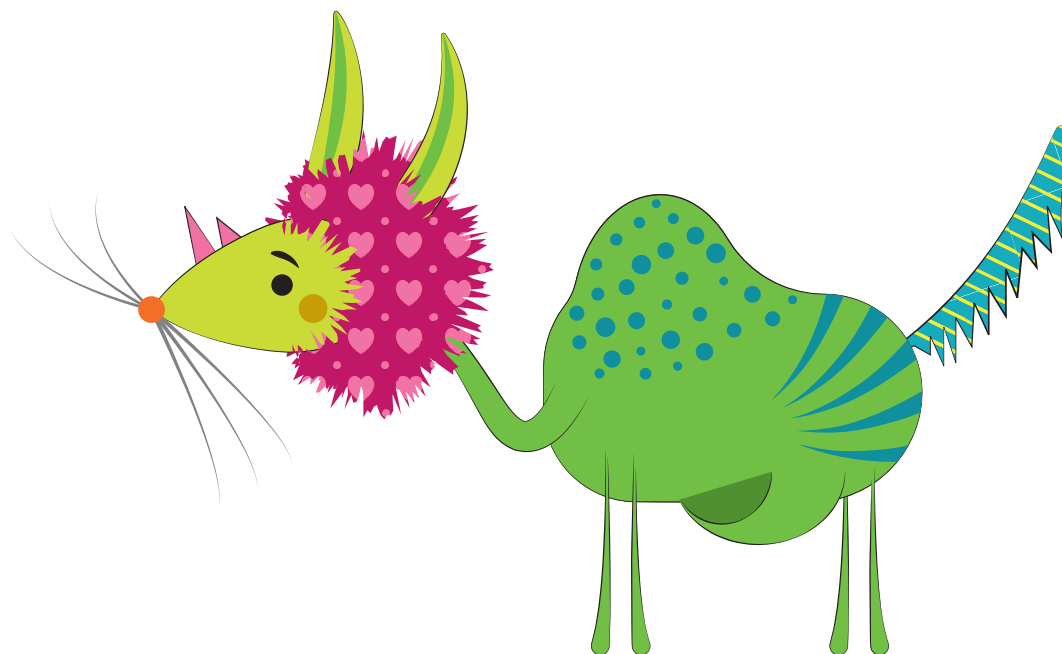
**Presenter Puppet:** Well, dear friends! That was the story of Zabderfilio. Did you enjoy it?

She certainly was a funny looking beast! But she was able to help her friends because she had so many different useful qualities. Next time you see someone who looks a little unusual, I hope you think of Zabderfilio. That person may have talents you never dreamed of and make a wonderful friend.



## Handout

### Sample Zabderfilio



## Chapter 5

# BACKGROUND / HUMAN RIGHTS THEMES

“ [The adults] didn't really have to face all these problems and issues that we have to face now because in their childhood they didn't have to think about these consequences.

*Raina Ivanova, Climate Activist*



## Democratic Citizenship

### What is democracy?

A society is considered “democratic” if it is founded on the principles of a sovereign citizenship, transparent decision making and accountable government. Although these ideals are difficult to achieve fully, they set a standard for democracy in contemporary Europe and around the world.


The word democracy comes from the Greek words *demos*, meaning “people” and *kratos*, meaning “power”. Accordingly, democracy is often defined as “the rule of the people”: a system of making rules determined by the people who are to obey those rules. Most people consider democracy to be the only system of government which is both stable and fair. Democracy rests on two fundamental principles:

### Related activities

A Constitution for Our Group  
Every Vote Counts  
Once Upon a Time  
Our flag  
Putting Rights on the Map  
Waterdrops  
Where Do You Stand?


- the principle of *individual autonomy*: that no-one should be subject to rules that have been imposed by others
- the principle of *equality*: that everyone should have the same opportunity to influence the decisions that affect people in society.

Other forms of government violate both of these principles. In an oligarchy, for example, power is held and decisions are taken by a small, privileged group, perhaps distinguished by wealth, family association, or military prowess. In a plutocracy, government is by the wealthy, and in a dictatorship by a single all-powerful individual. In these forms of government, neither individual autonomy nor equality is respected.

 What are the advantages of a democratic style of government?  
Are there any disadvantages?

Democracy takes many forms. For example, in direct democracy citizens personally participate in decision making. The most widespread form of democracy, however, is representative democracy, in which citizens elect representatives who create laws and policies and appoint the government officials. But citizens also take other actions to influence decisions, for example, they can protest to show their disagreement with bills, new policy proposals or other decisions. In theory, representative democracy involves the free and fair election of a parliament, elected and supported by a majority of the people being represented. Democracy is characterised by the rule of law, separation of powers, protection of human rights and protection of minorities. "Rule of law" is the principle that the government and legal system function only in accordance with written rules. Under a democratic government, human rights provide a common value system. Among other things, this means that under-represented social groups of any kind, such as children, women, migrants, religious or ethnic minorities, are protected from discrimination, and their identity and participation are supported.

The term democracy signifies a particular type of society as well as a particular form of government. A democratic society provides the fairest and most practical method of governance, with the greatest respect for equality, and with the majority of people playing an active rather than a passive role. Democracy is closely linked to the moral imperative to protect and promote the human rights of every individual, no matter with which group or community they self-identify. Because a democratic society obtains its legitimacy from the people, decisions taken by democratically elected representatives are also more likely to be respected by the people.

 Apart from voting, are there other opportunities for people to be involved in decision making in your country, region or community?

## Democracy in practice

In practice, every democracy has a different form and no single system should necessarily be considered a model for others. Democratic governments take several forms, including presidential (as in France, the Russian Federation or the United States of America) or parliamentary (as in the United Kingdom, Slovak Republic or Spain). Some democracies, such as Germany, have federal structures. Some voting systems are proportional, while others are majoritarian. However, common to all democratic systems are the principles of equality, and the right of every individual to some degree of personal autonomy.

Personal autonomy does not mean that everyone can do whatever she or he likes. Rather, it consists in the idea that the electoral system allocates an equal vote to each citizen and recognises that each individual is capable of independent choice and entitled to have that choice taken into account. After that, a great deal depends on the initiative and participation of individual citizens.

Democracies differ greatly in the degree to which they respect equality and allow their citizens to influence decisions. People who live in poverty often have a weaker voice. Women, who are less visible in the public arena, often have fewer opportunities to influence decisions, even those concerning women specifically. Certain social groups, such as children and refugees, are not normally allowed to vote.


 To what extent can children feel 'ownership' of laws and government decisions that affect them?

## Democratic citizenship

Democratic citizenship refers to the exercise of membership and participation in a democracy, be it the local community, the region, the canton or the federal state, the nation or a supranational organisation such as the European Union (or all of them!). Being a citizen is an everyday experience. At the state level, it means that the citizen's civil and political rights are protected by law, and people have reciprocal duties to the state – including obeying the laws of the country, contributing to common expenses, and defending the country if it is attacked.

In a legal sense, a citizen is the inhabitant or national of a state with civil and political rights and reciprocal duties. Citizenship partly coincides and partly differs from national or ethnic identification, and most European states are composed of several nationalities. People of the same nationality may even live in neighbouring states. While the state is a political and geopolitical entity, the nation is a cultural and/or an ethnic construction. Traditionally, citizenship is a relationship with a state, not dependent on nationality.

Citizenship today has acquired a meaning consisting of various interrelated and complementary ideas that go beyond a simple legal relationship between people and state. It is understood to have not only a legal dimension but also a psychological and social dimension. Being a citizen is part of our identity: we care for our community because it is *our* community, and we expect others to care for it and to strive for the common good. Perhaps most important is to be aware that an increasing number of people, including children, are formally or emotionally connected to more than one national citizenship, as in the case of people with more than one nationality. It is thus possible to exercise democratic citizenship even if one is a foreigner or does not have the right to vote. We can also be "global" or "world citizens" when we act for the good of humanity and the planet regardless of our nationalities or formal citizenships (and certainly also if we are stateless!). In this broader sense, citizenship is largely a process of socialisation. It involves feelings of identity, belonging, inclusion, participation and social commitment.

 Apart from voting in elections, which forms of involvement or participation are possible for ordinary citizens?

Three other concepts are also often referred to, especially in the international youth work scene. They are fluid concepts, yet they are useful to illustrate the evaluation of the idea of citizenship as going beyond the bonds between a state and a citizen.

*European citizenship* refers to the idea that citizens of states belonging to the European Union (EU) also have some rights and duties relating to the Union as a whole, in addition to their own states. Such rights include freedom of movement, the right of residence within the territory of the member states and the right to vote and stand as a candidate at elections for the European Parliament. European citizenship is not in confrontation with, or intended as an alternative to national state citizenship, but rather as an additional or complementary layer of citizenship and belonging.

*Global citizenship* is a recent concept, and one which emerged from the idea that we have global rights and responsibilities – not least, to earth itself and to humanity! Global citizenship is about understanding the need to tackle injustice and inequality on a global scale, and about actively trying to do so. It includes environmental concerns and recognises the impact that ecological disasters and climate breakdown can have on human lives.

*Digital citizenship* is used to describe the community of individuals online, and the corresponding rights and responsibilities. These rights and responsibilities may relate to any of the numerous communities with which an individual is affiliated – including the community of Internet users. See the chapter ‘Digital World’ for more details.



What is your understanding of citizenship? Do you think that certain people in your country should not be entitled to citizenship rights?

## Challenges

Citizenship is a fluid and sometimes contested notion because traditions and approaches to citizenship vary across history and across Europe, according to different countries’ histories, societies, cultures and ideologies. All these different ideas about citizenship live together in a fruitful – but also troublesome – tension that has economic, social and political implications. Narrow understandings of citizenship also serve to exclude people (the “non-citizens”).

In Europe today, various social phenomena challenge concepts of active citizenship. In some regions, ethnic conflict and aggressive nationalism prevent inclusive notions of citizenship from taking root. Across the continent inflammatory discourses against “newcomers” call to exclusive – and racist – interpretations of citizenship. The emergence of new collective identities, or identities formerly suppressed and now demanding recognition, together with demands for increasing personal autonomy and new interpretations of ‘equality’ all pose challenges for established notions of citizenship. The weakening of social cohesion and solidarity among people, especially among generations, and mistrust of traditional political institutions require continuous rethinking and make education for democratic citizenship essential in order to favour inclusive notions of citizenship.

The Council of Europe member states, under the European Convention on Human Rights, are obliged to ensure the human rights and freedoms of everyone who is physically present in their territory without discrimination on any ground including citizenship, residency or immigration status. Similarly, the CRC incorporates the full range of human rights without discrimination of any kind, and thus recognises the state’s obligation to promote and protect the rights of each and every child present in their territory, regardless of their citizenship or nationality.

## Children as citizens

Although children are legally citizens by birth or naturalisation, they are often neither recognised nor treated as citizens. “They tend to be either ignored as citizens or regarded in an adult-centric fashion as citizens of the future rather than of the present.”<sup>1</sup> Brian Howe identifies two main reasons for this



attitude: children's economic dependency and psychological immaturity. He points out that other economically dependent groups, such as stay-at-home parents, retired people, or adults with disabilities, are not denied citizenship. He concludes that children have a right to citizenship as "citizenship is about inclusion, not economic independence".

With the adoption of the CRC, children were explicitly recognised as subjects with rights for the first time in history. This means that children exercise their rights, in accordance with their evolving capacities and with support from their parents and care-givers, and they can claim the violation of their rights in front of competent bodies. This also applies to their responsibilities as citizens; like adults, children must respect the rights of others and must obey the law, but their level of responsibility and of accountability is appropriate to their age. The CRC declared children's civil and political rights to be exercised in accordance with their age and maturity. Children may indeed lack the cognitive development, maturity and self-control of most adults. However, development is an on-going, lifelong process, and the cognitive development of children is accelerated when they are treated with respect and provided with age-appropriate opportunities to participate as citizens. Children are tomorrow's voters and decision makers but the citizens of today.



Should children be treated as citizens in the same way as adults? Or are they just "pre-citizens" or citizens-to-be?

The CRC recognises children's needs and corresponding rights in three particular spheres:

- Rights to *protection* – for example, from abuse, neglect, economic and sexual exploitation
- Rights to *provision* of services – for example, health care, social security, the means to an adequate standard of living
- Rights to *participation* in all decisions affecting them.

The CRC stipulates that these rights are to be exercised in accordance with the evolving capacities of the child, and this also applies to their *responsibilities* as citizens.



In which ways can children exercise democratic citizenship in your community?

## Democracy works – if citizens are active

A democratic society is more than a democratically elected government and a system of institutions. Strong and independent local authorities, a mature and active civil society at national and local levels, and a democratic ethos in workplaces and schools are also key indicators of a healthy democratic society. Democracy should be seen as a practical process that needs to be nurtured every day and everywhere.

Democracy is able to function more effectively and serve the interests of its citizens better if people continuously monitor the government's actions, exert pressure, and formulate their own demands. In modern societies, non-governmental organisations and the media often serve as key channels for citizens' control. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can advocate, educate and mobilise attention around major public issues and monitor the conduct of government or other governing bodies. Through NGOs, as well as through other grassroots or community associations, citizens including children can be the driving force and the principal agents of change for a more democratic world.


The media have a very powerful role to play in democracies, communicating the news and opinions of various social actors and serving as a watchdog on behalf of citizens. In recent years, the role of social media and the appearance of “citizen journalists” and fake news engines have transformed the way that news is reported, and the way that it is received by the public.

### How healthy are our democracies?

The health of democracy today is increasingly under question. In many European democracies, political discontent and scepticism are widespread, and many people believe that the political elite pay only lip service to “the will of the people”, and instead pursue their own interests. Concerns about the state of democracy are often based on levels of participation in elections, which has been declining across Europe – and across the world – in recent years. The turnout of young people at elections has traditionally been lower than for older generations, and this difference appears to be increasing. The general trend appears to be for young people to be increasingly removed from traditional democratic structures and institutions, such as political parties, trade unions or formal youth organisations. One way to tackle this issue, is to lower the voting age. For example, Austria and Malta allow voting at all political levels from the age of 16; Greece from the age of 17.

These are potentially serious problems, but there are other studies which indicate that young people engage in politics in more diverse ways than merely voting. The Internet and the possibilities it created for global communication and campaigns gave life to new forms of civic participation and young people can now mobilise quickly around issues using the power of social media, online petitions and other forms of digital communication.

Political opinion and participation should not be seen purely in party political and electoral terms: it is often expressed through arts and sport, through environmental protest, consumer boycotts, or creative forms of campaigning such as turning banks into temporary ‘hospitals’ or ‘libraries’. Participation is a sign of a healthy democracy, that often starts at the local level.

 How do the Internet and digital media influence democratic citizenship and the participation of children and young people?


### Check whether the place where you live is a democracy

- People are the ones to decide on things that are important to them.
- In most cases, people do not make decisions directly, but they vote to elect the people who will represent them and their ideas at the moment of decision making.
- The elected people take action for the benefit of all the people and do not take action in their own interest. So they need to clarify the reasons for their actions, and they are also responsible for them.
- People can take other actions - apart from voting- to influence decisions; for example, people can demonstrate if there are things they do not agree with, or take part in associations.
- In a country, the constitution<sup>2</sup> and other laws reflect the agreement among citizens - the people of the country - on the rules and principles to be followed.
- The decisions are taken according to what the majority of the citizens think, but the opinion of the minority is also taken into consideration and minority groups are protected.

## How and why should democracy be learned by children?

For democracy to continue to thrive, children must learn to value it as a way of life. The necessary skills for building democracy do not develop automatically in children. For that reason, developing democratic skills and a deep appreciation and understanding of democracy should be an important part of education from the earliest age possible. Educators play an important role in this process. They need to believe that democracy and democratic ways of life are possible both in society as a whole, and in children's environments. Educators can help children understand that no democracy and no government is perfect, and that ideology must never be left unquestioned. In a healthy democracy, citizens question the motives of their leaders and monitor their activities. For this, educators also need to be able to apply democratic participation to their activities.

Education for democracy is education about an inclusive society which recognises all members as equal, and equally worthy – regardless of their situation or status. Education for democracy is about encouraging and developing curiosity, discussion, critical thinking, and the capacity for constructive criticism. Children should learn about taking responsibility for their actions. If key concepts of democracy are to be understood by children, then living and acting in a democratic environment is the best and only educational approach. Democratic principles need to be embedded in school structures and in the curriculum and should be standard practice in school relations. Educators need to demonstrate respect for children by establishing children's decision-making bodies and peer mediation opportunities, trusting children to organise their own events and empowering them to explore issues, to discuss and to formulate their opinion properly.

 Are children in your school given an opportunity to make decisions about their life in school or about the education process?

Education for democratic citizenship (EDC) is the term coined by the Council of Europe for educational programmes that seek to ensure that children and young people become active and responsible citizens who are ready and able to contribute to the well-being of the society in which they live. EDC equips learners with knowledge, skills and understanding which empower them to:

- exercise and defend their democratic rights and responsibilities on society;
- value diversity
- play an active part in democratic life with a view to promoting and protecting democracy and the rule of law.

This approach differs from traditional courses of civic or citizenship education which concentrate on providing knowledge and focus more on obedience and fulfilment of responsibilities. Particular attention is now paid to promoting the participation of children by creating opportunities for children to participate in their own educational process. They can learn about their rights and responsibilities and enjoy the possibility of contributing to decisions at home, at school, in children's clubs and in local organisations.

The Council of Europe Charter on EDC/HRE recognises that education for democratic citizenship and human rights education are closely inter-related and mutually supportive. Education for democratic citizenship focuses primarily on democratic rights and responsibilities and active participation, while human rights education is concerned with the broader spectrum of human rights and fundamental freedoms in every aspect of people's lives. The Charter asks member states to develop legislation and practices in order to provide "every person within their territory with the opportunity of education for democratic citizenship and human rights education".



## Escola da Ponte – Portugal

Escola da Ponte is a primary school in São Tomé de Negrelos, Portugal, which was started by the educator José Francisco Pacheco in 1976. The school follows principles of democratic education. The school is organised and run by students, mainly by means of a weekly deliberative assembly including students, teachers and parents. The assembly is organised and led by the students every Friday and aims to discuss the week just past and organise the week to come. Students are not divided into classes but into dynamic groups. They choose what to study, mainly on the basis of what they want to learn.

## Relevant human rights instruments

### Council of Europe

Several articles of the European Convention on Human Rights guarantee rights related to the exercise of effective citizenship: rights to physical liberty and security (Article 5), freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 9), freedom of expression (Article 10), freedom of peaceful assembly and association (Article 11) or the right to education (Protocol No1).

The [European Convention on Nationality](#) (1997) establishes common rules relating to the nationality of people based on the following general principles:

- everyone has the right to a nationality
- avoiding statelessness
- preventing arbitrary deprivation of one's nationality
- preservation of the nationality of spouses by marriage or its dissolution.

The provisions of the convention are of particular relevance for children where one or both parents do not have the nationality of the country where the child is born, and for children who would be stateless. It also sets rules for naturalisation of children.

The [Committee of Ministers Recommendation \(2016\)7 on Young People's Access to Rights](#) calls on member states to adopt a human rights-based approach to ensuring young people's access to rights. It also asks the member states to establish or develop youth policies that more effectively facilitate young people's access to rights.

The Council of Europe [Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life](#) presents concrete ideas and instruments that can be used by young people, youth organisations, local authorities, and other institutions involved in participation work. The charter recognises that youth participation implies having the right, the means, the space, the opportunity and the support to participate in and influence decisions.

### United Nations

The UN supports democracy by promoting human rights, development, and peace and security. The UN does not advocate for a specific model of government but promotes democratic governance as a set of values and principles that should be followed for greater participation, equality, security and human development.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights does not actually use the word 'citizen' or 'citizenship' but

does refer to a person's 'nationality'. In Article 15, it states that "Everyone has the right to a nationality" and that no-one can be arbitrarily deprived of his or her nationality. It also specifies that everyone has the right to change nationality. In Article 29, the Universal Declaration also recognises that our rights and freedoms are dependent on the fulfilment of responsibilities: "Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible."

The CRC also addresses nationality, guaranteeing – in Article 7 – the child's right to acquire a nationality both from their mother or father, and right to protection to avoid becoming stateless. In Article 8, the CRC acknowledges the contribution of nationality to identity, calling on governments "to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality". The understanding of citizenship in the CRC goes well beyond the strictly legal. It introduces the idea that not only adults but also children have the right to participate in the life of the community, as an essential aspect of their citizenship. For example, the following rights are guaranteed: to participate in proceedings regarding the child's guardianship or custody, to participate in decision making in "all matters affecting the child", to associate with others, for children with disabilities the right to "active participation in the community", for minority or indigenous children, the right to participate in the culture of their own group as well as that of society as a whole, to participate fully in cultural and artistic life.

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- 1 Howe, Brian, 'Citizenship Education for Child Citizens', *Canadian and International Education Journal*, Vol. 34, no.1: 2005
  - 2 A constitution defines how laws are made and protected and by whom, as well as the relations between the government and citizens.

“ I know how to use the computer better than my mother. My mother should have restricted access.

*A child participating in the drafting of the Council of Europe Recommendation to member states on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment, 2017*



#### Related activities

Advertising Human Rights  
Comasito Reporter  
Human Rights in the News  
Picture Games  
Telephone Call!  
Words that Wound

## Digital environment


### Children in the digital age

Media today plays a central role in the lives of children, but they are more likely to be found online than in front of the television. Information and communication technology has virtually reached into all corners of people's lives. Children are going online at younger ages and they are more likely to use their own personal devices. Research has shown that children mostly use their devices to visit social networking sites or use instant messaging, watch videos, search for schoolwork or play with other people. They are less likely to create content, read news or participate online.<sup>1</sup> Information and communication technologies are shaping children's lives in many ways, resulting in new opportunities for and risks to their well-being and rights. Consequently, we need to secure the exercise of the full range of children's rights in the digital environment.

## Children's rights in the digital environment


Every child, as an individual rights-holder, should be able to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms online as well as offline. The Council of Europe adopted *Guidelines* for member states to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment with the aim to support a comprehensive, strategic approach in dealing with the complex world of the digital environment. The 'digital environment' is understood "as encompassing information and communication technologies (ICTs), including the Internet, mobile and associated technologies and devices, as well as digital networks, databases, content and services"<sup>2</sup>

The primary obligation to promote and protect children's rights in the digital environment lies with the state, but business enterprises, especially the ones providing services on a global scale, have to be engaged, too. This is of particular importance in the case of violation of children's rights: children and their parents should have access to child-friendly avenues to submit complaints and seek remedies in both judicial and non-judicial procedures. To that end, children should be provided with gender and culture sensitive information about remedies available in a manner adapted to their age and maturity, and in a language which they can understand.

 Where and how would you go first to place a complaint if the right to privacy of a child is violated in a social media network?

## Access to digital environment

In 2017, children were consulted on the draft Council of Europe *Guidelines* for member states to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment in several European countries.<sup>3</sup> At the consultations, children agreed that everyone should have access to the Internet without discrimination, and many of them mentioned that access should be available free of charge, anywhere or at least in public places. Internet access is important for children for various reasons: to learn, to play, to socialise and to express themselves. The *Guidelines* acknowledge that where children do not have access to the digital environment or where this access is limited as a result of poor connectivity, their ability to fully exercise their human rights may be affected. Therefore, access to the digital environment should be provided in schools and care settings and with specific measures in place for children in vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, children in alternative care, children deprived of liberty and children in the context of international migration. A child friendly version of the Recommendation on *Guidelines* to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment is also available.

 Do children have access to the Internet in your school / institution / setting? Are children allowed to use their smart devices at school in your country?

## Right to freedom of expression and information

The digital environment has considerable potential to support the realisation of children's right to freedom of expression, including to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds. The CRC states that children should have access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of their social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health (Article 17). Children, as creators and distributors of information in the digital environment, should be made aware of how to exercise their right to freedom of

expression while respecting the rights and dignity of others, including other children.



Can you think of examples of children practising freedom of expression online? Where do children look for information when they want to know more about something?

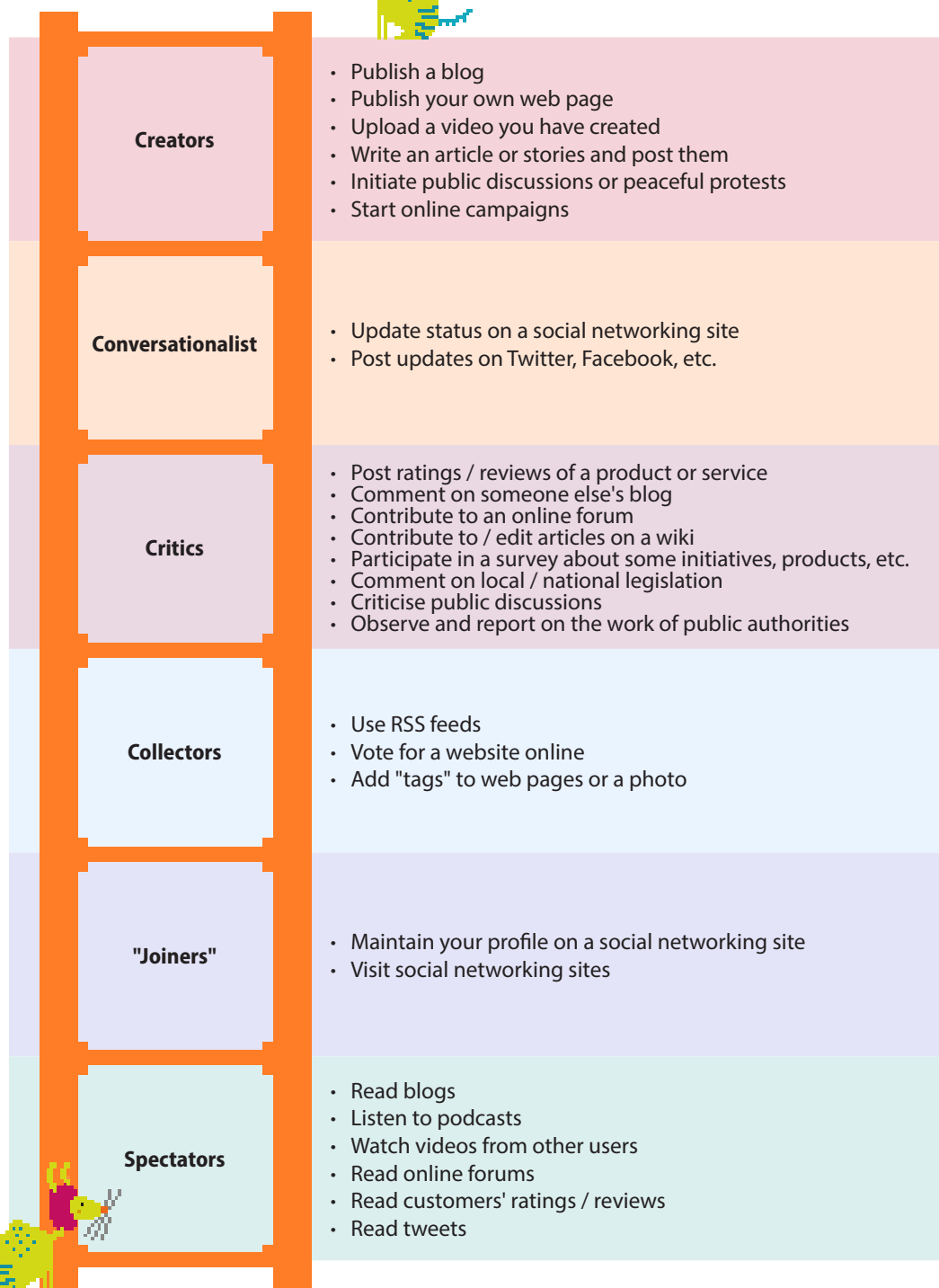
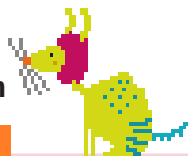
## Participation, right to engage in play and right to assembly and association

The digital environment provides distinctive opportunities for the rights of the child to participate, to engage in play, and the right to peaceful assembly and association, including through online communication, gaming, networking and entertainment. Interactive and play-based tools can stimulate skills such as creativity, teamwork and problem solving if they are appropriate to their evolving capacities and the needs of children in vulnerable situations. The right to play is naturally important for children, even if there are tensions with the time spent online and its consequences on physical and mental health. There are also concerns about safety, including the effect of violent games and the risks of meeting strangers online.

Participation in the digital environment includes the opportunity for children to take part effectively in local, national and global political debates. Online and offline activities can be combined and support each other, for example, in case of the #FridaysForFuture campaign that mobilised millions of children around the world via social media to demonstrate on the street and do other projects to raise attention to the climate crisis. Nevertheless, any monitoring or surveillance that interferes with the exercise of their rights to peaceful assembly and association should be prescribed by a law which is accessible, precise, clear and foreseeable, which pursues a legitimate aim, necessary in a democratic society and proportionate to the legitimate aim pursued, and allows for effective remedies.



## Ladder of online participation



Based on the 2010 model by Bernoff, J. and Li, C. (2010), "Social technographics revisited - mapping online participation". In Participation Models: Citizens, Youth, Online, available at: [www.nonformality.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Participation\\_Models\\_20121118.pdf](http://www.nonformality.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/Participation_Models_20121118.pdf)

## Privacy and data protection

Children have a right to private and family life in the digital environment, and this includes the protection of their personal data and respect for the confidentiality of their correspondence and private communications. Threats to children's privacy may arise from their own activities in the digital environment, as well as from the activities of others, including family, friends or strangers, for example, when parents share the photos or other information of their children online. Data collection and processing by public institutions, profiling of businesses and criminal activities such as hacking or identity theft can also pose a risk to the child's privacy.

Children's personal data should be processed fairly, lawfully, accurately and securely, for specific purposes and with the free, explicit, informed and unambiguous consent of the children and/or their parents. In order to be able to form the consent, children should have accessible, meaningful, child-friendly and age-appropriate information about privacy tools, settings and remedies. In most countries, the age at which children are capable of consenting to the processing of personal data is defined by law; below that age, parental consent is required for the process of any personal data. The consent can be withdrawn anytime, and children and their parents should have access to their personal data and to have it corrected or erased.



What is the age of consent to the processing of personal data in your country? Are you aware of the minimum age required to use social media networks?

## Right to education

As the digital environment enables and enhances children's access to quality education, it is vital that states promote online opportunities for formal, non-formal and informal education. Use of digital technology in the classroom can facilitate engagement between students and teachers, if appropriate technological infrastructure is provided. Digitalisation in education is unavoidable in order to adapt the curricula to the changing needs of society so that children can be provided with the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful life when they grow up.

Digital literacy education, including media and information literacies and digital citizenship education, ensures that children have the competence to engage in the digital environment wisely and the resilience to cope with its associated risks. It should enable children to understand and deal with potentially harmful content and behaviour and potential consequences of further dissemination of information about themselves or others. Digital literacy education should be included in the basic education curriculum from the earliest years and further education and awareness-raising initiatives and programmes should be developed for children, parents and educators working with children. Children should be aware of the victim services available to them, including helplines and hotlines.

Safer Internet Day is organised each February by the joint Insafe / INHOPE network, with the support of the European Commission, to promote the safe and positive use of digital technology, especially among children and young people. Celebrated on the second day of the second week of the second month, each year on Safer Internet Day millions of people unite to inspire positive changes online, to raise awareness of online safety issues, and participate in events and activities right across the globe. The Safer Internet Day has grown beyond its traditional geographic zone and is now celebrated in over 170 countries worldwide.

More information: [www.saferinternetday.org](http://www.saferinternetday.org)



Is there a helpline or hotline in your country that support children to deal with harmful contact, content and conduct?

## Right to protection from violence

Children have the right to be protected from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse in the digital environment as well, whereas any protective measures should take into consideration the best interests and evolving capacities of the child and not unduly restrict the exercise of other rights. Infants should be protected from premature exposure to the digital environment due to limited benefits with respect to their particular physical, psychological, social and stimulation needs. Effective age-verification is needed to ensure children are protected from products, services and content in the digital environment which are legally restricted with reference to specific ages.

There are a number of areas of concern for children's healthy development and well-being, for example risks of harm from:

- sexual exploitation and abuse, solicitation for sexual purposes (grooming), online recruitment of children for the commission of criminal offences, for participation in extremist political or religious movements or for trafficking purposes (contact risks)
- the degrading and stereotyped portrayal and over-sexualisation of women and children in particular; the portrayal and glorification of violence and self-harm, in particular suicides; demeaning, discriminatory or racist expressions or apologia for such conduct; advertising, adult content (content risks)
- bullying, stalking and other forms of harassment, non-consensual dissemination of sexual images, extortion, hate speech, hacking, gambling, illegal downloading or other intellectual property infringements, commercial exploitation (conduct risks)
- excessive use, sleep deprivation and physical harm (health risks).

All of the above factors are capable of adversely affecting the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of a child.

### What is cyberbullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying with the use of digital technologies. It can take place on social media, messaging platforms, gaming platforms and mobile phones. It is repeated behaviour, aimed at scaring, angering or shaming those who are targeted. Examples include:

- spreading lies about or posting embarrassing photos of someone on social media
- sending hurtful messages or threats via messaging platforms
- impersonating someone and sending mean messages to others on their behalf.

Face-to-face bullying and cyberbullying can often happen alongside each other. Cyberbullying, however, leaves a digital footprint – a record that can prove useful and provide evidence to help stop the abuse.

Source: Unicef [www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying](http://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying)

## Digital parenting

The digital environment poses specific challenges to parenting because parents face new issues on a regular basis as children and young people become more skilful at using the Internet, technology and social media. The principles of digital parenting are open communication with their children, including interest in the child's digital activities, and if possible, regular involvement in those, and at the same, active protection of the child's digital reputation and digital identity. Parents should also be equipped with information about the opportunities as well as the risks of the digital environment and have access to support services such as helplines and hotlines.

The Council of Europe developed special educational materials to assist parents on how to adequately approach the opportunities and challenges that digital environment offers. [Parenting in the digital age – positive parenting strategies for different scenarios](#) is an educational material aiming to develop understanding of the style of parenting, which works best for the families to ensure that children not only participate in the digital age, but actually thrive, while being protected from any risks posed by this new environment. Useful tools and helpful tips on how to protect children online could be found also in [Parental guidance for the online protection of children from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse](#) from the same series.

## Relevant human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

The Council of Europe has adopted several legal standards with a view to enhancing human rights protection on the Internet, which include the protection of children's rights on the Internet:

- The [European Court of Human Rights](#) has developed [case-law on human rights on the Internet](#) in relation to the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8 of European Convention on Human Rights) and freedom of expression (Article 10).
- The [Convention on Cybercrime](#) ("Budapest Convention") establishes a common approach to the criminalisation of offences related to computer systems (such as child pornography) and aims to make criminal investigations concerning such offences more effective.
- The [Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse](#), "Lanzarote Convention" responds to potential risks faced by children when using the Internet by imposing criminal penalties for online child pornography and grooming, that is, the solicitation of children for sexual purposes.
- The [Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data](#) ensures respect for fundamental human rights with regard to the processing of personal data. Children are holders of data protection rights under the Convention and special attention must be paid to empowering children to exercise their right to data protection.
- The [Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers on a Guide to human rights for Internet users](#) promotes respect for existing human rights and fundamental freedoms in the context of Internet use. The guide serves as a tool for Internet users to learn about their human rights online and the available remedies for any limitations. It also specifically states that children and young people are entitled to special protection and guidance when using the Internet

The Council of Europe [Internet Literacy Handbook](#) explains how to get the most out of the Internet and how to protect one's privacy.

Children learn best by doing, and that is why the Council of Europe has designed a game to help children understand their rights on the Internet: the [Wild Web Woods](#). The game teaches children how to respect the rights of others on the Internet. The aim of the game is to reach the e-city Kometa which is a place of fun, peace and freedom. Kometa can only be reached by passing through the Wild Web Woods and collecting coins. Each time the player collects a coin they are given important information about Internet safety and children's rights. The game is accompanied by a guide for teachers, [Teacher's guide to the online game: Wild Web Woods](#).

The [No Hate Speech Movement](#) stemmed from the Council of Europe youth campaign aimed at addressing and combating hate speech by mobilising young people to speak up for human rights and democracy online. It encouraged young people to take action, including raising awareness and educating about the risks that hate speech poses to human rights and democracy, reacting to and reporting cases of hate speech as well as promoting responsible behaviour online and digital citizenship. Launched in 2013, the No Hate Speech Movement youth campaign was, until 2017, co-ordinated at European level by the Youth Department of the Council of Europe. The movement continues across Europe and beyond through the work of the national campaigns and campaign activists.

## United Nations

The United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of opinion and expression has recognised the links between the Internet and international human rights, finding that "access to the Internet is not only essential to enjoy the right to freedom of expression, but also other rights, such as the right to education, the right to freedom of association and assembly, the right to full participation in social, cultural and political life and the right to social and economic development".

The UN Sustainable Development Goals targets "significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the Internet in least developed countries by 2020". (SDG 9)

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- 1 [EU Kids Online \(2014\)](#) EU Kids Online: findings, methods, recommendations. EU Kids Online, LSE, London, UK
  - 2 [Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child in the digital environment](#), Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)7 of the Committee of Ministers
  - 3 [It's our world: children's views on the protection of rights in the digital environment](#), Council of Europe, 2017

“ Kids know nothing about racism. They're taught that by adults.

*Ruby Bridges, Civil Rights Activist, first African American child to attend a white Southern elementary school*



### Related activities

A Body of knowledge  
A Long Journey  
A Modern Fairytale  
Blindfolded  
Boys Don't Cry!  
Bullying Scenes  
Dear Diary  
If the World was 20 People...  
Once Upon a Time  
Our flag  
Picture Games  
Silent Speaker  
Take a Small Step Forward  
Telephone Call!  
We are Family  
What is in my Bag?  
What a Wonderful World  
Words that Wound  
World Summer Camp  
Zabderfilio

## Discrimination

### What is discrimination?

Non-discrimination is a core principle and norm of international human rights instruments, two of which are the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter.

Non-discrimination is an overarching principle of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which prohibits discrimination against children on any ground including the child's or their parent's or legal guardian's "race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status". Article 2 of the CRC emphasises that all the rights in the Convention must apply to all children in the state, including visitors, refugees, children of migrant workers and those residing in the state illegally. Other articles of the CRC highlight groups of children who may suffer particular forms of discrimination, for example children without families (article 20), refugee children (article 22), children with disabilities (article 23), children of minorities or indigenous communities (article 30), children suffering economic and other exploitation (articles 32, 34, 36), children involved in the juvenile justice system and children whose liberty is

restricted (articles 37 and 40), and children in situations of armed conflict (article 38). Children may also suffer the consequences of discrimination against their parents, for example if children have been born out of wedlock or in other circumstances that deviate from traditional values, or if their parents are refugees or asylum seekers.

Discrimination occurs whenever people are treated less favourably than other people in a comparable situation only because they belong, or are perceived to belong, to a certain group or category of people. Discrimination is pervasive across all societies and takes many forms; the term is often combined to draw attention to specific situations.

- **Direct discrimination** occurs when a person or group of people is treated less favourably by comparison to how another person or another group of people in a similar situation have been or would be treated because of a particular characteristic they hold. For example, when Roma children are educated in a separate classroom or building.
- **Indirect discrimination** occurs when an apparently neutral rule, criterion or practice de facto puts representatives of a particular group at a disadvantage compared with others in a similar situation. For example, children whose parents attended the same school have priority at enrolment. This may hinder the access of children from poor backgrounds, Roma or immigrant families.
- **Multiple discrimination** occurs when a person is discriminated against on one particular (prohibited) ground in one certain situation, then based on another ground in another situation. For example, a refugee child might encounter discrimination in accessing a sports place because of their legal status and might be bullied at school because of their religion.
- **Intersectional discrimination** occurs when a person is discriminated against on more than one prohibited ground and these interact in a way that cannot be separated. For example, a girl with disabilities might face discrimination in access to education due to her gender and disability at the same time.
- **Segregation** is a systematic separation of a particular group from others that affects the enjoyment of their human rights, for example, when children are studying in a separate school building, or in a class or a group where the quality of education is low and the children feel stigmatised and excluded from the school community. Children can be affected by residential segregation, too, when they are living in residential areas with substandard housing conditions, without sanitation, school or even playgrounds.
- **Harassment** is unwanted conduct, bullying or other behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, such as racist bullying at school.
- **Retaliation** might occur when someone reports discrimination or harassment, for example if the parents report racist bullying of a teacher who, in turn, will give extra homework or tests to the child in order to have the complaint withdrawn or to force the child to leave the school.
- **Positive discrimination** or affirmative action: these are measures targeted at a particular group and intended to eliminate discrimination or to offset or redress disadvantages arising from structural discrimination and historical injustices. For example, establishing formal or de facto quotas for children from disadvantaged background to enter private schools.

There are other key concepts to understand in relation to the topic of discrimination. **Stereotypes** are shared beliefs or thoughts about particular groups. These generalisations become damaging when they are applied rigidly to individuals and are used as a reason for different treatment or behaviour. A **prejudice** is a particular class of stereotype, which contains a value judgement, usually negative. **Intolerance** is a lack of respect for practices or beliefs other than one's own. It also involves the rejection of people whom we perceive as different, for example members of a social or ethnic group other than ours, or people who are different in political or sexual orientation. Intolerance can manifest itself in a wide range of actions, from avoidance and hate speech to physical injury

or even murder. Discrimination and intolerance are often based on or reinforced by prejudice and stereotyping of people and social groups, consciously or unconsciously; they are an expression of prejudice in practice. Structural discrimination is the result of perpetuated forms of prejudice and the dominance of a certain group or groups. This has led to situations in which, even if officially members of other groups are allowed to access certain positions of power, the system makes it very difficult for them to do so.

There are several ways to fight against discrimination including:

- legal action to enforce the right to non-discrimination
- educational programmes that raise awareness about the mechanisms of prejudice and intolerance and how they contribute to discriminating and oppressing people, and programmes which demonstrate the appreciation of diversity and promoting tolerance
- activism by civil society to denounce discrimination and prejudice, to counteract hate crimes and hate speech, to support victims of discrimination or to promote changes in legislation.

The Council of Europe has a unique human rights monitoring body, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) working on issues relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (on grounds of “race”, ethnic / national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance in Europe. The ECRI analyses the situation in the member states of the Council of Europe and makes recommendations on how to fight against the racism and intolerance identified there, including the design, implementation and evaluation of national strategies and policies.

## Forms of discrimination

### Racial discrimination

The ECRI defines racial discrimination as differential treatment based on a prohibited ground such as “race”, colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin, which has no objective or reasonable justification. Although the ECRI rejects theories based on the existence of different ‘races’ – since all human beings belong to the same species –, they still use this term in order to ensure that those people who are generally and erroneously perceived as belonging to “another race” are not excluded from protection. Discriminatory actions are rarely based solely on one or more of the prohibited grounds, but are rather based on a combination of these grounds with other factors.

In its first General Policy Recommendation, in 1996<sup>1</sup>, ECRI proposed a series of concrete measures for combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance, in areas such as law, law enforcement and judicial remedies, education, cultural policies, research, in-service training for various professionals, public services, labour market, housing and data collection. To date, ECRI has published 16 General Policy Recommendations. There are four forms of racial discrimination which are particularly widespread in Europe, and specific General Policy Recommendations have been published for each of them: antigypsyism, discrimination against Muslims, discrimination against migrants and antisemitism.

The results of the monitoring activities of the Council of Europe show that Roma and Travellers<sup>2</sup> in Europe suffer from widespread and persisting antigypsyism and fall victim to various forms of discrimination, including lack of access to birth registration, social services and health-care, and segregation in education. Antigypsyism is an especially persistent, violent, recurrent and commonplace form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed in many ways, among them by vio-



lence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination. Children growing up in such a hostile environment are affected by passivity, frustration and marginalisation, as well as by mutual stereotyping and the fear of interacting with others due to the segregation, the wrong perceptions of the “others”, and the lack of possibilities for social interaction. In order to combat antigypsyism, the governments must:

- End segregation in schools, and eliminate harassment of Roma pupils
- End negative stereotyping in school textbooks
- Eliminate obstacles to equal participation in education and make nursery education genuinely accessible
- Use school mediators to liaise between parents and schools and to encourage parents to get their children to attend school
- Ensure Roma pupils are fluent in official languages
- Foster knowledge of Roma language, culture and history, and train teaching staff to facilitate intercultural dialogue and improve society’s awareness of antigypsyism
- Register all Roma children at birth and ensure all Roma are issued with identity documents.<sup>5</sup>

The ECRI issued has guidelines for combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims that offer governments practical recommendations for fostering awareness and tolerance. Governments have a duty to uphold the freedom of religion and guarantee that the followers of all faiths and none may live and thrive in their societies without fear of intolerance and discrimination. Special attention should be paid to the situation of Muslim women and girls because they may suffer from multiple discrimination on grounds of gender and religion as well as ethnic origin. Governments should combat religious discrimination in access to education and ensure that religious discrimination is not fostered in schools.<sup>6</sup>

Migrant children are a particularly vulnerable group who not only need protection on account of their age but also, in some cases, on account of their legal or administrative status in the country and because they are often unaccompanied, which renders them especially vulnerable. The ECRI recalls states’ obligation to respect children’s rights and their best interests, regardless of immigration status:

- Recognise and ensure the right to respect for family life, bearing in mind the best interest of the child to reside with his or her parent(s), family member or guardian irrespective of their immigration or migratory status
- Guarantee their access to preschool, primary and secondary education under the same conditions as nationals of the host member state, and ensure that school authorities do not require proof of immigration status for enrolment
- Recognise the specific obligation to ensure adequate shelter for all children, including those whose parent(s) is or are irregularly present, regardless of whether or not they are unaccompanied
- Ensure that all children regardless of their immigration status have full access to national immunisation schemes and paediatric care.<sup>7</sup>

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe has addressed the specific vulnerability of migrant children in transition to adulthood by recommending that governments ensure that young refugees receive additional temporary support after the age of 18 to enable them to access their rights, and by recognising and strengthening the role of youth work in promoting better access to these rights.<sup>8</sup>

Antisemitism has been included by ECRI, since its inception, in the aspects addressed in country monitoring. The results of various monitoring cycles show that Jewish people in Europe continue to experience antisemitic hatred, including violence. Moreover, there is an increase in antisemitism in many member states, characterised by contemporary forms of antisemitism and the spread of antisemitism and hatred

online. Extremist groups, especially Neo-Nazis, right wing extremists, in particular violent Islamists<sup>4</sup>, as well as certain left-wing extremists pose particular threats to the safety of Jewish communities and their members. Manifestations of antisemitism include discrimination and hate speech – including Holocaust denial and distortion – threats, acts of violence such as desecration of Jewish cemeteries, monuments and synagogues, physical assaults against Jews or those believed to be Jews and even murder and deadly terrorist attacks. In most stereotypes, the “other” is portrayed as inferior by nature, but with antisemitic prejudice, assumptions of special powers (financial, political, global) and conspiracy theories are more prevalent than portraying Jews as sub-humans (though that happens as well).

Young Jews in Europe are targets of antisemitism particularly online, but face problems in public places as well. Jewish women are harassed, particularly online, on the grounds of their gender and their religion. In this sense, special measures need to be taken by governments to give a high priority to the fight against antisemitism – including its intersectional manifestations – by taking all necessary measures for policies and institutions coordination, prevention/education, protection and prosecution/law enforcement<sup>5</sup>.

### **Discrimination based on disability**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) defines people with disabilities as “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”. The social model of disability – introduced by the CRPD – encourages us to eliminate all barriers created by the social and physical environment which inhibit disabled people’s ability from participating in society and exercising their rights. Such actions might include promoting positive attitudes in society as a whole, and modifying physical barriers, such as public buildings (like schools) without wheelchair access.

Children with disabilities have the same human rights as any other children. However, usually stemming from misperceptions and negative attitudes, they often face social, legal and practical barriers in exercising their rights on an equal basis with others. It is in their best interests to grow up as part of a family and develop trusting relationships with parents and siblings, relatives and friends. In order to achieve this, it is vital that we listen to them, take them seriously and promote their self-esteem, as well as support and reinforce their families in their capabilities. Children with disabilities should have access to education, health-care and social services, and be provided with equal opportunities to be engaged in play, cultural and recreational activities. They have the right to access information from a diversity of sources that are adapted to their interests and complex communication needs. Deinstitutionalisation intended to involve children and young people with disabilities in the community can significantly contribute to a change in the situation.

In accordance with the social model, disability should be regarded as part of human diversity and approached with ‘reasonable accommodation’. The CRPD defines ‘reasonable accommodation’ as “necessary and appropriate modification and adjustments not imposing a disproportionate or undue burden, where needed in a particular case, to ensure to persons with disabilities the enjoyment or exercise on an equal basis with others of all human rights and fundamental freedoms”. In the case of children, this might involve the provision of individualised support measures at schools, such as adapted teaching methods, materials and programmes, and making available the use of assistive technology and alternative examination formats. The denial or failure to provide reasonable accommodation is, in itself, considered discrimination.

The term ‘children with special educational needs’ is also used to cover those with other learning difficulties in schools, including behavioural difficulties, where these are interfering with their overall development and progress. As part of the movement towards inclusive education, schools are required to adapt their curriculum, teaching and approach, and to provide additional support to help all pupils achieve their potential.



How are children with disabilities educated in your country? What provisions are made for children with special educational needs?

## Discrimination on the grounds of sex and/or gender

Gender stereotypes are preconceived ideas whereby males and females are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. Gender stereotyping presents a serious obstacle to the achievement of real gender equality and feeds into sexism or gender discrimination. Although women are disproportionately affected by sexist behaviour, men can face discrimination, also, for example, when they are not allowed to take parental leave to raise their child on an equal basis with women.

Discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity among young people is a factor contributing to isolation, under-achievement and anxiety, and may even lead to suicide attempts. Failure to address issues related to sexual orientation or gender identity may have harmful consequences for the self-esteem of young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

The Council of Europe have recommended member states to take measures to combat discrimination faced by children and young people on the grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity, including ensuring the right to education, a safe environment and measures to promote respect and non-discrimination at school.<sup>2</sup>

Children may also encounter discrimination when their family are not treated the same way as a typical nuclear family, which has an opposite-sex married couple with children as its basis. In many Council of Europe member states same-sex couples can be officially recognised under registered partnership or marriage legislation. In order to protect the family unit, the Council of Europe recommends several measures for governments to ensure that the rights and obligations of same-sex partnerships are equivalent to those of different sex couples in a comparable situation and that the child's best interest prevails in decisions regarding adoption.<sup>3</sup>



Do children you work with use homophobic remarks, perhaps even without understanding them? What can you do to address this issue?

## Education for non-discrimination

Several international human rights instruments have acknowledged the importance and power of education to combat discrimination and intolerance. The CRC states that "the education of the child shall be directed to ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin" (Article 29).

It is important for educators to develop in every child attitudes of tolerance and non-discrimination, and to create a learning environment that acknowledges and benefits from diversity instead of ignoring or excluding it. As part of this development, those who work with children or youth, as well as children and young people themselves, need to become aware of their own and others' attitudes and behaviour, and be able to identify discrimination when it occurs. This ability needs to be communicated to children, and activities that encourage role play and promote empathy can be used to help all children to develop self-awareness, and also help to develop resilience and assertiveness in children who experience discrimination.

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### United Nations

Under Article 2 of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, each State Party “undertakes to respect and to ensure to all individuals within its territory and subject to its jurisdiction the rights recognized in the present Covenant, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”. Article 26 adds that “the law shall prohibit any discrimination and guarantee to all persons equal and effective protection against discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status”.

State Parties to the **International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination** pledged to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and promote understanding among all races. Racial discrimination is defined as “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life”. The State Parties shall avoid any act or practice of racial discrimination, ensure that public authorities also withhold from such acts and review, amend or nullify any laws or regulations that create or perpetuate racial discrimination.

The **Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**, adopted in 1979, condemns discrimination against women in all its forms, agrees to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women. The Convention identifies discrimination against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field”.

### Council of Europe

The **European Convention on Human Rights** establishes that “the enjoyment of the rights and freedoms set forth in this Convention shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status” (Article 14). Protocol No. 12 to the Convention went further by declaring that “the enjoyment of any right set forth by law shall be secured without discrimination on any ground such as sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, property, birth or other status”.

The **European Social Charter** (Revised) guarantees fundamental social and economic rights of individuals in their daily lives without discrimination on any ground such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national extraction or social origin, health, association with a national minority, birth or other status.

The **Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities**, whose aim is to protect the existence of national minorities, sets out principles relating to people belonging to national minorities in the sphere of public life, such as freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and access to the media, as well as in the sphere of freedoms relating to language, education, transfrontier co-operation, and so on.

The Council of Europe also works on awareness-raising and campaigning through different initiatives, often led by young people and by children and youth organisations. The All Different – All Equal youth campaign against racism, antisemitism, xenophobia and intolerance was the first Europe-wide campaign to sensitise and take action against racism and discrimination. More information can be found at [www.coe.int/alldifferent-allequal](http://www.coe.int/alldifferent-allequal). Similarly, the No Hate Speech Movement youth campaign mobilised

young people against hate speech and for human rights online: [www.nohatespeechmovement.org](http://www.nohatespeechmovement.org). 'Dosta', a Romany word meaning 'enough', is the name of an ongoing campaign dealing with discrimination against the Roma and aims at bringing non-Roma closer to Roma citizens. A child-friendly version was developed with the participation of children, and can be consulted at [www.dosta.org](http://www.dosta.org).

## European Union

According to Article 21.1 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, "any discrimination based on any ground such as sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic features, language, religion or belief, political or any other opinion, membership of a national minority, property, birth, disability, age or sexual orientation, shall be prohibited". The EU has several anti-discrimination Directives, most notably:

- The Racial Equality Directive ensures equal treatment between people, irrespective of racial or ethnic origin.
- The Employment Equality Framework Directive prohibits discrimination in the workplace on grounds of disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and age.
- The equality of men and women are provided for in two Directives, one in matters of employment and occupation, the other in the access to and supply of goods and services.

The EU legislation also requires that each member state has a designated national equality body which can be contacted for advice and support.



### Education against racism – France

"You have to explain to children that we are not born racist. We become racist, because racism is a cultural thing. I mean that throughout history we have always been shut into hierarchies linked to the colour of our skin, and so hierarchies are there in all of us and we have to question them in order to overcome them." Lilian Thuram

The Thuram Foundation was set up by the football player Lilian Thuram. The activities of the Foundation include workshops in primary and secondary schools as well as in universities in France and abroad. Every year, the Foundation organises a national competition (*Nous autres*) where groups of children are invited to submit artistic creations – e.g. films, drawings, songs, poems – deconstructing racism and discrimination.

- 1 ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 1: Combating racism, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance
- 2 The term 'Roma and Travellers' used by the Council of Europe is to encompass the wide diversity of the groups of Roma, Sinti, Kale and related groups in Europe, including Travellers and the Eastern groups (Dom and Lom) and those who identify themselves as Gypsies.
- 3 ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°3 "Combating racism and intolerance against Roma/Gypsies" – adopted on 6 March 1998
- 4 ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°5 "Combating intolerance and discrimination against Muslims" – adopted on 16 March 2000
- 5 ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°16 "Safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination" – adopted on 16 March 2016
- 6 Recommendation CM/Rec(2019)4 of the Committee of Ministers to member States: "Supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood"
- 7 The term 'Islamists' is used for activists of Islamism. Only a few Muslims are Islamists. The big majority of Muslims are not. The actions of Islamists should not be wrongly used to justify prejudice, discrimination and hatred against Muslims.
- 8 ECRI General Policy Recommendation N°9 on Preventing and combating antisemitism – adopted on 1 July 2021
- 9 Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2010)5: "Measures to combat discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation or gender identity"

“ Education is power. Education is the future. Education makes us who we want to be.  
*Muzoon Almellehan, UNICEF Goodwill Ambassador*



#### Related activities

A Body of knowledge  
A Modern Fairytale  
What if...

## Education and Leisure

### The right to education

Education is a fundamental human right, and it is essential for human development as well as for the realisation and enjoyment of other rights. Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) establishes that everyone is entitled to education and that at least for primary education, it should be free and also compulsory. Article 2 of Protocol No.1 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) guarantees an individual right to education and the right of parents to have their children educated in conformity with their religious and philosophical convictions. Article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognises the right of the child to education and the obligation of the state to make primary education compulsory, available and free to all, to encourage the development of different forms of secondary education available and accessible to every child, and to make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity. While education is a right, at the same time, it is an obligation for the rights-holders, the children.


Education is a process that prepares children to be autonomous, responsible and active citizens when they grow up. Every element of this process is equally important while all of it is interconnected and part of a bigger picture. For instance, non-formal education often complements the role of formal education, such as in relation to the

development of social skills of children, promoting social inclusion, preventing harmful behaviours or improving young people's participation and access to social rights.

Access to education can be jeopardised by several factors such as poverty, social exclusion, discrimination and de facto segregation. Children belonging to vulnerable or disadvantaged groups might face obstacles in getting enrolled at schools, in physically accessing buildings or in getting textbooks and school supplies. These educational inequalities were amplified by the COVID-19 crisis when all countries in Europe changed to distance learning using information and communication technology. Governments have the primary responsibility to ensure access to education for every child and take all the necessary measures to eliminate these barriers.

Historically, the legislation to combat child labour and to introduce compulsory education developed together and reinforced each other. Children above a certain age, depending on the national laws, have the 'right to work', but in the case of children, this right is subject to limitations in order to provide protections against excessive or dangerous work. Gaining an education is considered the priority for children, and work should not interfere with this, neither with their right to rest, leisure nor play. Nevertheless, some children work in order to support their family, and other children work in the holidays or after school in order to earn pocket money. Such work can itself be an important life experience with a strong educational function, although children do need to be aware of laws protecting them from abuse, and from activities that might be dangerous or harmful to their health.

The [Revised European Social Charter](#) lists several measures to ensure effective exercise of the rights of children and young people to protection. The minimum age of employment should be 15 years, with exceptions of light work without harm to the children's health, morals or education, while children under the age of 18 should not be employed in occupations regarded dangerous or unhealthy, or in night work. Children, who are still subject to compulsory education, should not be employed in such work as would deprive them of the full benefit of their education. The working hours of children under the age of 18 years should be limited in accordance with the needs of their development, and particularly with their need for vocational training, and they should be entitled to a minimum of four weeks' annual holiday with pay.

 What is the age of compulsory education in your country? What is the minimum age of employment in your country? Is there any relationship between the two regulations?

## Quality education

The first UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education, Katarina Tomasevski, stressed that education should be available and accessible to all, adaptable to the needs of the learner, the local context and the changing needs of society, and offered at an acceptable standard. The quality of education is an issue that has been challenged on several occasions at national courts as well as in front of the European Court of Human Rights. Therefore, the Council of Europe defined "quality education" and the obligations of the member states in relation to that. These standards apply to the provision of both public and private education.<sup>1</sup>

1. **Equality of opportunity:** Quality education should be inclusive and give all students access to learning, particularly those in vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, and should be adapted to their needs as appropriate. This should be understood as encompassing access to the education system as well as the enjoyment of conditions of teaching and learning which reasonably enable students to successfully complete the education programmes in which they are enrolled. Therefore, special measures are needed to ensure quality education to certain groups of children, in the form of equipment or resources. Deaf children, for example, have the right to reasonable

adaptation to help them learn, such as the use of sign language in classes, or the provision of hearing aids and interpreters whenever needed. All children with special needs have a right to similar adjustments so that they can attend mainstream schools while having equal opportunity to learn and succeed. Equality of opportunity in education also requires attention to other factors, such as the child's mother tongue, homework conditions, access to books, and any learning difficulty. Representation is an important aspect in this sense. Children who identify with one or more minority groups should see members of their groups in the textbooks, on the school wall. The history of diverse minority groups should be studied by all children. Schools need to incorporate such support mechanisms if they are to address equality of opportunity properly.

In some cases, it can be justifiable to educate children separately if their needs cannot be accommodated in the ordinary educational system or upon the request of the parents (such as religious or minority education). Notwithstanding, segregated education of lower standard than that offered to other students and with discriminatory effects, as is often the case for the Roma, is always unlawful.

2. **Education for the full development of the human personality:** Quality education develops the student's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential and encourages them to complete the educational programmes in which they enrol. It enables them to develop appropriate competences, self-confidence and critical thinking to help them become responsible citizens and improve their employability. The aims of education are the promotion of democracy, respect for human rights and social justice in a learning environment, which recognises everyone's learning and social needs; it therefore passes on universal and local cultural values to students while also equipping them with decision-making abilities. This approach is in accordance with the UDHR that explicitly states that education should aim at "the full development of human personality, the respect of human rights and understanding and peace among the nations of the world". Similarly, the CRC states that "the education of the child shall be directed to ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin" (Article 29). The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education emphasises the importance of including human rights and democracy in the programmes of both formal and non-formal education.<sup>2</sup>
3. **Further conditions of teaching and learning:** Quality education shall be ensured in a safe, non-violent learning environment where the rights of the students are respected by qualified teachers who are committed to continuous professional development. It is important for the purpose of education that it shall certify outcomes of formal and non-formal learning in a transparent way, based on fair assessment enabling acquired knowledge and competences to be recognised for further study, employment and other purposes.

## Emerging challenges

In Europe, barriers hindering children's access to universal and quality education persist. Certain groups of children are at higher risk of exclusion from education such as children with disabilities, children belonging to national minorities or indigenous groups, children with migrant background or children living in rural areas. While poverty and social exclusion are still the greatest barriers to education, new challenges are emerging that disproportionately affect children already lagging behind.

Compulsory education starts with primary education at the age of 6 or 7, while OECD countries are expanding access to early childhood education and reaching high enrolment rates at the age of 2 or 3.<sup>3</sup> Research shows that the provision of quality early childhood education has a positive impact on the overall development of children and reduces the chances of transmission of poverty and



inequality from one generation to the next. Nevertheless, young people who drop out of school early are usually vulnerable due to their economically and socially disadvantaged background. In 2019, an average of 10.2% of young people (aged 18-24) in the EU were early leavers from education and training, and only 5.6% of young people at this age were neither in employment nor in education or training. The lowest proportion of early leavers are in city centres (9.1%), while it is higher in rural areas (10.7%), but higher still in towns and suburbs (11.2%).

The rapid and constant evolution of information and communication technology is creating new opportunities but also challenges in education. Children are born as 'digital natives', where modern technology is part of their life. Digitalisation in education is important not only to tackle disengagement at school with innovative pedagogical solutions but also to adapt the curricula to the changing needs of society in order to provide children with the knowledge and skills necessary for a successful life. A vast range of information is available and accessible on the Internet; thus children need to learn how to search for information online and how to assess critically the content of such information. In order to do that, schools must improve not only the reading capacity of children but also critical thinking as an essential skill, for example, to identify fake news. Children need to be equipped with soft skills such as creativity, problem solving, flexibility, learning-to-learn and collaborative skills because schools are preparing them for jobs not created yet.

At the same time, digital inequalities are very strong across Europe and in every single village or city: not everyone can benefit from the high-tech solutions used to ensure continuity of online education. A lack of smart devices, lack of access to the Internet, and lack of digital skills on the side of both the students and the teachers all contribute to vulnerable children falling behind their peers.

In 2019, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe adopted a set of guidelines for its member states asking them to develop and promote digital citizenship education.<sup>4</sup> The document recognises that the digital environment provides an unprecedented means for people to be able to express themselves, to assemble and participate, and it opens new opportunities for improving access and inclusion. The recommendation underlines the importance of empowering "learners" by providing them with the means to acquire the skills and competences for democratic culture, and also enable them to tackle the challenges and risks arising from the digital environment and emerging technologies.

## The right to play and recreation activities

The importance of play and recreational activities for a child's health and development is recognised as a fundamental right by Article 31 of the CRC. Play or recreation can take place in the child's leisure time that is free from formal education, work or home responsibilities, and can be used as the child chooses. According to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, "environments in which play and recreational opportunities are available to all children provide the conditions for creativity; opportunities to exercise competence through self-initiated play enhances motivation, physical activity and skills development; immersion in cultural life enriches playful interactions; rest ensures that children have the necessary energy and motivation to participate in play and creative engagement".<sup>5</sup> Furthermore, the same Article of the CRC states that children have rights to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and they should be provided with appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activities. Thanks to the involvement in a community's cultural life, children inherit and experience the cultural and artistic life of their family, community and society, which helps them discover and shape their own sense of identity as well as to create new songs, dances, stories and paintings of their culture.

Playing, cultural and artistic activities are not simply about recreation and pleasure. These activities contribute to the development of a child's autonomy and promote their interpersonal and intercultural

skills. Through play and art, children can learn about key human rights principles, such as respect, dignity, equality, inclusion, fairness and co-operation. Sports also convey the social values of participation, co-operation, commitment, effort and positive competition. However, in order to maintain educational benefits, coaches and children alike must consciously use them for such purposes and be aware of the dangers that sports can present, especially when they become predominantly competitive.

Still, several challenges hinder the realisation of this right, including the lack of recognition of the importance of play and recreation on behalf of the state, professionals working with children, parents and care-givers. Children are under pressure to achieve formal academic success; their school schedules and homework leave minimum time for leisure; cultural or artistic activities are neglected subjects. Many children have no access to safe, inclusive spaces close to their homes, including green spaces like parks, gardens or forests, or they are excluded from the use of public spaces because of restrictions imposed on children.

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### United Nations

#### Education in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The Education 2030 Framework for Action, adopted by 184 UNESCO Member States in November 2015, aims at mobilising all countries and partners around the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4) on education and its targets. It proposes ways of implementing, co-ordinating, financing and monitoring the programme to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all.

### SDG 4 – Quality education

SDG4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes

4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education

4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development

4.a Build and upgrade education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



## The Council of Europe

Article 17 of the [Revised European Social Charter](#) declares the right of children and young people to social, legal and economic protection: “children and young persons, taking account of the rights and duties of their parents, have the care, the assistance, the education and the training they need, in particular by providing for the establishment or maintenance of institutions and services sufficient and adequate for this purpose”. Children should be provided with free primary and secondary education as well as be encouraged in regular attendance at schools.

Article 12 of the [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) guarantees the right to education for people belonging to minorities in order to facilitate the development of the abilities and personality of the child and to accommodate the linguistic, religious, philosophical aspirations of students and their parents:

The Parties shall, where appropriate, take measures in the fields of education and research to foster knowledge of the culture, history, language and religion of their national minorities and of the majority. (...). The Parties undertake to promote equal opportunities for access to education at all levels for persons belonging to national minorities.

The Council of Europe developed the [Reference Framework of Competences for Democratic Culture](#) for policy makers and educational practitioners in all sectors of education systems, from pre-school through primary and secondary schooling to higher education, including adult education and vocational education, in ways that are coherent, comprehensive and transparent.

The Council of Europe’s Youth sector strategy 2030 has been assigned with developing standards and resources for strengthening the quality and recognition of non-formal education programmes, and extending the attractiveness of youth work for the benefit of wider populations of young people. The youth sector is also expected to extend capacity building and resources for youth organisations to provide human rights education and advocate access to rights<sup>6</sup>.

### Plein la Bobine – France

Plein la Bobine is an International Film Festival for Young Audiences, held annually in the Massif du Sancy, in the Auvergne region in France. Between festivals, the organisation runs year-round educational activities related to the cinema for children in the locality. Schools can apply to participate in different ways – for example, as members of ‘The School Jury’, children can vote for their favourite short film; they can join the ‘Press classroom’, and report on the festival; or they can join the ‘Programme Classroom’, and help to build part of the programme for the festival.

Further information can be found at [www.pleinlabobine.com/presentation](http://www.pleinlabobine.com/presentation)



- 1 [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2012\)13 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on ensuring quality education](#)
- 2 [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)7 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education](#)
- 3 Education at a glance, 2020, OECD. pp. 156.
- 4 [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2019\)10 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on developing and promoting digital citizenship education](#)
- 5 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts (art. 31)
- 6 [Resolution CM/Res\(2020\)2 on the Council of Europe youth sector strategy 2030](#)

“ You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words. And yet I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!

*Greta Thunberg, UN Climate Action Summit, New York, 23 September 2019*



### Related activities

- Composito Reporter
- Putting Rights on the Map
- Reading the Label
- Waterdrops
- What a Wonderful World

## Environment

### Environment and children's rights

Human beings are part of life on earth, and the earth's environment affects all aspects of human life, including human rights. The 1972 United Nations Conference on the Human Environment formally recognised the link between the environment and human rights, acknowledging that "man's environment, the natural and the man-made, are essential to his well-being and to the enjoyment of basic human rights – even the right to life itself".

Environmental rights are often presented as collective rights, meaning that they are rights that belong to groups of people or whole societies rather than just to individuals. In addition to the right to a healthy environment, collective rights also include

the right to peace, to sustainable development, to communication, and to being able share in the common heritage of humankind. Collective rights such as the right to a healthy environment, are an acknowledgement that human rights exist not only for individuals in a political and social system but for all people united as fellow beings in interdependent systems that transcend nation states. For example, global warming affects all living things, regardless of which country they are in. Just as each individual must respect the intrinsic value of fellow human beings, they must also respect the value of all fellow beings: animals, plants and the ecosystems in which we all exist.

The environment affects people's human rights both positively and negatively. It plays an essential role in sustaining human life, providing the raw materials for our food, industry and development. However, environmental hazards, such as excess radiation or contaminated drinking water, can threaten human health and even life itself. If the cause is not accidental, or was preventable, these may also be human rights violations.

The UN Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment explained in a report how children's rights and the environment are connected:<sup>2</sup>

- **Right to life, health and development:** environmental harms can risk the life of children and pregnant women, cause preventable death and lifelong health problems. Children need a healthy environment in which to grow and thrive.
- **Right to an adequate standard of living:** the lack of clean air and water, the exposure to hazardous chemicals and waste, the effects of climate change and the loss of biodiversity violates the children's right to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development and all the rights derived from it: the rights to food, housing, and safe and clean water and sanitation.
- **Right to play and recreation:** children should engage in play and recreation activities in a healthy, safe environment. Some children face dangerous conditions when they go outside to play, including polluted air and water, open waste sites, toxic substances and the lack of access to safe green spaces and natural environments, while other children cannot even leave home without exposing themselves to environmental harms.
- **Right to education and information:** according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the education of children should be directed to the development of respect for the natural environment. Furthermore, children should have access to information that helps them to understand the environmental effect on their rights, how they can protect themselves and what role they can take to protect the environment. Such information should be provided in child-friendly language and in an accessible format.
- **Right to be heard:** children are not experts in science, and nor are adults, but they know the circumstances of their life much better than adults do. Respect for the views of the children in relation to long-term environmental challenges such as climate change and the loss of biodiversity is arguable, as it will shape the world in which they will spend their lives. Children can play a pivotal role by promoting environmentally-conscious lifestyles among their peers, in their community or in the society.

## Environmental issues in Europe

Europe, as with the rest of the globe, faces several major environmental threats which will almost certainly have an impact on future generations:

- **Climate change,** caused by excessive carbon emissions over centuries, is already having an effect on every region of the world. In recent years, Europe has seen effects such as drought, flooding,

extreme heat waves, and wildfires as a result of global warming and changes in weather patterns.

- **Soil degradation and water erosion** worldwide are threatening food supplies: the UN Food and Agriculture Organization estimates we may have only 60 years of harvests left. The problem is acute in Europe too: in some parts of Central and Eastern Europe, soil deterioration is now so severe the land cannot be cultivated.
- **Wildlife** is dying out across Europe, and **biodiversity** is severely threatened. Birds are in decline and a recent study showed that flying insects on nature reserves in Germany have declined by 76% in 27 years.
- **Industrial fishing** is leading certain species of fish – such as the bluefin tuna – to the edge of extinction. Overfishing is part of the problem, the use of medicines and disinfectants, causing marine pollution, is another.
- **Air pollution** from heavy industry and fossil fuels directly affects human health and all living things. A 2014 report by the European Environmental Agency found that pollution from cars, power plants, households and agriculture contributes to nearly 467,000 premature deaths across the continent.
- **Water scarcity and drought** is an increasingly frequent and widespread phenomenon across the European continent.
- **Overconsumption** has a negative impact on the environment. If everyone on the planet consumed the equivalent of the average European, two planet Earths would be necessary.
- **Domestic and industrial waste** is filling the world's land and oceans. In Europe, total annual waste is more than 2.5 billion tons. Of this, only about a third is recycled, while the rest is burned or sent to landfill.
- **Genetically modified organisms (GMOs)**, whose genetic material has been altered by the introduction of a modified gene, can have long-term consequences on human health, the environment and sustainable farming.



What are the main environmental concerns in your region? How do they affect local people? How do they affect children's rights?

## Children and the environment

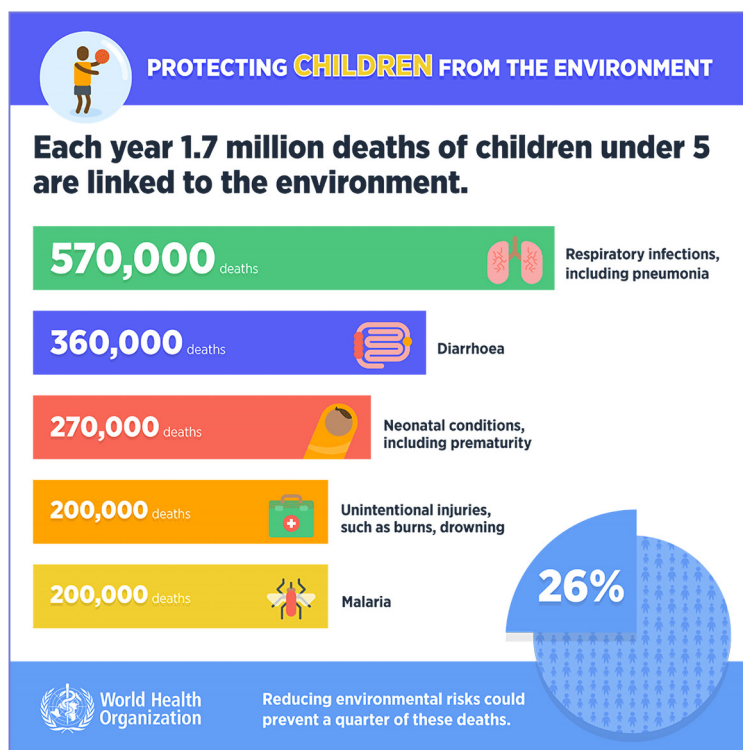


Children are exposed to many different environments that have a profound influence on their growth and development. Environmental exposures, both adverse and health-promoting, do not work in isolation but interact with social and nutritional determinants of health to influence children's health and well-being.

*Inheriting the world: The atlas of children's health and the environment, 2017 (WHO)*

In 2017, the World Health Organisation (WHO) published an updated version of a report first issued in 2004 on the challenges to children's environmental health. The report noted that in 2015, over a quarter of the deaths of 5.9 million children who died before reaching their fifth birthday could have been prevented through addressing environmental risks.

The WHO classes some of the environmental risks as 'traditional', and these include air pollution, unclean water and poor sanitation. Such risks are particularly common in developing regions. Other risks are classed as 'emerging', and they are mostly products of the industrialised world. These include chemicals – from pesticides, plastics, and other manufactured goods – electronic waste, and climate change.



© World Health Organisation, 2017.<sup>2</sup>



What are the major environmental issues affecting the health of children in your community?

## Sustainable development

In 1983, 'sustainable development' was defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (later the Brundtland Commission) as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Since the Commission met, there have been various global initiatives to address increasingly pressing environmental issues, and the notion of sustainable development has itself undergone development. It is widely recognised as having at least three dimensions: **social justice** and **economic development**, as well as **environmental protection**. In other words, sustainability is understood to be not just about conserving the environment, but also about learning to live in respectful relationships with each other while ensuring economic security for all.

## Sustainable Development Goals

In 2015, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were globally agreed to replace the Millennium Development Goals. These SDGs, with their 169 targets, are known as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and they reflect the three dimensions of sustainability. The United Nations Resolution announcing the Goals declares that:

We are determined to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable consumption and production, sustainably managing its natural resources and taking urgent action on climate change, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

All of the SDGs have some relation to the environment. This is more obvious in the case of, for example, SDGs 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life below Water) and 15 (Life on Land). However, the targets for many of the other goals also mention environmental concerns, illustrating the inseparable and interdependent nature of the three dimensions.

## SDG1: End Poverty in all its forms everywhere

Target 5: By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters

## SDG 2: End hunger, achieve food security...

Target 4: By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters, and that progressively improve land and soil quality

**1** NO POVERTY  


**2** ZERO HUNGER  


The Council of Europe is contributing to the implementation of the SDGs with most of its activities and co-operating with UN to support and monitor their realisation in the member states.<sup>3</sup>

? Look at the list of SDGs. How many of these are connected to the environment?







## What can children do?

### Designing with children

This is a website which aims to inspire design practitioners and build dialogue among people interested in exploring how children's cultures, capacities and imagination may have an impact upon the design profession, design process and ultimately the built environment.

Initiatives from across the world illustrate how adults and children can co-operate to build better places to live, study, and play. For example, in Ljubljana, Slovenia, the renewal of the nursery's playground Gubčeva was fully initiated by children's parents, with all children from the nursery actively involved in the process. Teachers became the main actors in the work with children, and they helped to gather the ideas developed by the children. 'Building workshops' were organised as lively social events, with whole families joining in to spend an active day out while helping their nursery get a better new look.

See examples of projects involving children at <https://designingwithchildren.net>

In 2019, Greta Thunberg was named Person of the Year by *Time* magazine for inspiring a global movement against climate change. #FridaysForFuture began in August 2018, when she sat in front of the Swedish parliament every school day for three weeks to protest because of her government's lack of action on the climate crisis.<sup>4</sup> Since then, millions of children, young people and supporting adults around the world have joined her and protested to put pressure on decision makers to live up to their international commitments (e.g. the Paris Agreement) and take appropriate steps within a short period of time in accordance with the most reliable scientific findings. In September 2019, Ms Thunberg, together with another 15 young people from different countries, submitted a complaint to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child claiming that several states had allegedly violated their rights to life, health and culture by causing and perpetuating the climate crisis. A series of events proved that children are eager and able to exercise their right to participation, freedom of assembly and association, educate each other and adults about crucial issues like the climate crises, and that they appreciate the support provided by teachers, principals and parents.



How environmentally aware are the children you work with? Do they know about some of the greatest threats to life on planet Earth? Is Fridays for Future known among the children you work with? What do they think about it?

## Human Rights Instruments

### Council of Europe

It is perhaps not surprising that the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) does not explicitly mention the environment: the Convention was adopted in 1950, when few people were aware of the problems associated with environmental breakdown. The ECHR makes many references to 'the economic well-being of the country', but not to its ecological well-being. Similarly, the ECHR acknowledges the importance of 'the protection of health', but does not explicitly recognise the importance of a healthy environment in sustaining a healthy population. Despite the absence of a specific mention, there is now substantial case law from the European Court of Human Rights which recognises the connection between human rights and the environment. For example, human rights

violations have been found in cases involving health risk as a result of pollution, and failure to plan for or anticipate the consequences of industrial or natural accidents, such as a methane explosion at a rubbish tip.<sup>5</sup>

By recognising its key role in mainstreaming the environmental dimension into human rights and pursuing a rights-based approach to environmental protection, the Council of Europe adopted unique legal instruments providing a solid basis for action in Europe and beyond. The [Bern Convention](#) is a binding international agreement in the field of nature conservation, covering most of the natural heritage of the European continent. It is the only regional convention of its kind worldwide, and aims to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, as well as to promote European co-operation in this field. The treaty also takes account of the impact that other policies may have on natural heritage, and recognises the intrinsic value of wild flora and fauna, which needs to be preserved and passed to future generations.

The Council of Europe is also working to support its member states in responding to environmental crimes such as illegal traffic, shipment or dumping of waste, illegal production of dangerous materials, illegal trade in ozone-depleting substances and illegal trade in wildlife. To this end, it co-ordinates national policies in order to strengthen international judicial co-operation, including amongst law enforcement agencies.

## United Nations

As with the European Convention, early human rights instruments, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the two Covenants, precede general awareness of the importance of the environment and consequently make no reference to it. However, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child does make specific reference to the environment in Article 24.c in the context of the child's right to health, urging governments

To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution[...]

Furthermore, Article 24 urges environmental education for parents and children as a part of general health education. Article 29 includes it among the goals of a quality education to which every child has a right (the development of respect for the natural environment).

The gradual recognition of the right to a healthy environment illustrates how the human rights framework is evolving, with new rights being recognised, defined and ultimately codified in human rights instruments. This can be a long and contentious process, involving building consensus, consultation with governments, intergovernmental organisations and non-governmental organisations.

It is important to mention the three [Rio Conventions](#) – on Biodiversity, Climate Change and Desertification – that derive directly from the 1992 Earth Summit. Each instrument represents a way of contributing to the Sustainable Development Goals of Agenda 21. The three conventions are intrinsically linked, operating in the same ecosystems and addressing interdependent issues.

## Convention on Biological Diversity

The objectives of the CBD are the conservation of biological diversity, the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from commercial and other utilisation of genetic resources. The agreement covers all ecosystems, species, and genetic resources.

## United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

The UNCCD aims to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought in countries experiencing serious drought and/or desertification, particularly in Africa, through effective actions at all levels, supported by international co-operation and partnership arrangements, within the framework of an integrated approach which is consistent with Agenda 21, with a view to contributing to the achievements of sustainable development in affected areas.

## United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The UNFCCC sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change. Its objectives are to stabilise greenhouse-gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, within a time-frame sufficient for the following: to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change; to ensure that food production is not threatened; to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.

In 2015, the State Parties to UNFCCC adopted the Paris Agreement in order to further strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise in the 21st century well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5°C. All states submitted comprehensive national climate action plans (so-called 'nationally determined contributions', NDCs) and they regularly report on its implementation to each other and to the public. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change and provide support for developing countries in line with their own national objectives.

The Conferences of the Parties (COP) to each Rio Convention, convened on a regular basis, have underlined through numerous articles and decisions the need for enhanced collaboration among the conventions, in order to enhance synergy and reduce duplication of activities. In August 2001, the Conventions established a Joint Liaison Group as an informal forum for exchanging information, exploring opportunities for synergistic activities and increasing co-ordination. Options for collaboration have been explored in several meetings and documents, and a number of collaborative activities are already underway.

Children already participated in the first United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Earth Summit) held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in 1992. Representing the voice of children, 12-year-old Severn Suzuki silenced world leaders with her speech demanding them to make their actions reflect their words. Since then, children have been involved in many similar global events that proved to be good occasions for advocating for children's rights and environmental justice. Recently, thanks to the #FridaysForFuture Movement, child environmental activists have been invited to participate in these meetings in their own right.

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1 [Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe, clean, healthy and sustainable environment](#)

2 You can also download the graph from here: <https://www.who.int/phe/ceh-infographic-EN-1-900px.gif?ua=1>

3 More information about the CoE and the SDGs: [www.coe.int/en/web/un-agenda-2030](http://www.coe.int/en/web/un-agenda-2030)

4 [www.fridaysforfuture.org](http://www.fridaysforfuture.org)

5 Factsheet 'Environment and the European Convention on Human Rights', European Court of Human Rights, March 2020

“ Cuts to Family Support Services mean that I no longer have transport to take me to see my birth parents and so I see them less often. I miss them.

*Kat, English participant in “Austerity Bites: Children’s Voices” project of Council of Europe and the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children*



#### Related activities

Take a Small Step Forward  
We are Family  
Who Should Decide?

## Family and Alternative Care

### The role of the family

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognises the family as the natural entity that best protects children and provides the conditions for their healthy development. The child is entitled to care, security and an upbringing that respects their personality and individuality. Indeed, Article 3 of the CRC states that the ‘primary consideration’ in all actions concerning children should be the child’s best interests.

Every child has the right to know their parents and to be cared for by them. The CRC assigns responsibility for the child’s well-being to parents and to the state, with states obliged to recognise that the primary responsibility for the child’s upbringing and development rests with the parents. States are required to undertake various positive measures to support parents in performing this duty. Similarly, parents have the main responsibility for ensuring that the child has an adequate standard of living, but if they are unable to do so, states have a responsibility to assist or intervene (Article 27).

Every child who is capable of forming their own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, and their views should be given due

weight in accordance with their age and maturity. This applies to any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them, where they have the right to be heard either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law (Article 12). Parents are required to give appropriate direction and guidance to the child, in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities. As the child grows older, they should have an increasingly greater say in personal matters. In conformity with the CRC, parents have an obligation to view the child as a rights-holder, and not merely as their “property” or a “mini adult”.

## What is a family?

In addition to the “traditional” family of two parents and their biological children, a number of different family structures have become increasingly common, such as:

- multi-generational extended families
- single-parent families, where one of the parents is absent, whether through divorce, desertion, death or other reasons
- adoptive or foster families
- “recomposed” nuclear families, with one natural parent and one step-parent, and any combination of biological and step-siblings
- de facto unions, where two people live together without being married
- families with same-sex parents
- families composed of children and grandparents.

Children should not be discriminated against because of the status of their parents or care-givers, be it their race, colour, gender, religion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability or any other ground. Increasingly, children are likely to experience transitions from one family living arrangement to another, and to end up living with one parent or with step-parents. However, in Europe the “traditional family” prevails; more than half of all married couples in the EU countries have their children living with them.

Irrespective of the type of family structure, both parents have a responsibility to care for and support their children. Most European governments have policies to protect and support the family and parenting needs but they may differ significantly. Many offer paid or unpaid paternity leave as well as maternity leave, and most provide for an additional period of parental leave as well, but the adherence to such schemes, and their provisions, may be very different from one country to another.

From a child’s rights perspective, it is consensual that in case of separation or divorce, children have the right to develop and maintain a relationship with each of the parents and keep contact with other significant adults (such as grandparents and extended family). All parenting responsibilities, including the financial support, need to be shared by the parents to take into consideration the best interests of the child.

Children have the right to be kept outside of parents’ conflicts and not forced to choose one parent over the other. They should participate in making decisions affecting them even in such a situation but they should not make “adult’s decisions” or take any standing they could be blamed for. Children need to be reassured that they are safe and their needs will be provided for.

## The right of children to know their origin

It is estimated that more than 8 million children worldwide have been born as a result of assisted reproductive technologies, of which the most common is in vitro fertilisation (IVF), including the use

of eggs, sperm or embryos from a known or anonymous donor. It might involve a gestational surrogate, when the embryo (created via IVF using the eggs and sperm of the intended parents or donors) is implanted into a surrogate but the child is genetically unrelated to her. Commercial surrogacy is legal in only few countries in Europe.

Traditionally, most countries used to favour anonymous donation models, and thus restricted the right of donor-conceived people to know their origins. International human rights law has moved towards recognition of a right to know one's origins. This is not an absolute right and must be balanced against the interests of the other parties involved: principally those of the donor(s) and the legal parent(s), but also those of clinics and service providers, as well as the interests of society and the obligations of the state.

Nevertheless, donor-conceived children should be informed about the existence of supplementary information on the circumstances of their birth upon their 16th or 18th birthday, and then decide whether they want to access this information.<sup>1</sup>

## Challenges for families in Europe

Europe is a continent full of diversity, contrasts and inequalities in relation to accessing resources and rights. This is also visible in policies regarding the family, which is historically one of the policy domains most marked by ideological principles. Still, families in Europe face a number of challenges common to the majority of societies.

### Working parents

Increasingly both parents tend to be in employment. Long working hours and conflict between work and family responsibilities may present problems – most commonly for women, although not exclusively. Throughout nearly all European countries, women have reported significant difficulties in combining work and family life, in particular during parenting<sup>2</sup>.

### Parents working abroad

It has become a growing phenomenon that people leave their homes to find a job requiring them to be far from their families for a long or repeated period of time. Many parents have to leave their children to their grandparents or other relatives, or place them in boarding schools. These children, left behind by their migrant parents, are extremely vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and neglect.

### Single-parent households

Despite declining numbers, marriage continues to be the most common form of family unit for raising children across Europe: almost three quarters (71.2 %) of all families in the EU are composed of married couples. However, there is great variety across the continent, and marriage as a family structure is less common in many northern and western countries than it tends to be in southern and eastern countries. Across the European region, single-parent families represent about 16% of the total, but there is again great diversity across Europe: in some parts of Belfast, for example, the proportion of single-mother families forms as much as 60% of the total; in the Dutch region of Noord-Overijssel, the proportion is only 7.7%. Single-parent families throughout Europe are predominantly *single-mother* families. In the case where the father fails to pay the child support, it affects women disproportionately and adds to the inequalities that they already face in the workplace, including the pay gap and difficulties in career development. Single-parent families are at particular risk of poverty and child poverty.<sup>3</sup>

## Positive parenting

The Council of Europe, while acknowledging that there are many different ways to raise children, has drawn up a set of general principles that underlie the concept of positive parenting as well as guidelines on how policy makers can support it. The Recommendation on Policy to Support Positive Parenting defines positive parenting as “behaviour based on the best interests of the child that is nurturing, empowering, nonviolent and provides recognition and guidance which involves setting of boundaries to enable the full development of the child”. Accordingly, parents should provide their children with:

- Nurture – responding to a child’s need for love, warmth and security
- Structure and guidance – providing a child with a sense of security, a predictable routine and necessary boundaries
- Recognition – listening to children and valuing them as people in their own right
- Empowerment – enhancing a child’s sense of competence and personal control
- A non-violent upbringing – excluding all corporal or psychologically demeaning punishment. Corporal punishment is a violation of children’s right to respect for physical integrity and human dignity.

According to the recommendation, states should support positive parenting through family policy measures that secure appropriate living standards for families with children and prevent child poverty and social exclusion of families with children. Supporting services for parents include local centres and services dispensing information, counselling and training on parenting as well as spaces where parents can go to exchange experiences and learn from one another and play with their children. In order to provide support in crisis situations, helplines should be set up for both parents and children. Families at risk, such as migrant families, parents and children with disabilities, teenage parents or parents in difficult social and economic circumstances, should receive targeted services.



A fundamental principle of the CRC is the child’s best interest, but who should decide what is best? For example, who should decide whether it is in a child’s best interest not to keep contact with one of the parents?

## Children in alternative care

When the biological family is not able to take care of a child (because of death or illness of the parent(s), violence in the family, abuse or neglect of the child or family breakdown), state authorities or the court determine whether it is in the best interest of the child to be placed in alternative care. Article 20 of the CRC states that:

A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State ... [which should] ensure alternative care for such a child.

These measures are only to be invoked in extreme cases; still, an estimated 1.5 million children in the Council of Europe member states live in some form of alternative care. Children who live outside a family unit or without parental care are often more likely to suffer from discrimination, abuse and exploitation, and may experience emotional and social deprivation because of neglect. They are thus especially vulnerable, and their rights may be particularly at risk of being violated.

Children can be placed with relatives, in foster care or other family-like settings, or in residential institutions. Evidence demonstrates that family and community-based forms of care, such as day care, parenting education and home support, are more likely to meet the needs of children than residential care in institutions. The Council of Europe therefore advocates for de-institutionalisation, which is beneficial to children, families, communities and governments.

## **Rights of children living in residential institutions**

It is universally acknowledged that the family is the best place for a child's development and well-being. However, children sometimes have to be entrusted to care institutions. A child can experience this "placement" as a traumatic experience. It is very important that the care procedure, arrangements and conditions respect the rights of the child concerned.

Placement must be an exceptional measure taken with the child's best interests in mind, following a multidisciplinary assessment and subject to periodic review. All childcare institutions, including institutions run by religious organisations and NGOs, should be duly accredited and registered by a competent public authority. The care institution should as far as possible be located close to the child's home environment to facilitate regular contact between the child and their parents or relatives. Conditions inside the institution should be organised in order to ensure the child's best possible mental, emotional and physical development. Therefore, small, family-style living units should be encouraged. The staff should be competent, trained and stable with sufficient resources and they should comply with the child safeguarding policy of the institutions and the child protection legislation of the respective country. Any breach of children's rights should be sanctioned in accordance with appropriate, effective procedures. Any disciplinary or supervisory measures applied in residential institutions should have their basis in official regulations and approved standards.

All children placed in residential institutions have the following rights, in particular:

- that the care decision, procedure, arrangement and conditions comply with the best interests of the child and the right to be heard
- the right to their identity, to equal opportunities and to respect for their ethnic, religious, cultural, social and linguistic background
- the right to be placed together with siblings and to maintain regular contact with their families and other key people in their lives
- the right to good quality healthcare
- access to all kinds of education and vocational training under the same conditions as apply to other children
- the right to be prepared for active, responsible citizenship through play, sport, cultural activities and increasing responsibilities
- the right to participate in decisions concerning them and to be informed of their rights and the residential institution's rules in a manner suited to their age
- respect for their human dignity and physical integrity, in particular the right to humane, non-degrading living conditions and a non-violent upbringing, including protection against corporal punishment and all forms of abuse
- the right to privacy, including access to a person they trust and to a body competent to provide them with confidential advice on their rights
- the right to assert their fundamental rights before an identifiable, impartial, independent body.



Placements must not last longer than necessary and must have as primary objective the best interests of the child and their successful social integration or reintegration as soon as possible. A child leaving care should be entitled to an assessment of their individual needs and to appropriate after-care support with a view to ensuring their reintegration in the family and in society.



What kind of alternative care is available in your country?

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

Article 8 of the [European Convention on Human Rights](#) protects everyone's private and family life, their home and their correspondence, from state interference. This right underlines the importance of protecting the family unit, the social unit that nurtures most children to adulthood.

Article 16 of the [Revised European Social Charter](#) ensures that all members of the family, including children, as a fundamental unit of society, have the right to appropriate social, legal and economic protection to ensure its full development.

Other Council of Europe conventions, such as the [European Convention on the Adoption of Children \(Revised\)](#), [Convention on Contact concerning Children](#) and [European Convention on the Exercise of Children's Rights](#), deal with children's rights in family and alternative care.

The [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2011\)12 on children's rights and social services friendly to children and families](#) addresses children's rights in social services planning, delivery and evaluation. Its aim is "to ensure that social services are delivered upon individual assessment of the child's needs and circumstances and take into account the child's own views, considering his or her age, level of maturity and capacity". The Recommendation defines "child-friendly social services" as "social services that respect, protect and fulfil the rights of every child, including the right to provision, participation and protection and the principles of the best interest of the child".

The [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2010\)2 on deinstitutionalisation and community living of children with disabilities](#) calls on member states to take appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures to replace institutional care with community-based services within a reasonable timeframe and through a comprehensive approach. It states that all children with disabilities should live with their own family unless in exceptional circumstances, and calls for phasing out new institutional placements and replacing them with a comprehensive network of community provision.

**Discover your rights!** is a booklet addressed to children and young people in alternative care which was produced in co-operation with SOS Children's Villages International. It uses comics, stories and informative texts to support children and young people in care to learn about their rights and learn how to take an active role in their own care process. Another booklet – *Securing Children's Rights* – is addressed at professionals working with children in alternative care. The publications, in several languages, are available on the [website of the Council of Europe](#).



## United Nations

The [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) recognises the family to be “the natural and fundamental group unit of society... entitled to protection by society and the State” (Article 16). The Declaration also protects the family from arbitrary interference, and includes the “right to marry and to found a family”. The Declaration does not define ‘family’, and the term now refers to many different combinations of children and adults besides the traditional nuclear family, which consists of two parents and their genetic children.

The [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) gives even greater emphasis to the importance of the family, declaring in its Preamble that it is not only the fundamental group of society, but also the “natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children”. The Convention recommends the family environment for “the full and harmonious development” of the child’s personality.

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- 1 For further information see: [Recommendation 2156 \(2019\) of the Parliamentary Assembly on Anonymous donation of sperm and oocytes: balancing the rights of parents, donors and children](#)
  - 2 Differences in Men’s and Women’s Work, Care and Leisure Time, Konstantina Davaki, 2016
  - 3 For further information see: [Resolution 2207 \(2018\) of the Parliamentary Assembly on Gender equality and child maintenance](#)

“ A girl has the power to go forward in her life. She’s not only a mother, she’s not only a sister, she’s not only a wife. She should have an identity. She should be recognised and she has equal rights as a boy.

*Malala Yousafzai, Nobel Peace Prize winner 2014*



## Gender Equality

### What is gender equality?

Gender equality entails equal rights for women and men, girls and boys, as well as the same visibility, empowerment, responsibility and participation, in all spheres of public and private life. It also implies equal access to and distribution of resources between women and men.<sup>1</sup> Even if progress is visible and the legal status of women in Europe has undoubtedly improved during recent decades, effective equality between women and men is far from being a reality. Gender inequality affects both girls and boys although it is widely acknowledged that sexism and gender stereotypes tend to have a more negative impact on girls.

All children’s rights enshrined by the UN Convention on the Right of the Child (CRC) apply to every child without discrimination, to girls and boys alike, as well as to children who identify with other genders. Nevertheless, certain children’s rights issues might affect some children more than others, depending on their gender. Another human rights instrument, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), also applies to girls, and the Committee assigned to oversee its implementation focuses on girls’ rights in its work.

### Key concepts

Sex, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation are often confused, while all have a children’s rights dimension.

#### Related activities

Boys Don’t Cry!  
Once Upon a Time  
We are Family

**Sex** is a biological fact; almost all human beings are born in one of two biologically differentiated types: a girl or a boy. The World Health Organisation (WHO) explains 'sex' as "the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. While these sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both, they tend to differentiate humans as males and females"<sup>2</sup> Some people are born with atypical combinations of physical features (body characteristics) that usually distinguish boys from girls at the time of birth. These people may be referred to as 'intersex'.

**Gender**, on the other hand, is a social construction. The "Istanbul Convention" refers to gender as "the socially constructed roles, behaviours, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men". The characteristics attributed to gender can therefore change.

#### Some sex characteristics

- Primary sex characteristics: genitals
- Secondary sex characteristics: breast development in the case of girls; greater muscle capacity in the case of boys
- Genetics: difference in chromosomes.

#### Some gender stereotypes

- Girls and women are expected to dress in a feminine way (types of clothes, colours)
- Women and girls are expected to do more housework than men and boys
- Boys do not show feelings and never cry.

**Gender identity** refers to the gender to which people feel they belong, which may or may not be the same as the sex they were assigned at birth. It refers to each person's deeply felt internal and individual experience of gender.

**Transgender** is an umbrella term often used to describe a wide range of identities and experiences. It usually refers to people who have a gender identity which is different from the gender assigned to them at birth, and to those people who wish to portray their gender identity in a different way from the gender assigned at birth.

**Sexual orientation** describes a pattern of emotional and sexual attraction to males, females, both or neither. Sexual orientation is not linked to gender identity; for example, a transgender man may be heterosexual or gay in the same way that another man may be heterosexual or gay.

An important part of one's identity and individuality, gender roles are formed through socialisation. Today, not only the family, school and workplace influence such socialisation, but also the media, including new information technologies, music, films and social media. Both traditional and new socialising forces serve to preserve and transmit gender stereotypes, but at the same time, they can change or challenge them.

## Gender stereotypes and discrimination

Gender stereotypes are generalised views or preconceived ideas, according to which individuals are categorised into particular gender groups, typically defined as "women" and "men" and are arbitrarily assigned characteristics and roles determined and limited by their sex. Stereotypes are descriptive in a sense that members of a certain group are perceived to have the same attributes regardless of individual differences, but also prescriptive as they set the parameters for what societies deem acceptable behaviour. Stereotyping becomes problematic when it is used as a vehicle to degrade and discriminate women and girls.

Many institutions of society reinforce traditional gender stereotypes. In the media, for example, women predominantly appear as objects of action, as victims and as caretakers, whereas men are usually portrayed as creative, strong, clever and full of initiative. While the media highlights a man's power and achievement, a woman, even an accomplished woman, is usually first evaluated by her appearance. Children and young people's self-presentation on social media, taking into account peer influence, also contributes to the endorsement of stereotyped gender roles. Evidence also shows that social media in particular is subject to abusive use, and that women and girls are often confronted with violent and sexualised threats online.

While gender stereotypes are principally formed during school years, gender inequalities are still a persistent feature of the education system in Council of Europe member states. Gender stereotyping continues to influence the behaviour and practices of school personnel. Schools tend to educate in ways that conform to gender stereotypes, and the majority of school learning environments do not encourage pupils to choose subjects in ways that are gender neutral. Students who do not conform to stereotypical expectations can experience criticism, ostracism and even violence. The education system is in a privileged position to reverse the situation, to change the mind-set of girls and boys, and to support girls and boys in fulfilling their true and full potential, by avoiding transmitting pre-conceived ideas about gender roles.

Traditional gender stereotypes can hurt boys as well as girls. Stereotypical male expectations of strength and competition often conflict with a boy's daily experiences such as living in atypical family structures, male unemployment or women's growing presence in the public sphere. Boys who do not fit the typical male stereotypes can suffer from bullying, exclusion and discrimination.

Girls might face discrimination in several fields of life: access to education and health care, participation, the right to play and recreation. Girls belonging to a minority, girls with disabilities, girls with migrant background, and girls living in rural areas or in disadvantaged situations are even more vulnerable because they can be subjected simultaneously to one or several other types of discrimination.



To what extent does your community conform to traditional gender stereotypes?  
How do these stereotypes affect children's lives?

## Violence against women and girls

Violence against women and girls is a form of gender-based violence, recognised as a form of discrimination and violation of human rights. According to the "Istanbul Convention", violence against women is type of violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately and results in physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life.

In 2014, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child and the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women issued a joint recommendation on the harmful practices affecting girls.<sup>3</sup> The "Istanbul Convention" also combats all of these harmful practices as a form of violence against women.

**Female genital mutilation (FGM):** This harmful practice directed at girls and women causes serious physical and mental harm and can even put their life at risk. It violates the children's right to physical integrity, right to health and right to protection from cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment.<sup>4</sup>

**Child and/or forced marriage:** Many countries in Europe allow children to get married, usually from the age of 16 or 17 with the permission of their parents or judicial authorities. The majority of child marriages involve girls. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child emphasises that marriage

below 18 years of age may be allowed only in exceptional circumstances, and that child marriage is considered a form of forced marriage, given that one or both parties have not expressed full, free and informed consent. For girls, getting married often means dropping out of school, and transitioning too quickly from childhood to adult life, and they are often subject to other forms of violence, including sexual and physical violence as well as early or unwanted pregnancies.

**Crimes committed in the name of so-called “honour”:** All forms of violence against girls and women in the name of traditional codes of honour are considered to be so-called ‘honour crimes’ and constitute a serious violation of human rights. Such violence takes various forms, such as “honour killings”, assault, torture, restrictions on free association, captivity or imprisonment, and interference in the choice of a spouse or partner.

With the exception of its provisions on FGM, forced sterilisation and forced abortion, the “Istanbul Convention” (Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women) is drafted in gender-neutral language and its provisions apply equally to both sexes. This means that any of its provisions can be implemented with a view to supporting and protecting boys who experience any of the forms of violence covered by the convention. As far as domestic violence is concerned, the “Istanbul Convention” encourages state parties to implement provisions against it with respect to children as well, both boys and girls, as the drafters recognised that many children are exposed to domestic violence and are thus in need of support. In other cases, children are not being targeted themselves, but witness violence against their mothers. Either way, they suffer and need to be protected.

All international organisations, including the Council of Europe, stress the importance of prevention, including awareness-raising campaigns and education targeting both girls and boys.

## Educating for gender equality

Today’s girls are tomorrow’s women just as today’s boys are tomorrow’s men. Attitudes, convictions and behavioural patterns are shaped very early on in life. To break the continuity of gender-based violence, it is essential to change mentalities, attitudes and gender relations. Education for gender equality starts with building gender awareness. This means recognising the negative impacts of gender stereotypes and addressing the inequalities that arise from them. The outcome of education for gender equality for girls is greater self-confidence, assertiveness, independence and engagement in the public sphere. The outcome for boys is overcoming fear of failure, learning to be less aggressive, becoming more sociable and responsible, and engaging more in the private sphere.

To be effective at education for gender equality, educators must recognise their own gender stereotypes and reflect whether their teaching methods, language and interaction with boys and girls reflect the gender equality they are striving to convey. Educators in general can promote gender equality through their behaviour and attitude by ensuring that girls and boys have the same opportunities for participation and interaction in any activity.

The “Istanbul Convention” requires states parties to teach children the concept of equality between women and men, non-stereotyped gender roles, and non-violent conflict resolution in interpersonal relationships. Building gender relations on mutual respect and recognition rather than dominance and control is the best way to prevent gender-based violence.

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### United Nations

The first legally binding international document prohibiting discrimination against women and requiring governments to take steps in favour of equality for women and men is the Convention on

the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Since coming into force in 1981, CEDAW has comprehensively addressed the fundamental rights of women in politics, health care, education, law, property, marriage and family relations. Since 2000, individual women or groups of women are eligible to file complaints of rights violations with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

## Council of Europe

The European Convention on Human Rights (the Convention) is Europe's core human rights treaty: Article 1 of the Convention guarantees the rights and freedoms it includes to everyone in the jurisdiction of the 46 member states of the Council of Europe. The principle of non-discrimination on the basis of sex is guaranteed by both Article 14 and Protocol 12 to the Convention. In addition, the European Social Charter establishes enjoyment of economic and social rights without discrimination.

The "Istanbul Convention" has a strong focus on women and girls in as far as they experience gender-based violence, such as stalking, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic violence, forced sterilisation and forced abortion. The Convention contains a range of measures to prevent gender-based violence against girls, aiming to protect girls against such violence and prosecute the perpetrators.

The Committee of Ministers adopted several recommendations in this field:

- Recommendation on Gender Mainstreaming in Education (CM/Rec(2007)13) puts forward a set of comprehensive measures which the member states need to put in place to ensure effective gender mainstreaming in education.
- Recommendation on Gender Equality and Media (CM/Rec(2013)1) provides specific guidelines and suggests action to ensure gender equality and to combat gender stereotyping.
- Recommendation on Preventing and Combating Sexism (CM/Rec(2019)1) contains the first-ever internationally agreed definition of sexism, and proposes a set of concrete measures to combat this widespread phenomenon, including the use of legislation and policies and awareness raising initiatives. The Recommendation proposes specific tools and measures to prevent and combat sexism and sexist behaviour in the areas of language and communications, the Internet and social media, media and advertising.

More information on the work for gender equality can be found here: [www.coe.int/equality](http://www.coe.int/equality)

Gender Matters is a Council of Europe manual on gender-based violence affecting young people. The manual is addressed to youth workers and educators and provides information about gender-based violence and related social, political and legal issues. It provides very practical methods and resources for education and awareness-raising activities with young people based on non-formal education.



- 1 [Council of Europe gender equality strategy 2018-2023](#)
- 2 [www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual\\_health/sh\\_definitions/en](http://www.who.int/reproductivehealth/topics/sexual_health/sh_definitions/en)
- 3 [Joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on harmful practices](#)
- 4 [Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 2135 \(2016\), Female genital mutilation in Europe](#)

“ Because of the lack of education on AIDS, discrimination, fear, panic, and lies surrounded me.

*Ryan White, Child's Rights Activist fighting against AIDS-related discrimination*



### Related activities

A Body of knowledge  
Blindfolded  
Comasito Reporter  
Dear Diary  
Rabbit Rights  
Sailing to a New Land  
Silent Speaker

## Health

### The right to health

The right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, to the facilities for treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health, is recognised by the CRC. It includes not only access to healthcare services but also conditions that determine our health, including access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation and housing, adequate food, healthy working and environmental conditions, and access to health-related education and information. This right is closely related the main principles of the CRC, the right to life, survival and development, as well as other human rights, particularly the right to social security, the right to rest and leisure and the right to an adequate standard of living. This relationship goes both ways: on the one hand, human rights violations can have serious health consequences, for example, suffering any form of violence. On the other hand, poor health can be an obstacle to being able to benefit properly from other rights – such as the right to an adequate standard of living and the right to education.

The children's right "to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds" includes information related to health, reproduction and sexuality (Article 13). Children and their parents should have access to education and be supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breast-feeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents. It is of crucial importance, because the right to health covers also freedoms, such as the right to control one's health and body and the right to be free from non-consensual medical treatment and experiments.



Health is not just an individual concern, it is also an economic and political issue: inequality and poverty frequently lie at the root of sickness and disease, and the availability of healthcare is always politically defined. Children are entitled to special protection to ensure that they are able to access their human rights at this crucial period of their development. Protecting children's right to good health includes preventative care and health education, as well as protection from abuse and exploitation and access to rehabilitation services.



To what extent does discrimination or poverty affect the health of the children you work with?

## Health issues for Children in Europe

Health in Europe, as measured by life expectancy at birth, is better than in most other regions of the world. However, there are significant differences according to age, gender and country, and within the same country. Most of these inequalities originate in socio-economic differences. Poorer people and those living in poorer areas have less access to health services and care (availability, affordability and quality), and tend to be in worse health and die younger than people who are better off. Other factors such as diet, physical activity, tobacco use, harmful alcohol consumption, and the provision and quality of health services, are often linked to overall economic circumstances, and play an important role in worsening conditions of health. Common health concerns for children and young people in Europe include the following.

### Communicable Diseases

Children need protection from diseases of all kinds, starting with maternal and child healthcare, good nutrition and immunisation. The number of children not vaccinated against preventable disease is increasing and puts all children's health at risk.

### Non-Communicable Diseases

Diseases related to inadequate water, environmental degradation, sanitation and hygiene represent a significant health challenge in some European countries. The UN define safe drinking water and sanitation as a human right derived from the right to an adequate standard of living and is inextricably related to the right to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, as well as the right to life and human dignity.

### Mental health

Health is not purely a physical and medical issue. Between 10% and nearly 30% of children in Europe are estimated to have mental health related problems<sup>1</sup>. There is general agreement that "mental illness is increasingly being recognized as the most significant health concern for children and adolescents in developed countries."<sup>2</sup> Mental health disorders of children and adolescents seriously interfere with the way they think, feel and act. Children suffering from neglect, witnessing conflict at home, or experiencing physical or psychological violence, discrimination or bullying in school, often suffer from low self-esteem and show poor results at school.

### Obesity

Among children, a 2014 study showed that on average, one in three children were overweight or obese in the WHO European region. In some parts of southern Europe, one in two children are overweight. Boys continue to be more likely to be overweight or obese than girls. Obesity carries particular

dangers for children: obese children have a much greater risk of developing Type 2 diabetes, suffering from hypertension, having difficulty sleeping and developing psychosocial problems.

## Alcohol, Drugs and Tobacco

Europe has the highest rates of alcohol and tobacco use in the world<sup>5</sup> – for both adults and children, despite restrictions on purchase under the age of 18. One fifth of young people aged 15 and over in the WHO European Region report ‘heavy episodic drinking’ – which means five or more drinks on one occasion. In the EU, one in every seven deaths in men, and one in every 13 deaths in women in the 15–64 age group was due to alcohol. Europe also has the highest prevalence of tobacco smoking among adults (28%), and some of the highest rates of tobacco use by adolescents. Exposure to smoking is directly related to severe respiratory health problems, such as asthma and reduced lung functioning. These may start in infancy and persist for someone’s entire life.

## Disability and special needs

An estimated 20% of the world’s population is directly or indirectly affected by disability, including those affected as family members and caregivers. Many children with disabilities require extensive and lifelong medical treatment, as well as substantive learning support – and all children have a right to such treatment and support derived from the right to the highest attainable standard of health. However, the overall health of a disabled child requires that emotional and psychological needs are addressed, as much as physical needs. The families of disabled children have a right to services that will allow them to care for their disabled child in everyday family life. The social model of disability emphasises the importance of removing all barriers created by the social and physical environment which inhibit disabled people’s possibility to participate in society and exercise their rights. Public institutions and service providers are obliged to take these needs into account and adjust to them.



What issues impact the access of the children you work with to the right to health? What needs to happen to ensure that they all can enjoy this fundamental human right?

## Child-friendly healthcare

Although the rights of children to health and healthcare are well established, they are often not translated into practice within healthcare and children’s services. The *Council of Europe Guidelines on child-friendly healthcare* propose an integrated approach that places children’s rights, needs and resources at the centre of healthcare services, taking into account their family and social environment.<sup>6</sup> The five principles – participation, promotion, protection, prevention and provision – are particularly relevant to the child-friendly healthcare approach.

## Participation

The principle of participation has three dimensions in the health field. On the individual decision-making level, if the child is able to consent to an intervention according to law, the intervention may only be carried out after the child has given his or her free and informed consent. At the second level, children should be given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience after they have used healthcare services. At the third level, children should be involved in public decision-making procedures on healthcare issues, including the assessment, planning and improvement of healthcare services.

## Promotion

Health promotion includes all actions that allow children to become more involved in their own health and increase their exposure to positive determinants of health, as well as factors in healthcare services and settings which will improve outcomes. Children having repeated or long-term contact with health services should be able to maintain contact with their families and friends; their education or future health should not be impaired through a prolonged stay in hospital.

## Protection

All children require protection from potential health hazards, including while using health services, but some children are more vulnerable than others either because they have a long-term condition that impairs their abilities, or because they live in sub-optimal circumstances. Child-friendly reporting systems should be put in place and professionals working with and for children should be subject to regular screening to ensure their suitability to work with children.

## Prevention

Prevention aims to avoid future health, social or emotional problems with actions such as reducing adverse health determinants, preventing the development of a disease or condition or preventing its impact on the lifestyle of the patient in order to prevent harm caused by a service or intervention. This includes vaccination and screening programmes, as well as education and awareness-raising activities, particularly about children's rights to health and healthcare.

## Provision

All children should have equitable access to quality services which contribute to the health and well-being of children and families. Specific healthcare provision may be needed for more vulnerable children, such as children with disabilities, children in residential institutions, homeless and street children, children living in low-income families, Roma children, migrant children, refugee and asylum-seeking children, unaccompanied children, and abused and neglected children.

## Health education

The positive relationship between education and health is widely acknowledged. This is a reciprocal relationship: better education generally results in better health. Better health, in turn, enables people to invest more time, money and energy in education. The main aim of health education is to inform people about healthy attitudes and practices in order to bring about changes in behaviour. Children need to understand that they are partly responsible for the state of their own health and can influence the health of other people in their family and community.

Effective health education provides children with learning experiences that build understanding, and encourage positive attitudes and healthy decisions to last throughout their lives. Important issues include the following: the state of their emotional health and promoting a positive self-image; respect and care for the human body; physical fitness; an awareness of harmful addictions such as alcohol, tobacco and other drugs; positive nutrition; safe sexual relationships. Sexuality education is of central importance for teenagers, helping them to develop a healthy body awareness and be safe from unwanted pregnancy, sexually transmitted diseases and sexual violence.

## My Hero is You, Storybook for Children on COVID-19

The book *My Hero is You* was developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee Reference Group on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings in co-operation with global, regional and country based experts. A global survey was carried out to assess children's mental health and psychosocial needs during the COVID-19 outbreak. A framework of topics to be addressed through the story was developed using the survey results of more than 1,700 children, parents, care-givers and teachers from around the world. The book was translated and shared through storytelling to children in several countries affected by COVID-19.

More information:

<https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/>



## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

The **Revised European Social Charter** refers to health in Article 11, which states that “everyone has the right to benefit from any measures enabling them him to enjoy the highest possible standard of health attainable”. Article 13 states that “anyone without adequate resources has the right to social and medical assistance”.

### United Nations

Health is a fundamental human right, protected by Article 25 (1) of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which relates the right to health to the right to an adequate standard of living:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

The same article also acknowledges the right of children to “special care and assistance”. This right is further developed in several international human rights instruments, in particular in Article 12 of the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** (ICESCR).

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- 1 Ravens-Sieberer, U. & Ottová-Jordan, V. 'Children's Mental Health in Europe: The Current Situation and its Implications', available at: <https://www.hindawi.com/journals/isrn/2013/419530/>
  - 2 Suhrcke M, Pillas D and Selai C. (2008). 'Economic aspects of mental health in children and adolescents', in World Health Organization. Social cohesion for mental well-being among adolescents. Copenhagen: WHO
  - 3 WHO. Alcohol use in adolescents: [www.euro.who.int/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0017/303470/HBSC-No.7-factsheet\\_Alcohol.pdf](http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0017/303470/HBSC-No.7-factsheet_Alcohol.pdf)
  - 4 Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec(2011) on [Guidelines on childfriendly health care](#)

“ I am very happy, so much safe and peace and play, there is no bombings.

*Bana Alabed, Syrian girl tweeting during the siege of Aleppo*



## Migration

### Migration in the XXI century

Migration is an ancient and wide phenomenon which has accelerated in speed and scale in recent times. It is estimated that children represent around a quarter of all migrants worldwide. In 2016, more than 100,000 undocumented child migrants entered Italy, Greece, Bulgaria and Spain, while Germany alone received over 260,000 asylum applications from children.<sup>1</sup> Children move within the European continent or arrive from non-European states on their own, often having become separated from family members during the journey. The reasons are diverse: some children escape war, conflict, violence or natural disasters; others travel to be reunited with their family, to study or to achieve economic objectives. Many of these children suffer violations of their rights on the way to and upon reaching Europe.

#### Related activities

A Long Journey  
Sailing to a New Land  
Waterdrops  
What is in my Bag ?

According to Europol, at least 10,000 migrant children went missing after arriving to Europe in 2015, with many feared of having been exploited and abused for sexual or labour purposes. Children on the move, especially without the protection of their families, are extremely vulnerable.

## Who are the migrant children?

'Migrant children' is an umbrella term referring to children who move away from their place of usual residence or born to such parents who moved away, within the country or across borders, temporarily or permanently, with or without their parents or relatives, for a variety of reasons.

- Refugee children: children who were granted international protection, alone or with their parents, based on the 1951 "Geneva Convention", in another country because of a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinions.
- Asylum-seeker children: children who seek safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and await a decision on their application for refugee status.
- Unaccompanied or separated children: unaccompanied children who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who is responsible for doing so, or separated children who have been separated from both parents or other primary caregivers, but not necessarily from other relatives.
- Internally-displaced children (IDPs): children who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, alone or with their families because of an armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border.
- Irregular migrant children: children or children to parents who arrived regularly into a country but become irregular due to administrative overstay, or, alternatively, those who arrived irregularly into a country (including smuggling and human trafficking).
- Stateless children: children who are not considered a national by any state thus do not enjoy the diplomatic protection of a state and the right to return.

There are numerous other categories of migrant children: for example, European citizens, including children, are free to move within the European Union and enjoy the same rights as the citizens of the state they are residing in. All these children are migrants, unless there is a specific context (e.g. children fleeing wars); the term 'migrant children' can be used without any particular concerns.

The UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1951 "Refugee Convention") and its Protocol are key legal documents as they set out the rights of refugees and the responsibilities of states that provide asylum. In 2018, UN member states adopted the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, to recognise both the dignity, equal and inalienable rights of everyone, as well as the right to freedom of movement and the right to seek asylum and safeguard of human rights of non-citizens in other countries.

## Access to rights and child-friendly procedures

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) applies to all children within the jurisdiction of a member state without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or their parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status, including migration status. Refugee and migrant children should be treated first and foremost as children, they should enjoy all the rights guaranteed to them without discrimination, and their best interests should be the primary consider-

ation in all actions and decisions affecting them.

Lack of accurate and reliable information makes refugee and migrant children unable to access their rights and understand the procedures affecting them. Children experience additional stress and anxiety and it makes them even more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, especially if they are unaccompanied or separated from their families. They should receive information in a child-friendly manner, which means information is adapted to the child's age, maturity, language, gender and culture. Children should be informed that they have the right:

- **to a life free from violence:** children should be protected from all forms of violence; if they fall victim to human trafficking, sexual or labour exploitation, they should be provided with victim assistance and services; furthermore, the state should take all the necessary steps to investigate the case and prosecute the offenders.
- **to seek asylum:** unaccompanied or separated children are routinely denied entry at borders or detained without the opportunity to seek asylum. Children fleeing persecution or serious harm in their own country, as any adult, have the right to ask for international protection. Asylum-seeker and refugee children should receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of their rights.
- **to non-refoulement:** no child should be returned to a country where there are substantial grounds for believing that there is a real risk of irreparable harm to the child, such as torture, underage recruitment or participation in hostilities.
- **to family reunification:** children should be assisted in tracing their parents or other members of their family, and in obtaining information about the reunification procedure. In case no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment in the country.
- **to liberty:** children should not be detained for reasons related to their, or their parents' or guardians' migration status, for example identification, assessment of their age, screening of their health or determination of their legal status. Detention has severe short- and long-term effects on children's physical and mental health. Children should not be held in detention even with their parents; in such a case, alternative measures should be put in place for the whole family.
- **to an effective remedy against the unlawful interference with their rights:** children must be informed about the right to an effective remedy that is independent of any such right belonging to any accompanying adult.

Refugee and migrant children can get access to child-friendly support and services based on their age. Any person who claims to be a child should be treated as such until proven otherwise and never be detained with unrelated adults or treated as an adult in any other way. In most countries, age-assessment procedures are based on medical examinations aiming solely at determining the person's biological age, without taking into account psychological, cognitive or behavioural factors. These procedures should be conducted in a language the child understands and in a child-friendly manner: the children's best interests and needs should be the primary consideration, their rights and dignity should be respected, and they should be given the opportunity to exercise their right to be heard and influence any decision to be taken.

## Effective protection

Refugee and migrant children must be effectively protected in accordance with the existing norms protecting their rights and their specific needs and status. Protection includes ensuring appropriate accommodation and access to health care and social services, prompt responses to disappearances, restoring family links, and protection from trafficking, sexual abuse and other forms of violence.

The European Social Charter secures children's rights in two ways: some of the rights have specific relevance for children and other rights are exclusively for children. The monitoring body of the Charter, the European Social Committee, state that migrant children, even in an irregular situation, have the right to housing, healthcare and social and medical assistance; Article 17 of the Charter on the right of children and young persons to social, legal and economic protections also applies to them. If irregular migrant children are not provided with these rights, they would be exposed to serious threats to their rights to life, health and psychological and physical integrity, and to the preservation of their human dignity.

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings requires states to create protective environments to make children less vulnerable to trafficking as well as to develop preventative measures targeting children in the most vulnerable situations as unaccompanied or separated children and irregular migrant children. Child victims of trafficking, irrespective of their migration status, should be provided with assistance within the framework of a National Referral Mechanism for trafficked children, which itself should be integrated into the general child protection system, bringing together social, health, and education services. The timely appointment of a legal guardian is essential in ensuring the protection and rehabilitation of unaccompanied children who are identified as victims of trafficking, to break the links with traffickers, and to minimise the risk of children going missing.

The Council of Europe "Lanzarote Convention" protects all children from sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, irrespective of their nationality, family or migration status in the territory of the states that ratified the convention. Children affected by migration are particularly exposed to a risk of sexual violence, especially children who arrive unaccompanied or go missing after their arrival to Europe. For example, reception centres need to provide adequate protection for children and accommodate them separately from adults in order to avoid the risk of sexual abuse or exploitation. Staff in contact with children should be adequately trained and screened in order to give the best possible protection to migrant children.

## Enhancing refugee and migrant children's integration

The social inclusion of refugee and migrant children should be enhanced through education and training opportunities. Welcoming and inclusive societies should help refugee and migrant children grow up in a nurturing environment and provide them with support for their transition into adulthood. Participatory work with them is vital to support their development and inclusion, and combat radicalisation.

'Life Projects' is an approach developed by the Council of Europe with the aim of supporting unaccompanied children to acquire and strengthen the skills necessary to become independent, responsible and active in society.<sup>2</sup> Life projects are individual tools, based on an agreement between the unaccompanied child and the competent authorities, that define the child's future prospects, promote their best interests without discrimination, and pursue objectives relating to their social integration, personal and cultural development.

The Council of Europe adopted a set recommendations for member states to ensure that young refugees receive additional temporary support after the age of 18 in order to enable them to access their rights, and to recognise the role of youth work in promoting better access to these rights.<sup>3</sup> The 18<sup>th</sup> birthday of a refugee child is the end of child protection services, an abrupt and often unprepared change in accessing housing and support such as welfare, education, and health care, especially for unaccompanied or separated children lacking the support of their families.



## Relevant international instruments and initiatives

### United Nations

- [Convention relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [Protocol to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees](#)
- [Global Compact on Refugees](#)
- [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

The 2030 Agenda recognises migration as a key dimension of sustainable development, including references to migration and decent work, protection from forced labour and the need to promote safe migration, the urgency of reducing cost of remittances, and the imperative of collecting disaggregated data on migration. Sustainable Development Goals targets 8.8, 10.7, 10.c and 17.18 specifically address migration as a key dimension of sustainable development.

### Council of Europe

The Council of Europe aims to ensure that all refugee and migrant children can benefit from the protection measures set out in international and European legal instruments and enjoy the full realisation of their rights. Several steps in line with this were undertaken to respond the ongoing challenge of protecting the rights of refugee and migrant children.

- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2019\)11](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on effective guardianship for unaccompanied and separated children in the context of migration
- [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2019\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood, 2019
- [How to convey child-friendly information to children in migration](#), A handbook for frontline professionals
- [Age assessment for children in migration - A guide for policy-makers](#) (2019)
- [We are children, hear us out! Children speak out about age assessment](#) (2019) Report on consultations with unaccompanied children on the topic of age assessment
- [Promoting child-friendly approaches in the area of migration - Standards, guidance and current practices](#) (2019)
- [Guide for Parliamentarians: Visiting places where children are deprived of their liberty as a result of immigration procedures](#) (2017)
- [Age assesment: Council of Europe member states' policies, procedures and practices respectful of children's rights in the context of migration](#) (2017)

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- 1 UNHCR, UNICEF, and IOM, [Refugee and Migrant Children – Including Unaccompanied and Separated Children- in Europe, Overview of Trends in 2016](#), April 2017
  - 2 [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2007\)9](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors
  - 3 [Recommendation CM/Rec\(2019\)4](#) of the Committee of Ministers to member states on supporting young refugees in transition to adulthood

“ We are speaking up for those who don't have anyone listening to them, for those who can't talk about it just yet, and for those who will never speak again.

*Emma González, Advocate for gun control*



### Related activities

- A Constitution for Our Group
- Blindfolded
- Every Vote Counts
- Human Rights in the News
- Our flag
- Silent Speaker
- Telephone Call!
- Where Do You Stand?
- Who Should Decide?

## Participation

### Child participation as a human right

Child participation means that children and young people under the age of 18, individually and in a group, have the right, the means, the space, the opportunity and, where necessary, the support to freely express their views, to be heard and to contribute to decision making on matters affecting them, while their views are given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.<sup>1</sup> The rights of children and young people to participate applies without discrimination on any grounds including race, ethnicity, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, disability, birth, sexual orientation or other status.

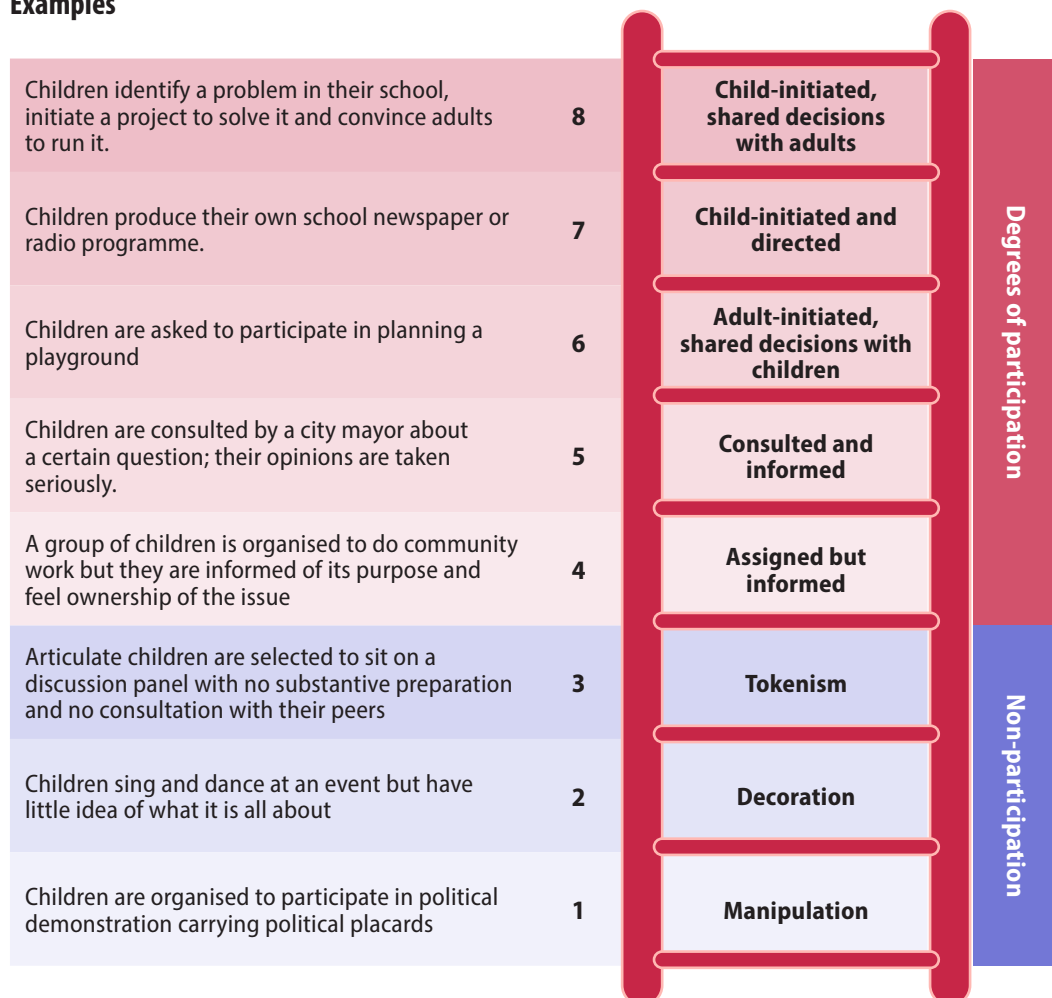
Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) guarantees the participation of children by declaring the right to be heard. This right should be exercised on two levels: on the level of individual decision making – including judicial and administrative procedures – and through involvement in public decision making regarding all matters affecting children. The “matters” should be interpreted broadly, to include not only the issues covered by the CRC, but in accordance with the clause “affecting the child”, in order to make sure the process is relevant for the life of the children. The child has the right “to express those views freely”, without manipulation, influence or pressure. Every child, who is capable of forming their views should be heard: this is not a limitation but an obligation on the state to assess this capacity on a case-by-case basis instead of imposing age limits. The views of the children must be “given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child” and they should be informed about the outcome of any process and told how their views have been considered. At the same time, consideration needs to be given to the notion of the evolving capacities of the child, and to direction and guidance from parents.

Participation should not be limited to a one-off event, but should be an ongoing process which contributes to building a culture of participation throughout the whole of a child’s environment – in the family, at school, in caring institutions, in the healthcare system, in the community and society as a whole. For both adults and children, the development of such a culture of participation can be a very powerful exercise in democracy.

The most important precondition for meaningful participation of children and young people is that adults respect their ability to take part in decisions, and recognise them as partners. A democratic partnership will be the result, taking the place of traditional relationships built on adults’ power and control over children. Without respect for the children’s abilities, participation is likely to be tokenistic: children may give their opinions, but will have no influence on the result.

## Models of participation

### Examples



Between tokenism and full involvement and influence, there are various degrees of participation. These are well illustrated by the eight-stage 'Ladder of participation', developed by Roger Hart<sup>2</sup>. The first three stages are manipulation, decoration and tokenism, regarded as false forms of participation. Genuine forms of participation include the 'Assigned and informed' stage, in which specific roles are given to children, and the 'Consultation and informed' stage in which children give advice on programmes run by adults and they understand how their opinion will affect the outcome. The most advanced stages are 'Adult-initiated' participation, a shared decision-making process with children, and 'Child-initiated and directed' projects in which adults appear only in a supportive, advisory role. This last stage provides children with an opportunity for joint decision making, co-management and shared responsibility, with adults and children accessing each other's information and learning from each other's life experiences.

Ireland's National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making<sup>3</sup> translated Article 12 of the CRC into a model composed of four distinct and interrelated elements in a chronological order:

- **Space:** Children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their view
- **Voice:** Children must be facilitated to express their view
- **Audience:** The view must be listened to
- **Influence:** The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.<sup>4</sup>



Source of the picture: Ireland National Strategy



Is there a strategy or policy on children and young people's participation in your country?

## Principles for promoting children's participation

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child set nine principles of effective and meaningful child participation.<sup>5</sup>

**Transparent and informative** – Children should be given information about their right to participate in a child-friendly and accessible format. The information should include how they will be able to participate, why they have been given the opportunity to participate, the scope and limitation of their participation and the impact that they will be able to have.

**Voluntary** – Children have the right not to exercise the right to participation. Children should be able to choose whether or not they would like to participate and should be informed and able to withdraw from activities at any time. Children should not be coerced into participating or expressing their views.

**Respectful** – Children should be treated with respect and provided with opportunities to express their views freely and to initiate ideas. Staff should also respect and gain an understanding of the family, school and cultural context of children's lives.

**Relevant** – Participation should build on children's own knowledge and should be focused on issues relevant to their lives and the local context. In addition, space needs to be created to enable children to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important.

**Child-friendly** – Child-friendly approaches should be used to ensure children are well prepared for their participation and are able to contribute meaningfully to activities. Since children need different levels of support, participation approaches and methods should be designed or adapted based on children's ages and evolving capacities.

**Inclusive** – Children's participation should provide opportunities for vulnerable children to be involved and should challenge existing patterns of discrimination. Particular efforts should be made to enable participation of children and young people with fewer opportunities, including those who are vulnerable or have special needs. Staff should be sensitive to the cultures of all children participating.

**Supported by training** – Staff must have the knowledge and capacity to facilitate meaningful child participation. This may involve training and preparation prior to engaging children in activities, as well as ongoing support as required. Children themselves can be involved as peer trainers and facilitators on how to promote and practice effective participation.

**Safe and sensitive to risk** – Adults working with children have a duty of care. Staff should take every precaution to minimise the risks to children of abuse and exploitation and any other negative consequences of participation. Children should be aware of their right to be protected from harm and know where to turn for help if needed.

**Accountable** – Following their participation, children should be provided with feedback and/or follow-up regarding how their views have been interpreted, taken into account and how they have influenced the outcomes. Where appropriate and possible, children should be informed about the opportunity to be involved in follow-up processes and activities.

## Opportunities for involvement

There are numerous opportunities for children to participate in decision making, individually or in a group, beginning in their families and extending even to the level of local or national political decisions. Examples of successful participation of children are available all over Europe.

**In the family:** Children's participation can should start at home at the earliest age, with children playing a role in family decision making. Serving as a model, it can contribute to the psychosocial development of the child, better family relationships and even prevention of all forms of violence.

**At school:** Schools can provide important models of meaningful participation. Producing school rules together or entrusting children with decorating the classroom or keeping order can be good starting points, and can help children to identify with their school environment. Although useful, institutions such as school councils will only provide opportunity for genuine participation if the children are given real mandate to make decisions. Children can also participate in addressing school problems such as bullying or other forms of peer violence, and can make important contributions to democratic school life through initiatives such as producing a newsletter or online presence, or organising clubs, festivals or campaigns<sup>2</sup>.

**Leisure activities:** Children's out-of-school programmes can provide them with experiences to illustrate how participation can make a difference. Clubs or associations, child- and youth-led NGOs, street programmes, festivals, and campaigns can all offer various opportunities to exercise democracy. Out-of-school activities can often be complementary to school projects.

**Online activities:** The Internet provides a wealth of opportunities for children and young people to become involved in political debate, surveys, campaigns and organising, or simply practising putting their own point of view across. Combining online and offline activities can provide valuable learning experiences – for example, the #FridaysForFuture campaign that mobilised millions of children around the world to demonstrate on the street and carry out other projects to raise attention to the climate crisis.

**Participation at community level:** A wide range of good practices is available in relation to children's participation in their community, including local or municipal children and youth councils with consultative status in local governance. The Council of Europe have set out that the participation of young people in local and regional life must constitute part of a global policy of citizens' participation in public life. The revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life<sup>2</sup> with concrete ideas and instruments that can be used by young people and local authorities.

**Participation at national level:** The establishment of consultative bodies for children and young people at federal state or national levels, such as children and youth councils, parliaments or forums, is also widespread in Europe, although they differ widely in terms of mandate and structure. Children's right to participate in decisions affecting them should be enshrined in national legislation that can be supported by a national policy to promote children's participation.

**Participation at international level:** International organisations, including the Council of Europe and the United Nations, acknowledge the importance of involving children in their own work whenever it is relevant for children. More and more opportunities are created for children to participate in standard setting as well as monitoring of international human rights conventions. The Council of Europe have called on member states to "support children and young people and their organisations to participate in the monitoring of [...] the implementation of the relevant Council of Europe instruments and other international standards on children's rights."<sup>2</sup> The Council of Europe has extensive experience of involving children in standard setting, recently, in the drafting of the text and the child-friendly version of the Recommendation on Guidelines to respect, protect and fulfil

the rights of the child in the digital environment. Consultations were carried out in eight member states involving more than 200 children who gave outstanding feedback about the process.<sup>9</sup> The Lanzarote Committee, assigned to oversee the implementation of the “Lanzarote Convention”, was the first monitoring body of the Council of Europe consulting children.<sup>10</sup>



Are you aware of good practices of child participation in your school or organisation, at community, regional, national or international level?

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

The Council of Europe Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)2 on participation of children and young people under the age of 18 was developed following comprehensive reviews of the reality of child participation in a number of member states and with the direct involvement of children in the work of the drafting Committee. The Recommendation covers the rights of children and young people to be heard in all settings, including in schools, in communities and in the family, as well as at the national and European level.

The Council of Europe has developed a Child Participation Assessment Tool with 10 specific and measurable indicators to measure progress in the area of children’s participation. The indicators can be used by states to measure progress in implementing Recommendation CM/Rec (2012)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18.

Participation is an important area of the Council of Europe’s work, especially relating to young people. The Council of Europe is almost unique in having introduced a co-management system through the Joint Council on Youth, where representatives of European youth organisations (Advisory Council on Youth) and governments (European Steering Committee for Youth) decide jointly on the youth sector’s priorities, objectives and budgets. The task of the Joint Council, in a spirit of co-management, is to develop a shared position on the youth sector’s overall priorities and objectives.

### United Nations

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child interpreted Article 12 of the CRC on the right to be heard in its General Comment No. 12.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, the Committee developed specific guidelines to involve children in the monitoring of the CRC and in the General Days of Discussions organised biannually.<sup>12</sup>



## Child Participatory Budgeting – Croatia

Participatory budgeting is a process of democratic deliberation and decision making, in which “ordinary” people decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. Such processes are usually only accessible to adults; however, successful experiences with young people and children show that even financial issues can be discussed at a young age.

The Children’s City Council in the city of Opatija (aged 11 to 14) has introduced changes for children through a sustained, open and respectful engagement with the Mayor and officials of the City Council. The Children’s Council makes proposals for the city budget at regular meetings and allocates funding annually to a project that they determine will most benefit children. This initiative has been supported by the Society ‘Our Children’ Opatija since 2001, and offers an example of how sustained engagement of children in public budgeting can help to involve them in setting priorities and making a real contribution to decisions which affect them.

More information is available at: <http://dnd-opatija.hr/en/home/>



- 1 [Recommendation \(2012\)2 of the Committee of the Ministers on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18](#)
- 2 Originally developed by Arnstein, Sherry R.: A Ladder of Citizens Participation, JAIP, Vol 35, No.4, 1969, p. 216-224. <http://lithgow-schmidt.dk/sherry-arnstein/ladder-of-citizen-participation.html> The model was developed by Hart, Roger: Children’s Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 1992, Florence.
- 3 [Ireland’s National Strategy on Children and Young People’s Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020](#)
- 4 The checklist is based on model of Laura Lundy published in her article, “‘Voice’ is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child’ (2007)
- 5 [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 12.](#)
- 6 Dürr, Karlheinz, The School: A democratic learning Programme Education for Democratic Citizenship DGIV/EDU/CIT (2003) 23final, Council of Europe, 2004.
- 7 [Recommendation 128 \(2003\)3 on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life](#)
- 8 [Recommendation \(2012\)2 of the Committee of the Ministers on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18](#)
- 9 [It’s our world: children’s views on the protection of rights in the digital environment](#)
- 10 [Guidelines for Implementation of Child Participation In the 2nd thematic monitoring round of the “Lanzarote Convention” on ‘The protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse facilitated by information and communication technologies \(ICTs\)’](#)
- 11 [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 12.](#)
- 12 For further information see the website of the Committee: [www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/ChildParticipation.aspx](http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/ChildParticipation.aspx)

“ We, youth, are engaged in shaping lasting peace in our communities as positive contributors to peace, justice and reconciliation.

*Amman Declaration on Youth, Peace and Security, 2015*



#### Related activities

Capture the Castle  
Cookie Monster  
From Bystander to Helper  
Picturing Ways Out of Violence  
The Battle for the Orange

## Peace

### Peace and security in Europe

A culture of human rights is a pre-condition for a genuine state of peace because denial of human rights inevitably leads to conflict and violence. However, the reverse also holds true: conflict and violence always result in violations of human rights – and in the case of war, the violations are comprehensive and on a terrible scale. Sustainable, lasting peace and security can only really be attained when all human rights are properly fulfilled.

Children in Europe continue to be affected by armed conflict – both directly and indirectly in open-armed conflicts or in “frozen conflicts”. European nations are involved in many of these international conflicts, often as participant and contributor – for example, in providing arms, support and training. Armed conflicts elsewhere in the world are also responsible for children seeking refuge and asylum.

There are also non-military threats to peace and security within Europe. Many of these are the result of man-made environmental crises such as climate change, soil degradation and industrial farming practices. Extreme weather events such as hurricanes, floods and drought have increased in recent years as a result of global climate change, and these have led to insecurity of home, health and even threats to life in some parts of Europe. Other potential sources of conflict in Europe include widening inequality, both economic and cultural. Such inequalities inevitably lead to intolerance, which often displays itself in the form of racism and can take violent forms.


In an increasingly high-tech, globalised world, the nature of conflict has changed, but there are still far too many casualties among civilians, including children. According to UNICEF, 2019 concluded a “deadly decade” for children in conflict with more than 170,000 grave violations against children.<sup>1</sup> This is equivalent to 45 violations every day for the last 10 years, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, abductions, denial of humanitarian access, child recruitment and attacks on schools and hospitals. Child refugees make up more than half of the total numbers of refugees worldwide: more than 11 million children have been forced to flee their homes and are living as refugees<sup>2</sup>. This does not include the millions of children on the move who are not recognised refugees.

## Peace and human security

Human security is a relatively recent concept which recognises the interrelation between violence and all kinds of deprivation. The concept of human security refers to the protection of individuals and communities both from direct threats of physical violence, as well as from indirect threats resulting from such things as poverty, social or political inequality, or natural disasters and disease. A country or region may not be under immediate threat of attack, but it can still be insecure if, for example, it is unable to maintain the rule of law, if large populations are displaced by famine or decimated by disease, or if people’s basic survival needs are not met.

Human security advances human rights because it addresses grave threats to human rights and supports the development of systems that give people the building blocks of survival: respect for dignity and autonomy, and essential freedoms, such as freedom from want and freedom from fear. In 2012, a Resolution of the UN General Assembly determined that “the notion of human security includes ... the right of people to live in freedom and dignity, free from poverty and despair. All individuals, in particular vulnerable people, are entitled to freedom from fear and freedom from want, with an equal opportunity to enjoy all their rights and fully develop their human potential...”.

Approaches to human security advocate strategies of protection and empowerment: protection helps to shield people from direct dangers, but also seeks to develop norms, processes and institutions that maintain security. Empowerment enables people to develop their potential and become full participants, including being involved in decision-making.

 Which factors threaten the human security in your community? How does this insecurity affect children?

## Peace as a human right

The Preamble of the CRC declares that children should be brought up in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity. Peace is not just the absence of conflict and violence; it is a way of living together so that all members of society can see their human rights fulfilled. Peace is seen as essential to the realisation of human rights and many see it as a human right in itself.

In 2016, the UN General Assembly approved the Declaration on the Right to Peace. Article 1 of the Declaration states that “everyone has the right to enjoy peace such that all human rights are promoted and protected and development is fully realized”. This is in line with 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals that affirms “there can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development”. An earlier UN Declaration on a Culture of Peace was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1999. According to this document, the responsibility for promoting a culture of peace rests with all members of the community, including parents, teachers, politicians, journalists and civil society institutions and organisations.

## Peace education

Peace education is education that reflects Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes not simply the right to education but one which is “directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms”. Such an education should promote “understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups” and further “the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace”. The Convention on the Rights of the Child also declares that “education of the child should be directed to ... the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin”.

Peace education teaches the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavioural change which will enable children, young people and adults to manage conflict and avoid violence, both overt and structural, to resolve disagreements peacefully, and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an interpersonal, inter-group, national or international level. Peace education improves children’s self-esteem, develops their problem-solving skills and helps them to avoid unsafe behaviour.

Peace education is an important element of many educational approaches which aim to promote human rights and a culture of peace and democracy, starting with human rights education. Peace education seeks to understand and eliminate the causes of conflict, such as poverty and all forms of discrimination, as well as to teach skills of conflict management. Peaceful resolution of conflict is a skill which can be cultivated and learned from early childhood.

Typically, children experience conflict with their peers, with parents, teachers and other adults. Conflict should not be seen as inherently negative or damaging: it can usually be transformed, often in a positive direction. In contrast, violence – the aggressive use of force or abusive exercise of power – always results in injury and destruction. For this reason, society has developed many ways of handling conflict using non-violent methods such as dialogue, negotiation and mediation. ‘Dialogue’ between individuals is the essence of human understanding and the only way to reach consensus; ‘negotiation’ means direct discussion between the disputing parties, while ‘mediation’ involves a neutral, third party.<sup>5</sup>

Learning to deal with conflict and to refrain from violence is an important lesson in socialisation for all children. Conflicts can be resolved in three different ways: a “win-win” solution, which allows

both parties to benefit, a “win-lose” solution in which only one party benefits at the expense of the other, and the “lose-lose” solution in which neither party benefits. The following technique of conflict resolution in six stages can be applied to any situation:

<b>1 Identify needs:</b>	“What do you need? What exactly do you want?”
<b>2 Define the problem</b>	“What do you believe to be the problem in this case?”
<b>3 Seek a number of solutions</b>	“Who can think of a possible way of solving the problem?”
<b>4 Evaluate solutions</b>	“Would you be pleased with this solution?”
<b>5 Decide which solution is the best</b>	“Do you both accept this solution? Has the problem been solved?”
<b>6 See how the solution is applied</b>	“Let us talk once more about this situation and make sure that the problem really has been solved.” <sup>4</sup>



How do the children you work with usually react to conflict? Are there ways you can help them learn to manage and resolve conflict more effectively?

## Human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

The Preamble to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) describes the close connection between peace and human rights, stating that fundamental freedoms are:

the foundation of justice and peace in the world and are best maintained on the one hand by an effective political democracy and on the other by a common understanding and observance of the Human Rights upon which they depend.

Since 2003, the European Youth Centre has been home to the annual [Youth Peace Camp](#) which allows young people and youth organisations from conflict-stricken regions to engage in dialogue and conflict-transformation activities based on human rights education and intercultural learning. The Youth for Democracy programme prioritises the role of youth organisations in peace building and social cohesion.

### United Nations

Articles 38 and 39 of the Convention on the Right of the Child concern the rights of children in conditions of armed conflict. Article 38 calls for “all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict”. Article 39 calls for the “physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration” of children who fall victim to any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse or armed conflicts. Of particular concern is the protection of the child from service in armed forces. Article 38 bans children under 15 from participation in direct hostilities; this minimum age was raised to 18 by the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict.

The Security Council adopted in 2015 in the Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace and Security which calls on “all relevant actors, including when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to take into account, as appropriate, the participation and views of youth”, and recognises that “their marginalisation is detrimental to building sustainable peace in all societies”<sup>5</sup>. The resolution identifies five areas of action: Participation, Protection, Prevention, Partnership, and Disengagement and Reintegration.

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1 [www.unicef.org/press-releases/2019-concludes-deadly-decade-children-conflict-more-170000-grave-violations-verified](http://www.unicef.org/press-releases/2019-concludes-deadly-decade-children-conflict-more-170000-grave-violations-verified)

2 [www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html](http://www.unhcr.org/uk/figures-at-a-glance.html)

3 Education for conflict prevention and peacebuilding: meeting the global challenges of the 21st century, UNESCO, 2012. Pp.15-16.

4 EDC/HRE Volume VI: Teaching democracy – A collection of models for democratic citizenship and human rights education, Council of Europe, 2009. pp. 80-82.

5 United Nations Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015)

“ Children shouldn’t be worried about paying the lunch debt of their classmates.

*Amariyanna Copeny, child activist, about the water crisis in her hometown, Flint, USA*



## Poverty

### What is poverty?

Poverty is historically defined according to the income or expenditure of a household based on absolute or relative standards. Absolute poverty is a situation when a family is living below the poverty line, while relative poverty indicates that a household is considered poor in relation to others in the same society. Measuring poverty in monetary terms has several limitations, and children are often invisible because the focus is on the household in which resources are not necessarily shared equally. On the contrary, a multidimensional approach to poverty takes into account material deprivations that might affect children, such as access to school, water, and sanitation. It is therefore conceptualised as denial of choice and opportunities due to the lack of resources that leads to social exclusion.<sup>1</sup>

It is important to understand how children perceive poverty and social exclusion. In 2014, a joint project of the Council of Europe and the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children gave voice to children to share how austerity measures affected their lives and the realisation of their rights.<sup>2</sup> Children across Europe explained deprivation as a force to make choices and sacrifices, reconsider values and decide what is important. Children testified to being deprived of schoolbooks, access to sport clubs, swimming pools and playgrounds, family and school support services, family holidays and recreational activities with friends. Nevertheless, children proved to be resilient: they visited food banks and second-hand shops, they looked for alternative solutions for public transportation, and wanted to play a role in shaping a better future for all.

### Related activities

Cookie Monster  
Dear Diary  
If the World was 20 People...  
Reading the Label  
Take a Small Step Forward  
What a Wonderful World  
What if...  
World Summer Camp

Children are overrepresented amongst the poor but poverty does not affect children equally. According to UNICEF, half the people living in poverty are children, 75 million children are living in relative poverty in the world richest countries<sup>5</sup>, and one European child in three is deprived in two or more ways with regard to education, healthcare, social security, housing, basic services and food.<sup>6</sup> The European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights estimates that there are 25 million children living in low-income or low-employment rate households and/or experiencing material deprivation in the 28 member states.<sup>7</sup> The percentage of children at risk of poverty or social exclusion differs widely within the EU (13.8% in Denmark while 49.2% in Romania) and is more likely to affect certain groups of children such as Roma children or children with a migratory background.

The urgency to combat child poverty has been acknowledged at the international level. Within the framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, states agreed to reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty by 2030. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stated that the implementation of comprehensive strategies and targets aimed at eradicating child poverty “is currently lagging far behind expectations and the actual needs of children” in Europe, and therefore urged member states to prioritise ending child poverty in terms of political commitment and budgetary resources.<sup>8</sup>

## Child poverty as deprivation of rights

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognises children’s right to a standard of living adequate to meet their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, and exhorts governments to assist families who cannot provide these basic needs for their children, especially with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing. The CRC also highlights the right to receive social security benefits necessary for the child to develop and live in good conditions. Evidence from many countries continually shows that children who grow up in poverty are generally more vulnerable: they are more likely to be in poor health, to have learning and behavioural difficulties, to underachieve at school, to have lower skills and aspirations and eventually to be low-paid and unemployed. Poverty thus impacts negatively on various children’s human rights.

The European Social Charter (ESCR)<sup>9</sup> goes further than any other international convention by declaring, in addition, the right to protection against poverty and social inclusion that applies to children. The ESCR incorporates several other provisions with relevance to combating child poverty: the right of children and young people to social, legal and economic protection (Article 17) and social rights such as access to health care, the right to social security, the right to social and medical assistance, the right to benefit from social services, the right to housing and the right to social, legal and economic protection of the family (Article 16).

Deprivation of children of their social rights constitutes a violation of human rights, whereas poverty might affect the enjoyment of many other children’s rights. Poor children are more vulnerable to maltreatment and neglect because poverty is a key underlying factor contributing to the abuse and exploitation of children. Children should not be removed from their family due only to poverty-related issues; however, it is still a practice in many countries in Europe. Children growing up in poverty are deprived of equal opportunities to participate in play, recreation and cultural activities, ultimately leading to social exclusion. Poverty frequently undermines children’s rights to be heard and to have their views taken into account in all matters affecting them.

In Europe, children with disabilities, children in care, children from minority groups, children on the move or otherwise affected by migration, children deprived of liberty, children in a street situation and children of imprisoned parents are particularly vulnerable. Children belonging to these vulnerable or marginalised groups are at higher risk of poverty, while poverty can reinforce discrimination with regard to those children. Children in general are more likely to be hit by fiscal austerity measures during economic crises such as cuts in social benefits and an increase in taxes.





What are the most significant, long-term effects of poverty on children?

## State measures to combat child poverty

Governments need to address child poverty by ensuring access to social services (education, health, welfare) and providing public services (water, electricity, transportation) for families. Community organisations also play a role in poverty alleviation by providing immediate assistance such as food, clothing, healthcare and education services. Both governments and organisations within civil society can offer income-generating projects, support small business ventures and provide employment opportunities, remedial education and skill-building training courses to poor communities.

Providing people living in poverty with food and shelter is an essential but short-term response. However, alleviating poverty in the long run requires strengthening the participation of poor people in decision-making processes, ensuring community-based development and removing discrimination based on gender, ethnicity and social status. A key tactic to reducing poverty is stimulating economic growth, making markets work better for poor people, and building up their skills. All these are roles that both individuals and institutions, both governmental and civil society must unite to play.

Because child poverty and growing social exclusion are such endangering processes, in recent years several European countries have formulated government strategies to combat them. These integrated strategies aim not only to improve support measures, such as welfare services, healthcare and early childcare for all, but also to support empowerment and capacity building for families and children as well, such as access to quality education for all children, parent education and the promotion of children's participation in various decision-making activities concerning the design of local policies. Combating racism and different forms of discrimination is a key part of such poverty-reduction policies.

## Relevant human rights instruments and initiatives

### Council of Europe

The European Convention on Human Rights, which guarantees civil and political human rights, is complemented by the European Social Charter (ESC), adopted in 1961 and revised in 1996, which guarantees social and economic human rights. As with most human rights instruments, the European Convention on Human Rights contains a strong statement against discrimination. Although it does not specifically name poverty as a reason for social exclusion, it mentions "property ... or other status". Addressing the daily lives of individuals, the European Social Charter covers many of the key components of poverty:

- **Housing:** access to adequate and affordable housing; reduction of homelessness
- **Health:** accessible, effective health-care facilities for the entire population, including preventive illness
- **Education:** free primary and secondary education and vocational guidance; access to vocational and continuing training
- **Employment:** an economic and social policy designed to ensure full employment
- **Legal and social protection:** the right to social security, social welfare and social services; the right to be protected against poverty and social exclusion.

The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-21) identified fighting child poverty as one of the priorities.

The Committee of Ministers adopted in 2015 a Recommendation on Access of young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to social rights calling on member states to develop public policies aiming at “preventing and eradicating the poverty, discrimination, violence and exclusion” faced by young people. The Recommendation was elaborated with input from children and young people taking part in the Enter! project of the youth sector of the Council of Europe.

## United Nations

There are several articles of the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** that oblige states to provide appropriate services, and support its citizens for appropriate living conditions:

- Right to social security
- Right to equal pay for equal work
- Right to rest and leisure
- Right to adequate standard of living
- Right to education
- Right to participate in cultural life

The **Convention on the Rights of the Child** makes extensive provision for the economic well-being of children. While parents are given the principal responsibility for the care, development and support of their child, the state is enjoined to assist parents and guardians if they are unable to adequately care for the child (Article 18). The Convention also entitles all children to:

- the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health (Article 24)
- a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (Article 27)
- the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance (Article 26).

The **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, adopted in 1966, commits the state parties agreed to take steps to achieve progressively the full realisation of the rights enshrined in the covenant to the maximum of their available resources.

Based on international human rights norms and standards, the [UN Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights](#) provide, for the first time, global policy guidelines focusing specifically on the human rights of people living in poverty.

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- 1 [Protecting the Child from Poverty: The Role of Rights in the Council of Europe](#), Council of Europe
  - 2 You can find video and written testimonies from children on the website of the project: [Austerity Bites: Children’s Voices](#), Council of Europe and the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children
  - 3 End Child Poverty Coalition: [www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/children-in-poverty](http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/children-in-poverty)
  - 4 UNICEF, [Innocenti Report Card 14: Building the Future: Children and the Sustainable Development Goals in Rich Countries](#), 2017
  - 5 European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights: [Combating child poverty: an issue of fundamental rights](#), 2018
  - 6 Parliamentary Assembly, [Ending Child Poverty in Europe, Resolution 1995 \(2014\)](#)
  - 7 The European Social Charter has an original version of 1961 and revised version of 1996; the latter has not been ratified by all state parties.

“ Prevention and awareness raising about the risks [of sexual abuse and exploitation] should start at an early age but subjects should be tailored to specific age groups.

*Hungarian children participating at the monitoring of the “Lanzarote Convention”, 2018*



## Violence

### The right to a life free from violence

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) prohibits “all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse” against children (Article 19). Violence against children constitutes a violation of the rights of the child, compromises children’s social development and affects the enjoyment of their other rights. Violence often has devastating short- and long-term mental and physical health consequences, at times persisting across generations. Violence against children remains widespread and falls into four general categories:

**Emotional Abuse:** This can take the form of verbal abuse, mental abuse and psychological maltreatment. Emotional abuse includes acts or failures to act by parents or caretakers, which cause or could cause serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional or mental disorders.

#### Related activities

A Modern Fairytale  
Bullying Scenes  
Capture the Castle  
From Bystander to Helper  
Picturing Ways Out of Violence  
The Battle for the Orange  
Words that Wound

**Neglect:** Failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Neglect may be physical, educational or psychological. Physical neglect includes failure to provide such things as adequate food or clothing, appropriate medical care, proper supervision or protection from the elements. It may include abandonment. Educational neglect includes failing to provide appropriate schooling or to cater for special educational needs, and allowing excessive truancies. Psychological neglect includes an absence of love and emotional support and failure to protect the child from abuse, including allowing him or her to use drugs or alcohol.

**Physical violence:** Inflicting physical injury on a child includes burning, hitting, punching, shaking, kicking, beating or otherwise harming a child. Such injuries, fatal or non-fatal, constitute violence, whether or not the adult intended to cause harm; for example, an injury may result from over-discipline or acts of physical punishment.

**Sexual violence:** Inappropriate sexual behaviour with a child including the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful or psychologically harmful sexual activity, sexual exploitation and use of children in audio or visual images of child sexual abuse. Below the legal age of consent, set by legislation, children are considered to be incapable of consenting to sexual acts. Sexual violence is an abuse of power over a child and a violation of a child's right to normal, healthy, trusting relationships.

Violence may be hidden and hard to detect when committed by people who are part of children's everyday lives, and in places which should be havens for children, such as at school, at home, or in residential institutions. The effects of violence on children are devastating: it undermines their well-being and their ability to learn and socialise normally; it is likely to leave physical and emotional scars that may provoke long-term trauma. Many children are afraid to speak out against the offenders who are known to them, especially in cases of sexual abuse. This silence places a burden of responsibility on all those who work with children of being able to recognise signs of abuse and to report them in all instances.

No acts of violence against children are justifiable; all violence against children is preventable. Education, training and capacity building are needed to raise awareness and promote a culture of non-violence. Clear policies and effective reporting mechanisms are necessary, as is advocacy to put non-violence on the political agenda.

## Corporal punishment

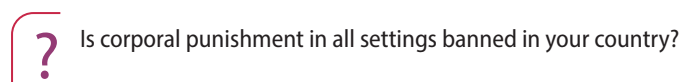
The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child defines corporal or physical punishment as

any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light. Most involves hitting ("smacking", "slapping", "spanking") children, with the hand or with an implement – a whip, stick, belt, shoe, wooden spoon, etc.". In the view of the Committee, corporal punishment is invariably degrading. There are other non-physical forms of punishment that are also cruel and degrading and thus incompatible with the CRC. These include, for example, punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.<sup>1</sup>

Corporal punishment of children, be it at home, in alternative care, at school or within the justice system, is considered a violation of children's right to protection against violence (Article 17 of the European Social Charter) and freedom from torture or degrading and inhuman treatment (Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights).

Following a call for a Europe-wide ban on corporal punishment by the Parliamentary Assembly, 32 Council of Europe member states have formally banned corporal punishment in all settings, including the home.<sup>2</sup> However, despite this positive development, corporal punishment remains lawful or unpunished in many countries and is still perceived as an acceptable form of 'discipline'. Putting

an end to corporal punishment in the home requires a cultural shift and change of attitude among parents, leading to positive, non-violent methods of bringing up children.



## Domestic violence

Domestic violence is physical, sexual, psychological or economic violence that occurs within the family or domestic unit or between former or current spouses or partners. Most victims of domestic violence are women, but many of these women have children who can also fall victim to violence or witness the violence directed at their mothers.

## Violence in schools – peer violence

It is estimated that 246 million children and adolescents experience school violence and bullying in some form every year. Bullying in schools may take many forms, and it may be physical or psychological. Children who are perceived to be 'different' – for example, more or less academically able, larger or smaller, with a skin colour or accent differing from the majority – often find themselves the target of sarcastic humour, rumours, name-calling, intimidation and social exclusion, as well as suffering physical attacks on their person or belongings. For children who are the victims of such violence, school becomes a place of terror, not a place to learn.

There is a need for public awareness and zero tolerance of violence in schools. School officials, teachers and parents need to be able to detect symptoms of violence and must act promptly against it. Every school needs consistent prevention policies to eliminate violence, and simple, confidential ways for children to lodge complaints. Involving children in awareness raising and peer support are effective means to combating violence in schools. The Council of Europe Charter on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights Education (EDC/HRE) assigns education an important role in combating violence, particularly in schools, such as bullying and harassment, whether physical, psychological or, increasingly commonly, through the Internet ('cyberbullying').

## Exposure to harmful content

The Internet and social media can expose young people to a wide range of risks. Whether intentional or unintentional, exposure to inappropriate sexual or violent material or content otherwise considered harmful to the child's development constitutes a form of violence. Harmful content covers a broad range of material such as child sexual abuse material ('child pornography'), violent video games or websites that encourage hate speech, but it is not necessarily illegal. Exposing a child to content that is harmful amounts to child maltreatment.

## Sexual violence

'Sexual violence' is an umbrella term used to cover all forms of sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children. It is estimated that about one in five children are victims of some form of sexual violence in Europe and that, in about 80% of cases, the offender is known to the child. Sexual violence against children can take many different forms, such as sexual abuse within the family or circle of trust, sexual exploitation through prostitution or sexual abuse materials, sexual violence facilitated by the Internet, and sexual assault by peers.

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (“Lanzarote Convention”) is the first international treaty dedicated specifically to the protection of children from sexual violence. Building upon existing international and regional legal standards, the “Lanzarote Convention” is a major step forward in the prevention of sexual offences against children, the prosecution of perpetrators and the protection of child victims. It criminalises:

- **Child sexual abuse:** this refers to sexual activities of an adult with a child. Even if a child has reached the legal age of consent established in national laws, it is still sexual abuse if the adult uses coercion, force or threats, or if the adult abuses a position of trust, authority or influence, or takes advantage of an especially vulnerable child.
- **Child prostitution – Sexual exploitation through prostitution:** this is any form of child sexual exploitation whereby a child is recruited, coerced or caused to participate in prostitution in exchange for (the promise of) money or any other form of remuneration or benefit.
- **Child pornography – Child sexual abuse material:** this refers to any material that depicts a child engaged in real or simulated sexually-explicit conduct, or any depiction of a child’s sexual organs for primarily sexual purposes. The criminal offence can be committed by producing such material, offering it or making it available, distributing or transmitting it, procuring it for oneself or for another person, possessing it and knowingly obtaining access to it.
- **Solicitation of children for sexual purposes – Online grooming:** this refers to the intentional act of an adult proposing to meet a child who has not reached the age of sexual majority for the purpose of sexually abusing or exploiting him/her. The “Lanzarote Convention” refers specifically to such proposals being made through information and communication technologies, and to situations where the offender has taken some concrete steps to meet with the child in person. Nevertheless, the committee mandated to interpret the Convention has recommended that states should also consider extending criminalisation to cases when the sexual abuse is committed exclusively online.

People working in contact with children should be screened and trained, and the reporting of any suspicion of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse should be encouraged. Children should learn at school about the risks of sexual abuse, how to protect themselves and where to seek help (including telephone helplines). Parents, teachers, social workers and policy makers all have a role in ensuring that children are protected from sexual abuse.

## Human trafficking, forced labour and slavery

Human trafficking, forced labour and slavery are serious violations of human rights and, in case of victims under the age of 18, of children’s rights.

The Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings identifies ‘child victim of trafficking’ as any person under the age of 18 who is recruited, transported, transferred, harboured or received for the purpose of exploitation, either within or outside a country. In some cases, children are tricked into trafficking with promises of schooling and travel; in others, their impoverished families turn them over for a cash reward. The majority of victims are girls trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation, including the production of child abuse material, but this form of trafficking affects boys as well. Children are also subjected to trafficking for the purposes of forced labour, forced begging, forced criminal activities and domestic servitude.

The European Convention on Human Rights prohibits all forms of slavery, servitude, forced and compulsory labour (Article 4). Servitude is an aggravated form of compulsory labour, when the person is under coercion to perform work that he or she has not offered voluntarily.

## Vulnerable groups of children

Although violence against children is not limited to any group or economic class, some children are especially vulnerable to abuse. These include:

- **Children in street situations:** Children living and working on the streets are particularly vulnerable to human trafficking and exploitation. Street children can still be found in large cities of Europe, and their numbers are growing due to unemployment, poverty and migration.
- **Children with disabilities:** Although children with disabilities are often targets of abuse, including physical and sexual violence, child protection services repeatedly fail to address their needs properly.
- **Children in residential or closed-type institutions:** Children in institutions are particularly vulnerable to violence during and after their placement. This vulnerability persists even after young people leave the institution.
- **Migrant children:** Migrant and asylum-seeking children, especially those who are unaccompanied, are exposed to trafficking or exploitation.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex children: Bullying or cyberbullying motivated by a victim's perceived sexual orientation, gender identity / expression or sex characteristics can be particularly hurtful due to its repeated nature, and is widespread.

### What you can you do?

- Monitor the children you work with and report any possible instances of violence
- Monitor programmes designed to protect children from violence and put pressure on the authorities for improved protective legislation
- Support families through parenting programmes
- Break the silence; speak up about violence you experience or witness
- Challenge the social acceptance of certain kinds of violence
- Raise awareness of violence against children
- Learn to recognise signs of violence
- Mobilise the school and community against bullying
- Teach children how to protect themselves and how report abuse
- Teach children non-violent ways to manage conflict
- Inform yourself about how to report online bullying and hate speech
- Refrain from using violence yourself.

## Relevant human rights instruments and programmes

### Council of Europe

The European Convention of Human Rights prohibits torture and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This right is further protected by The European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment which develops standards for the protection of juveniles deprived of their liberty, provides non-judicial preventive mechanisms for protecting young detainees, and regularly visits young offenders' institutions.<sup>23</sup>

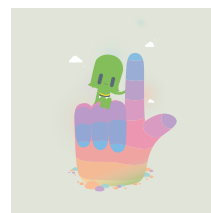
The [Guidelines of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on child-friendly justice](#) aim at improving the justice system and adapting it to the specific needs of children who come into contact with law for family matters (such as divorce or adoption), in administrative justice (for nationality or immigration issues), or in criminal justice (as victims, witnesses or perpetrators of crimes). Child-friendly justice is:

- accessible
- age-appropriate
- speedy
- diligent
- adapted to and focused on the needs of the child
- respecting the right to due process
- respecting the right to participate in and to understand the proceedings
- respecting the right to private and family life
- respecting the right to integrity and dignity.

Three quarters of children aged 2 to 4 worldwide – close to 300 million – are regularly subjected to violent discipline (physical punishment and/or psychological aggression) by their parents or other caregivers at home, and around 6 in 10 (250 million) are subjected to physical punishment.<sup>24</sup>

### The Underwear Rule

About 1 in 5 children falls victim to violence including sexual abuse. This can be prevented by teaching children the “underwear rule” using the child-friendly *Kiko and the Hand*<sup>25</sup> materials. Kiko and the Hand provide also a simple guide to help parents explain to children where others should not try to touch them, how to react and where to seek.







The International Observatory of Violence in Schools is a non-governmental organisation which carries out research and disseminates information about violence in schools. Research studies also include the impact of intervention programmes and public policies, and the organisation also helps to draw up proposals for action against violence in schools.

- 1 UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 8. on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment*
- 2 [www.coe.int/en/web/children/corporal-punishment#{%2212441097%22:\[0\]}](http://www.coe.int/en/web/children/corporal-punishment#{%2212441097%22:[0]})
- 3 See [www.cpt.coe.int/EN/about.htm](http://www.cpt.coe.int/EN/about.htm)
- 4 UNICEF: A Familiar Face (2017) [https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/EVAC-Booklet-FINAL-10\\_31\\_17-high-res.pdf](https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/EVAC-Booklet-FINAL-10_31_17-high-res.pdf)
- 5 <https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/underwear-rule>

# APPENDICES

## **Selected International Human Rights Instruments**

Status of ratification of major Human Rights Instruments

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (child-friendly summary)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (in full)

European Convention on Human Rights (Child-friendly summary)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (Child friendly version)

Convention on the Rights of the Child (full text)

Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention)

## **Human Rights Glossary**

## **Children Rights Cards**

## Status of ratification of major Human Rights Instruments (status as at 1 December 2023)

Countries	UNITED NATIONS							COUNCIL OF EUROPE						
	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Convention on Rights of the Child	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women - Against Women	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	International Convention for the Protection of All People from Enforced Disappearance from Enforced Disappearance	European Convention on Human Rights	European Social Charter	European Social Charter -Revised	European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	European convention on protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and sexual abuse	Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
Entry into force	3.01.1976	23.03.1976	2.09.1990	4.01.1969	3.09.1981	3.05.2008	23.12.2010	3.09.1953	26.02.1965	01.07.1999	1.02.1989	1.02.2008	1.07.2010	1.08.2014
Albania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Andorra		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Armenia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Austria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Azerbaijan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Belarus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓	✓		
Belgium	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bosnia and Herzegovina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bulgaria	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Croatia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Cyprus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Czechia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Denmark	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Estonia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Finland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
France	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Georgia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Germany	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Greece	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Holy See			✓	✓							✓	✓		
Hungary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Iceland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Italy	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kazakhstan	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓							

Countries	UNITED NATIONS							COUNCIL OF EUROPE						
	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights	Convention on Rights of the Child	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	International Convention for the Protection of All People from Enforced Disappearance	European Convention on Human Rights	European Social Charter	European Social Charter -Revised	European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment	Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings	European convention on protection of children against Sexual Exploitation and sexual abuse	Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence
Entry into force	3.01.1976	23.03.1976	2.09.1990	4.01.1969	3.09.1981	3.05.2008	23.12.2010	3.09.1953	26.02.1965	01.07.1999	1.02.1989	1.02.2008	1.07.2010	1.08.2014
Latvia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Liechtenstein	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Lithuania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Luxembourg	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Malta	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Monaco	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Montenegro	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Netherlands	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
North Macedonia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Norway	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Poland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Portugal	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Romania	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Republic of Moldova	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Russian Federation	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓					✓			
San Marino	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Serbia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Slovak Republic	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Slovenia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Spain	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sweden	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Switzerland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓
Türkiye	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Ukraine	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
United Kingdom	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights (child-friendly summary)

### **Article 1, Right to equality:**

You are born free and equal in rights to every other human being. You have the ability to think and to tell right from wrong. You should treat others with friendship.

### **Article 2, Freedom from discrimination:**

You have all these human rights no matter what your race, skin colour, sex, language, religion, opinions, family background, social or economic status, birth or nationality.

### **Article 3, Right to life, liberty and personal security:**

You have the right to live, to be free and to feel safe.

### **Article 4, Freedom from slavery:**

Nobody has the right to treat you as a slave, and you should not make anyone your slave.

### **Article 5, Freedom from torture and degrading treatment:**

Nobody has the right to torture, harm or humiliate you.

### **Article 6, Right to recognition as a person before the law:**

You have a right to be accepted everywhere as a person according to law.

### **Article 7, Right to equality before the law:**

You have a right to be protected and treated equally by the law without discrimination of any kind.

### **Article 8, Right to remedy by capable judges:**

If your legal rights are violated, you have the right to fair and capable judges to uphold your rights.

### **Article 9, Freedom from arbitrary arrest and exile:**

Nobody has the right to arrest you, put you in prison or to force you out of your country without good reasons.

### **Article 10, Right to fair public hearing:**

If you are accused of a crime, you have the right to a fair and public hearing.

### **Article 11, Right to be considered innocent until proven guilty:**

- 1) You should be considered innocent until it can be proved in a fair trial that you are guilty.
- 2) You cannot be punished for doing something that was not considered a crime at the time you did it.

### **Article 12, Freedom from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence:**

You have the right to be protected if someone tries to harm your good name or enter your house, open your mail or bother you or your family without good reason.

### **Article 13, Right to free movement:**

- 1) You have the right to come and go as you wish within your country.
- 2) You have the right to leave your country to go to another one, and you should be able to return to your country if you want.

### **Article 14, Right to protection in another country:**

- 1) If someone threatens to hurt you, you have the right to go to another country and ask for protection as a refugee.
- 2) You lose this right if you have committed a serious crime.

### **Article 15, Right to a nationality and the freedom to change it:**

- 1) You have the right to belong to a country and have a nationality.
- 2) No-one can take away your nationality without a good reason. You have a right to change your nationality if you wish.

### **Article 16, Right to marriage and family:**

- 1) When you are legally old enough, you have the right to marry and have a family without any limitations based on your race, country or religion. Both partners have the same rights when they are married and also when they are separated.
- 2) Nobody should force you to marry.
- 3) The family is the basic unit of society, and government should protect it.

### **Article 17, Right to own property:**

- 1) You have the right to own things.
- 2) Nobody has the right to take these things from you without a good reason.

**Article 18, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion:**

You have the right to your own thoughts and to believe in any religion. You are free to practise your religion or beliefs and also to change them.

**Article 19, Freedom of opinion and information:**

You have the right to hold and express your own opinions. You should be able to share your opinions with others, including people from other countries, through any ways.

**Article 20, Right to peaceful assembly and association:**

- 1) You have the right to meet peacefully with other people.
- 2) No-one can force you to belong to a group.

**Article 21, Right to participate in government and elections:**

- 1) You have the right participate in your government, either by holding an office or by electing someone to represent you.
- 2) You and everyone has the right to serve your country.
- 3) Governments should be elected regularly by fair and secret voting.

**Article 22, Right to social security:**

The society you live in should provide you with social security and the rights necessary for your dignity and development.

**Article 23, Right to desirable work and to join trade unions:**

- 1) You have the right to work, to choose your work and to work in good conditions.
- 2) People who do the same work should get the same pay.
- 3) You should be able to earn a salary that allows you to live and support your family.
- 4) All people who work have the right to join together in unions to defend their interests.

**Article 24, Right to rest and leisure:**

You have the right to rest and free time. Your workday should not be too long, and you should be able to take regular paid holidays.

**Article 25, Right to adequate living standard:**

- 1) You have the right to the things you and your family need to have a healthy and comfortable life, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and other social services. You have a right to help if you are out of work or unable to work.
- 2) Mothers and children should receive special care and help.

**Article 26, Right to education:**

- 1) You have the right to go to go to school. Primary schooling should be free and required. You should be able to learn a profession or continue your studies as far as you can.
- 2) At school, you should be able to develop all your talents and learn to respect others, whatever their race, religion or nationality.
- 3) Your parents should have a say in the kind of education you receive.

**Article 27, Right to participate in the cultural life of community:**

- 1) You have the right to participate in the traditions and learning of your community, to enjoy the arts and to benefit from scientific progress.
- 2) If you are an artist, writer or scientist, your work should be protected and you should be able to benefit from it.

**Article 28, Right to a social order:**

You have a right to the kind of world where you and all people can enjoy these rights and freedoms.

**Article 29, Responsibilities to the community**

- 1) Your personality can only fully develop within your community, and you have responsibilities to that community.
- 2) The law should guarantee human rights. It should allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.
- 3) These rights and freedoms should support the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 30, Freedom from interference in these human rights:**

No person, group or government anywhere in the world should do anything to destroy these rights.

# Universal Declaration of Human Rights (in full)

## **Adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948**

On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights the full text of which appears in the following pages. Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and “to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories.”

### **PREAMBLE**

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

### **Article 1.**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

### **Article 2.**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### **Article 3.**

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

### **Article 4.**

No-one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### **Article 5.**

No-one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### **Article 6.**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

### **Article 7.**

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

**Article 8.**

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

**Article 9.**

No-one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

**Article 10.**

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

**Article 11.**

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

(2) No-one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

**Article 12.**

No-one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

**Article 13.**

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

**Article 14.**

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 15.**

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No-one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

**Article 16.**

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

**Article 17.**

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No-one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

**Article 18.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practise, worship and observance.

**Article 19.**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

**Article 20.**

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No-one may be compelled to belong to an association.

**Article 21.**

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.



**Article 22.**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

**Article 23.**

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

**Article 24.**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

**Article 25.**

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

**Article 26.**

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

**Article 27.**

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

**Article 28.**

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

**Article 29.**

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

**Article 30.**

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

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Resources: Universal Declaration of Human Rights: [www.un.org/Overview/rights.html](http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html)

# European Convention on Human Rights (Child-friendly summary)

## Section I: Rights and Freedoms

### **Article 1, Obligation to respect human rights:**

If you live in a country that has agreed to this convention, you have a right to these basic civil and political rights whether you are a citizen or not.

### **Article 2, Right to life:**

You have the right to life, and this right is protected by law.<sup>1</sup>

### **Article 3, Freedom from torture:**

Nobody is allowed to torture, harm or humiliate you.

### **Article 4, Freedom from slavery and forced labour:**

Nobody is allowed to treat you as a slave, and you should not make anyone your slave. No-one can make you work by force.

### **Article 5, Right to liberty and security**

You have the right to freedom and safety. No-one is allowed to take away this right except by legal means. If you are arrested, you have many rights, including to understand why you are arrested, to have a prompt hearing and to challenge your arrest,

### **Article 6, Right to a fair trial:**

If you are accused of a crime, you have the right to a fair and public hearing.

### **Article 7, No punishment without law:**

You cannot be punished for doing something that was not considered a crime at the time you did it.

### **Article 8, Right to respect for private and family life home and correspondence:**

You have the right to be protected if someone tries to enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without good reasons.

### **Article 9, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion:**

You have the right to your own thoughts and to believe in any religion. You are free to practise your religion or beliefs and also to change them.

### **Article 10, Freedom of expression:**

You have the right to think what you want and responsibly to say what you like. You should be able to share your ideas and opinions in any way including newspapers and magazines, radio, television, and the Internet.

### **Article 11, Freedom of assembly and association:**

You have the right to meet peacefully with other people, including the right to form and to join trade unions.

### **Article 12, Right to marry:**

When you are legally old enough, you have the right to marry and to found a family.

### **Article 13, Right to an effective remedy:**

If your rights are violated by another person or by the government, you have the right to ask for help from the courts or other public bodies to uphold your rights.

### **Article 14, Freedom from discrimination:**

You have all the rights and freedoms in this convention no matter what your sex, race, colour, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social background, association with a minority group, economic status, birth or other status.

### **Article 15, Derogation in time of emergency:**

The government may suspend its duties to uphold these rights and freedoms in time of war. This suspension may not include Article 2, the Right to Life.

### **Article 16, Restrictions on political activity of aliens:**

The government cannot restrict your political activity simply because you are not a citizen of that country.

**Article 17, Prohibition of abuse of rights:**

No person, group or government anywhere in the world may do anything to destroy these rights.

**Article 18, Limitation on use of restrictions on rights:**

Your rights and freedoms can only be limited in ways set out in this convention.

**Section II: European Court of Human Rights****Articles 19 to 51, The European Court of Human Rights, its mandate and activities:**

The Convention establishes a European Court of Human Rights to deal with cases brought to it by individuals and governments. The Judges are entirely independent and are elected by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe.

**Section III, Miscellaneous provisions****Articles 52 to 59, Application of rights in this convention**

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe oversees how governments respect this convention and fulfill their obligations to promote and protect human rights.

**Protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights**

Since the ECHR was adopted in 1950, the Council of Europe has made important additions, known as protocols, which add to the human rights of people living in Europe. Among the major rights and freedoms added are these:

**Protocol No. 1:****Article 1, Right to property**

You have the right to own property and use your possessions.

**Article 2, Right to education**

You have the right to go to school.

**Article 3, Right to free elections**

You have the right to elect the government of your country by secret vote.

**Protocol No. 4:****Article 2, Freedom of movement**

If you are in a country legally, you have the right to travel or live wherever you want within it and also to return to your home country.

**Protocols Nos. 6 and 13:****Article 1, Freedom from the death penalty**

You cannot be condemned to death or executed by the government either in peace- or wartime.

**Protocol No. 7:****Article 2, Right of appeal in criminal matters**

If you have been convicted of a crime, you can appeal to a higher court.

**Protocol No. 12:****Article 1, General protection against discrimination**

Public authorities cannot discriminate against you for reasons like your skin colour, sex, language, political or religious beliefs, or origins.

*Two additions to the Convention (called protocols) aim at abolishing the death penalty in Europe.*

## Convention on the Rights of the Child (Child friendly version)

### **Article 1, Definition of a child:**

Until you are eighteen, you are considered a child and have all the rights in this convention.

### **Article 2, Freedom from discrimination:**

You should not be discriminated against for any reason, including your race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, religion, origin, social or economic status, disability, birth, or any other quality of your or your parents or guardian.

### **Article 3, The child's best interest:**

All actions and decisions that affect children should be based on what is best for you or any child.

### **Article 4, Enjoying the rights in the Convention:**

Governments should make these rights available to you and all children.

### **Article 5, Parental guidance and the child's growing abilities:**

Your family has the main responsibility for guiding you, so that as you grow, you learn to use your rights properly. Governments should respect this right.

### **Article 6, Right to life and development:**

You have the right to live and grow well. Governments should ensure that you survive and develop healthily.

### **Article 7, Birth registration, name, nationality and parental care:**

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

### **Article 8, Preservation of identity:**

Governments should respect your right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

### **Article 9, Separation from parents:**

You should not be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good (for example, if a parent mistreats or neglects you). If your parents have separated, you have the right to stay in contact with both of them unless this might hurt you.

### **Article 10, Family reunification:**

If your parents live in different countries, you should be allowed to move between those countries so that you can stay in contact with your parents or get back together as a family.

### **Article 11, Protection from illegal transfer to another country:**

Governments must take steps to stop you being taken out of their own country illegally.

### **Article 12, Respect for the child's opinion:**

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

### **Article 13, Freedom of expression and information:**

You have the right to seek, get and share information in all forms (e.g. through writing, art, television, radio and the Internet) as long as the information is not damaging to you or to others.

### **Article 14, Freedom of thought, conscience and religion:**

You have the right to think and believe what you want and to practise your religion as long as you do not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Your parents should guide you on these matters.

### **Article 15, Freedom of association and peaceful assembly:**

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

### **Article 16, Privacy, honour and reputation:**

You have a right to privacy. No-one should harm your good name, enter your house, open your letters and emails or bother you or your family without a good reason.

### **Article 17, Access to information and media:**

You have the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, including books, newspapers and magazines, television, radio and the Internet. Information should be beneficial and understandable to you.

**Article 18, Parents' joint responsibilities:**

Both your parents share responsibility for bringing you up and should always consider what is best for you. Governments should provide services to help parents, especially if both parents work.

**Article 19, Protection from all forms of violence, abuse and neglect:**

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

**Article 20, Alternative care:**

If parents and family cannot care for you properly, then you must be looked after by people who respect your religion, traditions and language.

**Article 21, Adoption:**

If you are adopted, the first concern must be what is best for you, whether you are adopted in your birth country or if you are taken to live in another country.

**Article 22, Refugee children:**

If you have come to a new country because your home country was unsafe, you have a right to protection and support. You have the same rights as children born in that country.

**Article 23, Disabled children:**

If you have any kind of disability, you should have special care, support and education so that you can lead a full and independent life and participate in the community to the best of your ability.

**Article 24, Healthcare and health services:**

You have the right to good quality health-care (e.g. medicine, hospitals, health professionals). You also have the right to clean water, nutritious food, a clean environment and health education so that you can stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 25, Periodic review of treatment:**

If you are looked after by local authorities or institutions rather than by your parents, you should have your situation reviewed regularly to make sure you have good care and treatment.

**Article 26, Benefit from social security:**

The society in which you live should provide you with benefits of social security that help you develop and live in good conditions (e.g. education, culture, nutrition, health, social welfare). The Government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.

**Article 27, Adequate standard of living:**

You should live in good conditions that help you develop physically, mentally, spiritually, morally and socially. The Government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.

**Article 28, Right to education:**

You have a right to education. Discipline in schools should respect your human dignity. Primary education should be free and required. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

**Article 29, The aims of education:**

Education should develop your personality, talents and mental and physical skills to the fullest. It should prepare you for life and encourage you to respect your parents and your own and other nations and cultures. You have a right to learn about your rights.

**Article 30, Children of minorities and native origin:**

You have a right to learn and use the traditions, religion and language of your family, whether or not these are shared by most people in your country.

**Article 31, Leisure, play and culture:**

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

**Article 32, Child labour:**

The government should protect you from work that is dangerous to your health or development, that interferes with your education or that might lead people to take advantage of you.

**Article 33, Children and drug abuse:**

The Government should provide ways of protecting you from using, producing or distributing dangerous drugs.

**Article 34, Protection from sexual exploitation:**

The government should protect you from sexual abuse.

**Article 35, Protection from trafficking, sale, and abduction:**

The government should make sure that you are not kidnapped, sold or taken to other countries to be exploited.

**Article 36, Protection from other forms of exploitation:**

You should be protected from any activities that could harm your development and well-being.

**Article 37, Protection from torture, degrading treatment and loss of liberty:**

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

**Article 38, Protection of children affected by armed conflict:**

If you are under fifteen (under eighteen in most European countries), governments should not allow you to join the army or take any direct part in warfare. Children in war zones should receive special protection.

**Article 39, Rehabilitation of child victims:**

If you were neglected, tortured or abused, were a victim of exploitation and warfare, or were put in prison, you should receive special help to regain your physical and mental health and rejoin society.

**Article 40, Juvenile justice:**

If you are accused of breaking the law, you must be treated in a way that respects your dignity. You should receive legal help and only be given a prison sentences for the most serious crimes.

**Article 41, Respect for higher human rights standards:**

If the laws of your country are better for children than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should be followed.

**Article 42, Making the Convention widely known:**

The Government should make the Convention known to all parents, institutions and children.

**Articles 43-54, Duties of Governments:**

These articles explain how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights

Note: The CRC was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989 and entered into force as international law in 1990. The CRC has 54 articles that define the rights of children and how these rights are to be protected and promoted by governments. Almost every country in the world has ratified this Convention, promising to recognize all the rights it contains.

## Convention on the Rights of the Child (full text)

Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989 entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49

### **Preamble**

The States Parties to the present Convention, Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom, Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity, Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Coven-

nant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children,

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth";

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) ; and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict, Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child, Recognizing the importance of international cooperation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

**Have agreed as follows:**

### **PART I**

#### **Article 1**

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

#### **Article 2**

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

#### **Article 3**

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions,

courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.
3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

#### **Article 4**

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.

#### **Article 5**

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

#### **Article 6**

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

#### **Article 7**

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.
2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

#### **Article 8**

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.
2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

#### **Article 9**

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child.
2. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.
3. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.
4. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.
5. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.

#### **Article 10**

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt



with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.

2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order (ordre public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

#### **Article 11**

1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.
2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

#### **Article 12**

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

#### **Article 13**

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
  - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or

(b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

#### **Article 14**

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

#### **Article 15**

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

#### **Article 16**

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

#### **Article 17**

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health.

To this end, States Parties shall:

- (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
- (b) Encourage international cooperation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;

- (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
- (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
- (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

#### **Article 18**

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.
2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.
3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from childcare services and facilities for which they are eligible.

#### **Article 19**

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.
2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

#### **Article 20**

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.
2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.
3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

#### **Article 21**

States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

- (a) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;
- (b) Recognize that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin;
- (c) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in the case of national adoption;
- (d) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in inter-country adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;
- (e) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

**Article 22**

1. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.
2. For this purpose, States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, cooperation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent inter-governmental organizations or nongovernmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family. In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present Convention.

**Article 23**

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.
2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child.
3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive

to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

**Article 24**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.
2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:
  - (a) To diminish infant and child mortality;
  - (b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;
  - (c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;
  - (d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;
  - (e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;
  - (f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.
3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international cooperation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

#### **Article 25**

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

#### **Article 26**

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.
2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

#### **Article 27**

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.
2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.
3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.
4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

#### **Article 28**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:
  - (a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;
  - (b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;
  - (c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;
  - (d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;
  - (e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.
3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

#### **Article 29**

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:
  - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;
  - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;
  - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;
  - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace,

tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

- (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.
2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

### **Article 30**

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

### **Article 31**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.
2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

### **Article 32**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.
2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular:
  - (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;
  - (b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;
  - (c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

### **Article 33**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

### **Article 34**

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

- (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;
- (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practises;
- (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

### **Article 35**

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

### **Article 36**

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

### **Article 37**

States Parties shall ensure that:

- (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;
- (b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;
- (c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age.
- (d) In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall

have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;

- (e) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.

### Article 38

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.
2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.
3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.
4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

### Article 39

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

### Article 40

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a

constructive role in society.

2. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of international instruments, States Parties shall, in particular, ensure that:
  - (a) No child shall be alleged as, be accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law by reason of acts or omissions that were not prohibited by national or international law at the time they were committed;
  - (b) Every child alleged as or accused of having infringed the penal law has at least the following guarantees:
    - (i) To be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law;
    - (ii) To be informed promptly and directly of the charges against him or her, and, if appropriate, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence;
    - (iii) To have the matter determined without delay by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to law, in the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is considered not to be in the best interest of the child, in particular, taking into account his or her age or situation, his or her parents or legal guardians;
    - (iv) Not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt; to examine or have examined adverse witnesses and to obtain the participation and examination of witnesses on his or her behalf under conditions of equality;
    - (v) If considered to have infringed the penal law, to have this decision and any measures imposed in consequence thereof reviewed by a higher competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to law;
    - (vi) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used;
    - (vii) To have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings.
3. States Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:
  - (a) The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;

(b) Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected. 4. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.

#### **Article 41**

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child and which may be contained in:

- (a) The law of a State party; or
- (b) International law in force for that State.

## **PART II**

#### **Article 42**

States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

#### **Article 43**

1. For the purpose of examining the progress made by States Parties in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken in the present Convention, there shall be established a Committee on the Rights of the Child, which shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.
2. The Committee shall consist of ten experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field covered by this Convention. The members of the Committee shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, as well as to the principal legal systems.
3. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.
4. The initial election to the Committee shall be held no later than six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention and thereafter every second year. At least four months before the date of each election, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations

within two months. The Secretary-General shall subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Convention.

5. The elections shall be held at meetings of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.
6. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election if renominated. The term of five of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these five members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the meeting.
7. If a member of the Committee dies or resigns or declares that for any other cause he or she can no longer perform the duties of the Committee, the State Party which nominated the member shall appoint another expert from among its nationals to serve for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of the Committee.
8. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure.
9. The Committee shall elect its officers for a period of two years.
10. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. The Committee shall normally meet annually. The duration of the meetings of the Committee shall be determined, and reviewed, if necessary, by a meeting of the States Parties to the present Convention, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.
11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.
12. With the approval of the General Assembly, the members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide.

**Article 44**

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognized herein and on the progress made on the enjoyment of those rights
  - (a) Within two years of the entry into force of the Convention for the State Party concerned;
  - (b) Thereafter every five years.
2. Reports made under the present article shall indicate factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the degree of fulfilment of the obligations under the present Convention. Reports shall also contain sufficient information to provide the Committee with a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the Convention in the country concerned.
3. A State Party which has submitted a comprehensive initial report to the Committee need not, in its subsequent reports submitted in accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of the present article, repeat basic information previously provided.
4. The Committee may request from States Parties further information relevant to the implementation of the Convention.
5. The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, every two years, reports on its activities.
6. States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries.

**Article 45**

In order to foster the effective implementation of the Convention and to encourage international cooperation in the field covered by the Convention:

- (a) The specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the
- (b) United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

- (c) The Committee shall transmit, as it may consider appropriate, to the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies, any reports from States Parties that contain a request, or indicate a need, for technical advice or assistance, along with the Committee's observations and suggestions, if any, on these requests or indications;
- (d) The Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to undertake on its behalf studies on specific issues relating to the rights of the child;
- (e) The Committee may make suggestions and general recommendations based on information received pursuant to articles 44 and 45 of the present Convention. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be transmitted to any State Party concerned and reported to the General Assembly, together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

**PART III****Article 46**

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

**Article 47**

The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Article 48**

The present Convention shall remain open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Article 49**

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.
2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification or accession.

**Article 50**

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communi-



cate the proposed amendment to States Parties, with a request that they indicate whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be

2. submitted to the General Assembly for approval.
3. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties.
4. When an amendment enters into force, it shall be binding on those States Parties which have accepted it, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Convention and any earlier amendments which they have accepted.

#### **Article 51**

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.
2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.
3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General

#### **Article 52**

A State Party may denounce the present Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Denunciation becomes effective one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

#### **Article 53**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

#### **Article 54**

The original of the present Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. IN WITNESS

THEREOF the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention.

## Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (Lanzarote Convention) - Unofficial summary

The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse was adopted and opened for signature on the 25 October 2007 in Lanzarote, Spain, and entered into force on 1 July 2010. It has been signed and ratified by all Council of Europe member states. The Convention is also opened to non-member states; Tunisia has already acceded to the Convention

### **Purpose of the Convention**

The Lanzarote Convention is aimed ensuring that its Parties are taking the necessary steps to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, to seek protection of victims and to promote national and international co-operation in the process of implementation of the foreseen measures in the treaty.

### **Prosecution**

The Convention is the first international treaty that identifies and criminalise the offence of sexual abuse (Article 18). It also defines as criminal acts the following: "child prostitution" / Sexual exploitation of children through prostitution (Article 19); "child pornography" / Child sexual abuse material (Article 20); "participation of a child in pornographic performances" / Exploitation of a child in sexual performances (Article 21); corruption of children (Article 22) and solicitation of children for sexual purposes, also known as "online grooming" (Article 23).

### **Specific measures provided by the Convention**

In terms of prevention, Parties are required to:

- screen, recruit and train persons working in contact with children;
- ensure that children are made aware of the possible risks and the ways to protect themselves;
- ensure regularly monitored intervention measures for both offenders and potential ones, aimed at preventing sexual offences against children.

Protective measures involve:

- establishment of programmes to support victims and their families;
- access to therapeutic assistance and emergency psychological care;
- reporting of suspicion of sexual exploitation or sexual abuse;
- establishment of telephone and Internet helplines to provide advice.

Criminal law measures:

- ensure that certain types of conduct are criminal offences, such as engaging in sexual activities with a child below the legal age for such activities;
- criminalise conduct which makes use of new technologies, in particular the Internet, to sexually harm children;
- establish common criteria to ensure that an effective, proportionate and dissuasive punitive system is put in place;
- collect and store data on convicted offenders of sexual offences against children.

Child-friendly investigative and judicial procedures:

- ensure that child victims are well protected during proceedings, and that the trauma experienced is not enhanced;
- protect the privacy, identity and image of child victims;
- establish measures adapted to the needs of child victims, respecting their rights and those of their families;
- limit the number of interviews with child victims and ensure they take place in appropriate surroundings, with professionals trained for the purpose.

### **Monitoring**

A specific monitoring mechanism is set up for the purpose of ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention's provisions. This is the Lanzarote Committee (comprising representatives of all the Parties to the Convention). It is for the Committee to monitor and collect data from international, national, and regional sources in order to provide an overview of the situation in member states, to foster the co-operation and to detect any possible difficulties.

## Human Rights Glossary

**Affirmative action:** action taken by a government or private institution to make up for past discrimination in education or employment.

**African Charter on Human and People's Rights** (African Charter): a Regional human rights treaty for the African continent adopted by the Organisation of Africa Unity (OAU) in 1981.

**Alternative care:** In the event of the biological family not being able to take care of a child (because of death or illness of the parent(s), violence in the family, abuse or neglect of the child or family breakdown), state authorities or the court determine whether it is in the best interest of the child to be placed in alternative care. (*Based on the CRC*)

**American Convention on Human Rights** (American Convention): a human rights treaty adopted by the Organisation for American States (OAS) in 1969. It covers North, Central and South America.

**Antigypsyism/anti-Roma racism:** A specific form of racism, an ideology founded on racial superiority, a form of dehumanisation and institutional racism nurtured by historical discrimination, which is expressed, *inter alia*, by violence, hate speech, exploitation, stigmatisation and the most blatant kind of discrimination towards people and groups (perceived as) Roma by individuals or by institutions. A belief and a treatment of Roma as inferior people, based on stereotypes, prejudices and systemic discrimination.

**Antisemitism:** A certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities. (IHRA working definition <https://holocaustremembrance.com>). Discrimination, prejudice, hostility or violence against Jews as Jews, or Jewish institutions as Jewish (Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism [www.jerusalemdeclaration.org](http://www.jerusalemdeclaration.org)).

**Bullying:** Bullying refers to aggressive behavior which is repeated and intends to hurt someone. It can take the form of physical, psychological or verbal aggression. Bullying can be direct, confronting a person face-to-face, or indirect by spreading rumours or harming someone over the Internet, for example.

**Codification, Codify:** the process of formalising law or rights into written instruments.

**Collective rights:** the rights of groups to protect their interests and identities; sometimes referred to as part of 'third generation rights'.

**Convention:** binding agreement between states; used synonymously with treaty and covenant. A convention is stronger than a declaration because it is legally binding for governments that have ratified it. When, for example, the UN General Assembly adopts a convention, member states can then ratify the convention, turning it into international law.

**Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women** (Women's Convention, CEDAW), adopted in 1979: the first legally binding international document prohibiting discrimination against women and obligating governments to take affirmative action to advance the equality of women.

**Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination** (CERD), adopted in 1965: a UN Convention defining and prohibiting discrimination based on race.

**Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide** (Genocide Convention), adopted in 1948: an international convention defining and prohibiting genocide; the first international treaty of the United Nations.

**Convention on the Rights of the Child** (Children's Convention, CRC), adopted in 1989: a convention setting forth a full spectrum of civil, cultural, economic, social, and political rights for children.

**Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** (CRPD), adopted in 2006: the first convention affirming the human rights of people with disabilities of any kind, including physical and psycho-social.

**Council of Europe:** founded in 1949 to protect and promote human rights, democracy and the rule of law. Today its 46 member states cover virtually the entire continent of Europe. It is based in Strasbourg.

**Covenant:** binding agreement between states; used synonymously with convention and treaty. The major international human rights covenants are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Both were adopted in 1966 and entered into force in 1976.

**Declaration:** Document stating agreed upon principles and standards but which is not legally binding. UN conferences, like the 1993 UN Conference on Human Rights in Vienna and the 1995 World Conference for Women in Beijing, usually produce two sets of declarations: one written by government representatives and one by nongovernmental organisations (NGOs). The UN General Assembly often issues influential but legally non-binding declarations.

**Declaration on the Rights of the Child:** Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1959, this non-binding instrument sets forth ten general principles, which later formed the basis for the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which was adopted in 1989.

**Democratic citizenship:** refers to the active participation by individuals in the system of rights and responsibilities which is the lot of citizens in democratic societies.

**Digital Environment:** information and communication technologies, including the Internet, mobile and associated technologies, and devices, as well as digital networks, databases, content and services.

**Discrimination:** Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favorably than other people are in a comparable situation only because they belong or are perceived to belong to a certain group or category of people. People may be discriminated against because of their age, disability, ethnicity, origin, political belief, race, religion, sex or gender, sexual orientation, language, culture and on many other grounds.

**Education:** any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character, or physical ability of a person. It has a fundamental influence on the capabilities and potentials of individuals and communities to achieve development as well as social and economic success.

**Entering into force:** the process through which a treaty becomes fully binding on the states that have ratified it. This happens when the minimum number of ratifications called for by the treaty has been achieved.

**Environment:** the aggregate of surrounding things, conditions, or influences.

**European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment:** a regional human rights treaty adopted in 1987 by the Council of Europe that aims to prevent various violations against people who are detained by a public authority in places like prisons, juvenile detention centres, police stations, refugee camps or psychiatric hospitals.

**European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms** (European Convention, European Convention on Human Rights, ECHR): A regional human rights treaty adopted in 1950 by the Council of Europe. All Council of Europe member states are party to the ECHR, and new members are expected to ratify the convention at the earliest opportunity.

**European Court of Human Rights:** situated in Strasbourg, it is a supra-national court, established by the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides legal recourse of last resort for individuals who feel that their human rights have been violated by a contracting party to the Convention.

**European Cultural Convention:** adopted by the Council of Europe in 1954, a regional treaty that provides the official framework for the Council of Europe's work on education, culture, heritage, youth and sport. A complement to the European Convention, the Cultural Convention seeks to safeguard European culture and to develop mutual understanding and the appreciation of cultural diversity among its various peoples.

**European Social Charter** (ESC, adopted by the Council of Europe in 1962; revised in 1996): a regional treaty that guarantees social and economic human rights; it complements the European Convention on Human Rights, which principally addresses civil and political rights.

**European Union (EU):** an economic and political union of member states located in Europe and committed to regional integration and social cooperation.

**Evolving capacity:** A principle used in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that recommends greater exercise of a child's rights in relation to his or her growing cognitive and emotional maturity.

**First-generation rights:** a term referring to all civil and political human rights such as voting, expression, religion, assembly, fair trials, and life. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) principally codifies these rights. Because the term suggests a hierarchy of civil and political rights over second generation rights, or economic and social rights, it is increasingly falling from use.

**Formal education:** structured education system that runs from primary school to university and includes specialised programmes for technical and professional training.

**Gender:** a social construct that informs roles, attitudes, values and relationships regarding women and men. While sex is determined by biology, gender is determined by society, almost always functioning to subordinate women to men.

**Gender Equality:** equal visibility, empowerment and participation of both sexes in all spheres of public and private life. Gender equality is the opposite of gender inequality, not of gender difference, and aims to promote the full participation of women and men in society.

**Geneva Conventions:** four treaties of humanitarian law adopted in 1949 under the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in Geneva, Switzerland. These treaties revise and expanded original treaties adopted in 1864 and 1929. They address the treatment of sick and wounded soldiers and sailors, prisoners of war and civilians under enemy control.

**Genocide:** acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group.

**Hate Speech:** Advocacy, promotion or incitement, in any form, of the denigration, hatred or vilification of a person or group of persons, as well as any harassment, insult, negative stereotyping, stigmatisation or threat in respect of such a person or group of persons and the justification of all the preceding types of expression, on the ground of “race”, colour, descent, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, language, religion or belief, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation and other personal characteristics or status (ECRI).

**Health:** a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

**Humanitarian law:** the body of law, mainly based on the Geneva Conventions, that protects certain persons in times of armed conflict, helps victims and limits the methods and means of combat in order to minimise destruction, loss of life and unnecessary human suffering.

**Human rights framework:** the evolving and interrelated body of international instruments that define human rights and establish mechanisms to promote and protect them.

**Human rights instruments:** any formal, written document of a state or states that sets forth rights as non-binding principles (a declaration) or codifies rights that are legally binding on those states that ratify them (a covenant, treaty, or convention).

**Inalienable:** refers to rights that belong to every person and cannot be taken from a person under any circumstances.

**Indivisible:** refers to the equal importance of each human rights law. A person cannot be denied a human right on the grounds that it is ‘less important’ or ‘non-essential’.

**Informal education:** the lifelong process whereby every individual acquires attitudes, values, skills and knowledge from the educational influences and resources in his or her own environment and from daily experience (e.g. with family and neighbours, in the marketplace and library, from the mass media and play).

**Interdependent:** refers to the complementary framework of human rights law. For example, your ability to participate in your government is directly affected by your right to express yourself, to get an education and even to obtain the necessities of life.

**Intergovernmental organisations (IGOs):** organisations sponsored by several governments that seek to coordinate their efforts; some are regional (e.g. the Council of Europe, the Organisation of African Unity), some are alliances (e.g. the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, NATO); and some are dedicated to a specific purpose (e.g. the World Health Organisation [WHO]).

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR):** adopted in 1966, the ICCPR establishes that all people have a broad range of civil and political rights and sets up ways to monitor their respect by the member states.

**International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ICESCR):** adopted in 1966, the ICESCR establishes that all people have a broad range of economic, social and cultural rights.

**International Labour Organisation (ILO):** established in 1919 as part of the Versailles Peace Treaty, the ILO became a specialized agency of the UN in 1946. Under its mandate to improve working conditions and promote social justice, the ILO has passed a number of conventions pertaining to the human rights of children, especially concerning child labour.

**Lanzarote Convention** (European Convention on Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse): an international treaty adopted in 2007 by the Council of Europe to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, to seek protection of victims and to promote national and international co-operation in the process of implementation of the foreseen measures in the treaty.

**Member States:** states that are members of an intergovernmental organisation (e.g. the United Nations, the Council of Europe).

**Migration:** Migration is a process of moving, either across an international border or within a country, encompassing any kind of movement of people, regardless of the causes.

**Non-formal education:** Any planned programme of personal and social education outside the formal education curriculum that is designed to improve a range of knowledge, skills and competencies.

**Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs):** organisations formed by people outside of government. NGOs monitor the proceedings of human rights bodies such as the Human Rights Council of the United Nations and are the ‘watchdogs’ of the human rights that fall within their mandate. Some are large and international (e.g. the Red Cross, Amnesty International, the Scouts); others may be small and local (e.g. an organisation to advocate for people with disabilities in a particular city; a coalition to promote women’s rights in one refugee camp).

**Ombudsman/offices:** a person or office established to safeguard the rights of individual citizens, or a particular group of citizens, in relation to the powers and actions of government (ENOC).

**Optional Protocol:** a treaty that modifies another treaty adding additional procedures or provisions). It is called ‘optional’ because a government that has ratified the original treaty can choose whether or not to ratify the changes made in the protocol.

**Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (2000):** amendment to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) that raises the minimum age for participation in armed conflict from the original fifteen to eighteen years.

**Race:** A term used to separate people into groups based on their appearance (or other factors), which has no scientific basis. There is only one human race.

**Racism:** the belief that a ground such as perceived ‘race’, skin colour, language, religion, nationality or national or ethnic origin justifies contempt for a person or a group of persons, or the notion of superiority of a person or a group of persons.

**Participation:** Participation and active citizenship is about having the right, the means, the space and the opportunity and, where necessary, the support to participate in and influence decisions and engage in actions and activities so as to contribute to building a better society. (Compass: Manual for Human Rights Education with young people, Human Rights Themes)

**Peace:** Peace is a way of living together so that all members of society can accomplish their human rights.

**Positive discrimination:** see affirmative action.

**Poverty:** a human condition characterized by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

**Race:** A term used to separate people into groups based on their appearance or other factors, which has no scientific basis. There is only one human "race".

**Racism:** the belief that people’s qualities are influenced by their ethnic group or tribe and that the members of other groups and tribes (“races”) are not as good as the members of their own, or the resulting unfair treatment of members of other “races”.

**Ratification, Ratify:** process by which the legislative body of a state confirms a government’s action in signing a treaty; formal procedure by which a state becomes bound to a treaty after acceptance.

**Reservation:** the exceptions that states parties make to a treaty (e.g. provisions that they do not agree to follow). Reservations, however, may not undermine the fundamental meaning of the treaty.

**Second-generation rights:** a term referring to economic, social and cultural rights, such as an adequate standard of living, health care, housing and education. The International Covenant on Economic, Social,

and Cultural Rights principally codifies these rights. Because the term suggests a hierarchy of civil and political rights over economic and social rights, it is increasingly falling from usage.

**Sexual abuse:** sexual activities of an adult with a child who, according to provisions of national law, has not reached the legal age for sexual activity.

**Sexual exploitation:** abuse or exploitation of another person's sexuality without consent, for the perpetrators own advantage or benefit, or for the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited. It includes causing the prostitution of another person; electronically recording, photographing, or transmitting intimate or sexual utterances, sounds or images of another person.

**Sexual trafficking:** the illegal business of recruiting, harboring, transporting, obtaining, or providing a person and especially a minor for the purpose of sex.

**Shadow report:** an unofficial report prepared by institutes or individuals representing civil society submitted to a committee monitoring a human rights treaty. Such reports usually contradict or add to the official report on treaty compliance and implementation submitted by a government as part of its treaty obligations.

**Solidarity rights:** see collective rights.

**Special Rapporteur:** a person chosen by a UN human rights body to report on a particular theme (e.g. on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; on violence against women) or on the human rights situation in a particular country.

**Stereotype:** an oversimplified, generalised and often unconscious preconception about people or ideas that may lead to prejudice and discrimination.

**Third generation rights:** see collective rights.

**Trafficking in human beings:** recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. (Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings)

**Treaty:** formal agreement between states that defines and modifies their mutual duties and obligations; used synonymously with convention and covenant. When member states ratify a treaty that has been adopted by the UN General Assembly, the articles of that treaty become part of its domestic legal obligations.

**UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization):** it seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO develops educational tools to help people live as global citizens free of hate and intolerance and to support each child's access to quality education.

**UNICEF (the United Nations Children's Fund):** mandated by the United Nations General Assembly, UNICEF advocates for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish it as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children.

**Universality:** a principle that all human rights are held by all persons in all states and societies in the world.

**Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Universal Declaration, UDHR):** adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10 December 1948. A primary UN document establishing human rights standards and norms which all member states have agreed to uphold. Although the declaration was intended to be non-binding, through time its various provisions have become so widely recognized that it can now be said to be customary international law.

**Violence:** intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment or deprivation.

**World Health Organisation (WHO):** an intergovernmental organisation under the auspices of the United Nations that works to promote health worldwide.

**Xenophobia:** A fear of foreigners, of persons from other countries or of things foreign generally. Xenophobia can lead to discrimination, racism, violence and even armed conflict against foreigners.

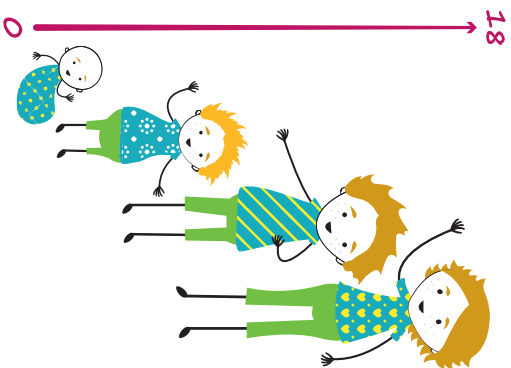


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## Definition of a child

Article 1

A child means every human being below the age of eighteen years.



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## The child's best interest

Article 3

In all actions concerning children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration. When adults or institutions make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

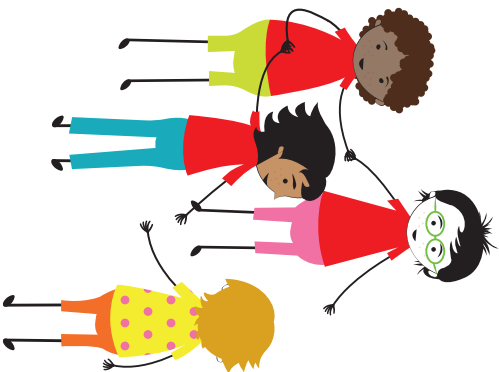


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## Freedom from discrimination

Article 2

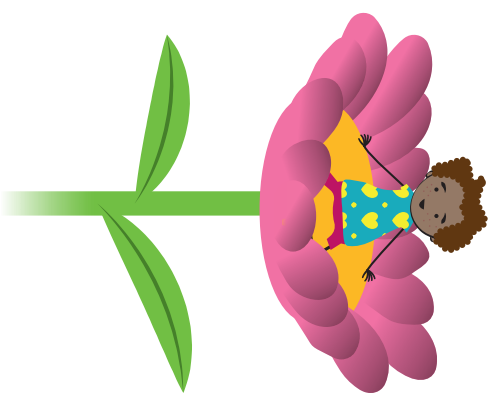
All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis..



## Right to life and development

Article 6

Every child has the right to live and grow well. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.





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### Birth registration, name, nationality and parent care

Article 7

Every child has the right to a name, and this should be officially recognised by the government. Children have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).



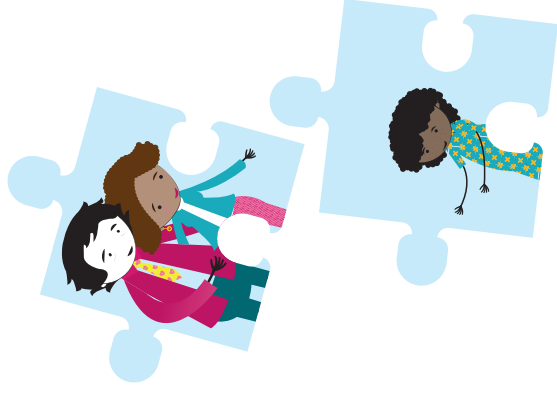
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### Family reunification

Article 10

If the parents live in different countries, children should be allowed to move between those countries to stay in contact with their parents or get back together as a family. States must respect the right of the children and their parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country.



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### Non-separation from parents

Article 9

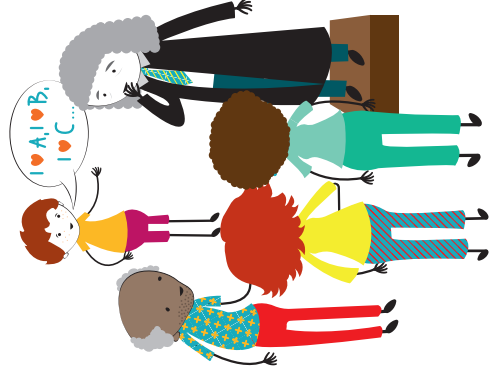
Children have the right to live with their parent(s), unless it is bad for them (for example, if a parent mistreats or neglects them). If the parents have separated, children have the right to stay in contact with both of them unless this might hurt them.



### Respect for the child's opinion

Article 12

When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say freely what they think should happen and to have their opinions taken into account.



fold

## Freedom of expression and information

Article 13

Children have the right to seek, get and share information in all forms (e.g. through writing, art, tel-e-vision, radio and the Internet) as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.



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## Freedom of association and peaceful assembly

Article 15

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



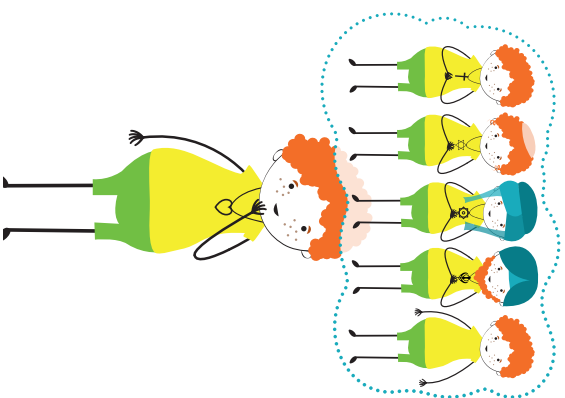
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## Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 14

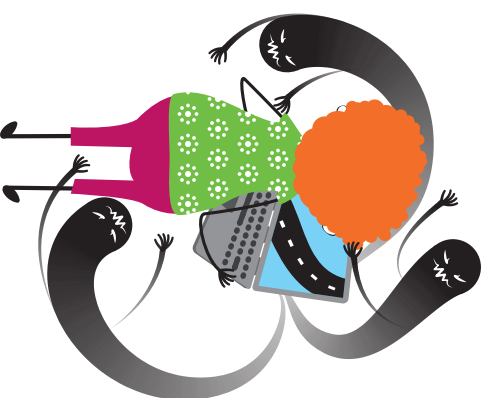
Children have the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion as long as they do not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide the children on these matters.



## Privacy, honour and reputation

Article 16

Children have a right to privacy. No-one should harm their good name, enter their house, open letters, emails personal messages or bother children or their family without a good reason.



fold

## Access to information and media

Article 17

Children have the right to reliable information from a variety of sources, including books, newspapers and magazines, television, radio and the Internet. Information should be beneficial and understandable to the children.



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## Alternative care

Article 20

If parents and family cannot care properly for their children, then children must be looked after by people who respect their religion, traditions and language.

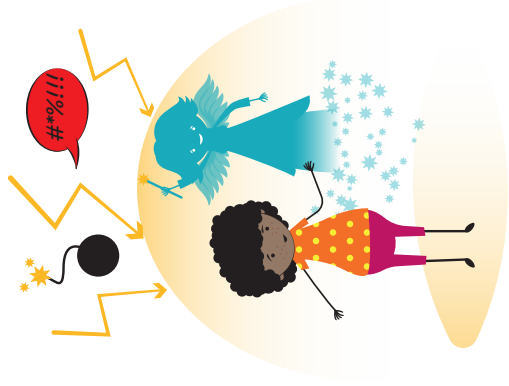


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## Protection of all forms of violence, abuse and neglect

Article 19

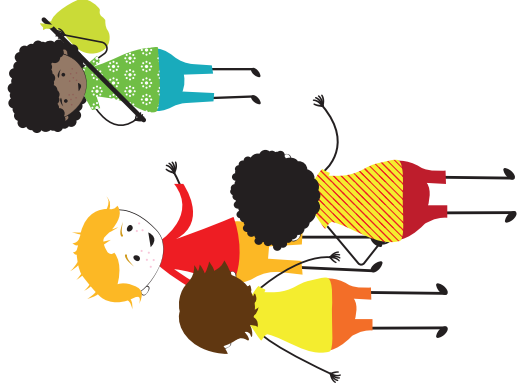
Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.



## Refugee children

Article 22

If children have moved or fled to a new country because their home country was unsafe, they have a right to protection and support. They have the same rights as children born in that country.



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## Children with disabilities

Article 23

Children with any kind of disability should have special care, support and education so that they can lead a full and independent life and participate in the community to the best of their ability.



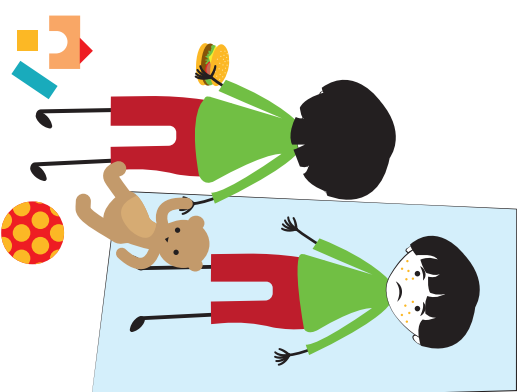
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## Adequate standard of living

Article 27

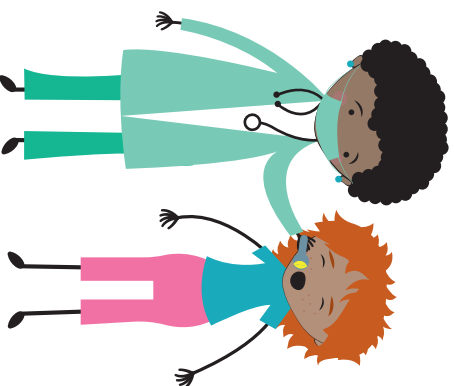
Children should live in good conditions that help them develop physically, mentally, spiritually, morally and socially. Governments should help families who cannot afford to provide this.



## Health care and health services

Article 24

Children have the right to good quality health-care (e.g. medicine, hospitals, health professionals). They also have the right to clean water, nutritious food, a clean environment and health education so that they can stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.



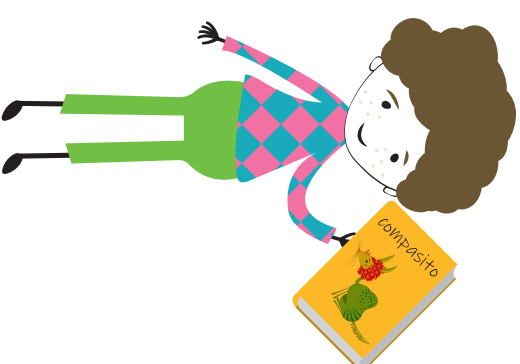
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## Right to education

Article 28

Children have a right to an education that fosters the development of the personality and talents, and respects human rights and the cultural and national values. Primary education should be free. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity.



fold

## Children of minorities and native origins

Article 30

Children have a right to learn and use the traditions, religion and language of their family, whether or not these are shared by most people in their country.



cut

## Child labour

Article 32

The governments should protect children from work that is dangerous to their health or development, that interferes with their education or that might lead people to take advantage of children.



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## Protection from sexual abuse, trafficking, sale and abduction

Articles 34 and 35

Governments must protect children from sexual abuse. They must make sure that children are not kidnapped, sold or taken to other countries to be exploited.

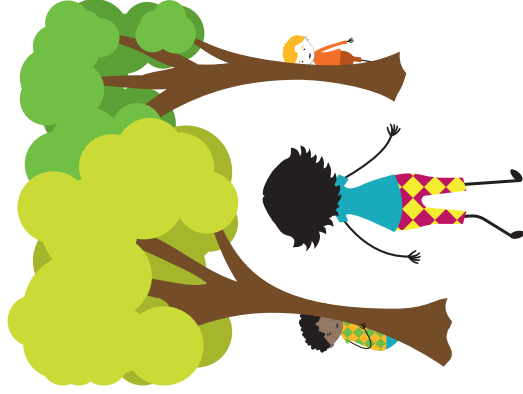


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## Leisure, play and culture

Article 31

Children have a right to relax and play and to join in a wide range of recreational and cultural activities.



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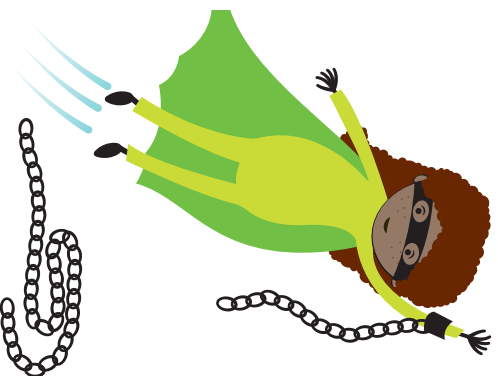


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## Protection from torture, degrading treatment and loss of liberty

*Article 37*

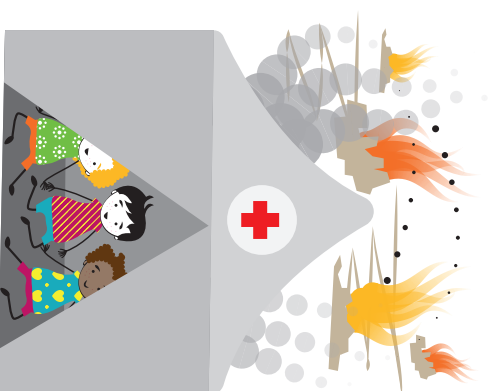
No one is allowed to punish children in a cruel or harmful way. If children break the law, they should not be put in prison with adults and should be able to stay in contact with their family.



## Protection of children affected by armed conflicts

*Article 38*

States must ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict. Children under fifteen (under eighteen in most European countries) should not be allowed to join the army or take any direct part in warfare. Children in war zones should receive special protection.



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Human rights education aims to establish a culture of human rights. Human rights education should have a key role in any educational processes. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child offers an invaluable opportunity for introducing human rights to children. Learning about and experiencing children's rights helps children to understand what human rights are about, to understand that they are rights-holders themselves, and to adapt and apply their rights in everyday life. These are the key aims of human rights education with children.

*Compasito* is a manual designed to facilitate the practice of human rights education with children. Its primary users are adults active in formal and non-formal education with children. *Compasito* provides ideas, inspiration and practical help to explore human rights with children. It looks at children as young citizens of the present and as rights-holders who are competent in many issues related to their life. It builds on children's motivations, experiences and their search for solutions.

In *Compasito*, children's rights are presented within the wider context of human rights as a whole. Thus, universal human rights and children's rights are jointly presented in such a way that by understanding their own rights, children also understand that all human beings have human rights.

The educational process builds on children's active participation, by which they learn about human rights and understand human rights issues, acquire skills and abilities to be able to defend human rights, and develop attitudes of respect for equality and dignity.

We hope that practitioners of human rights education will find inspiration and practical ideas in this manual to make human rights education a reality for children and for the benefit of our societies.

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