

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 sentence 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.