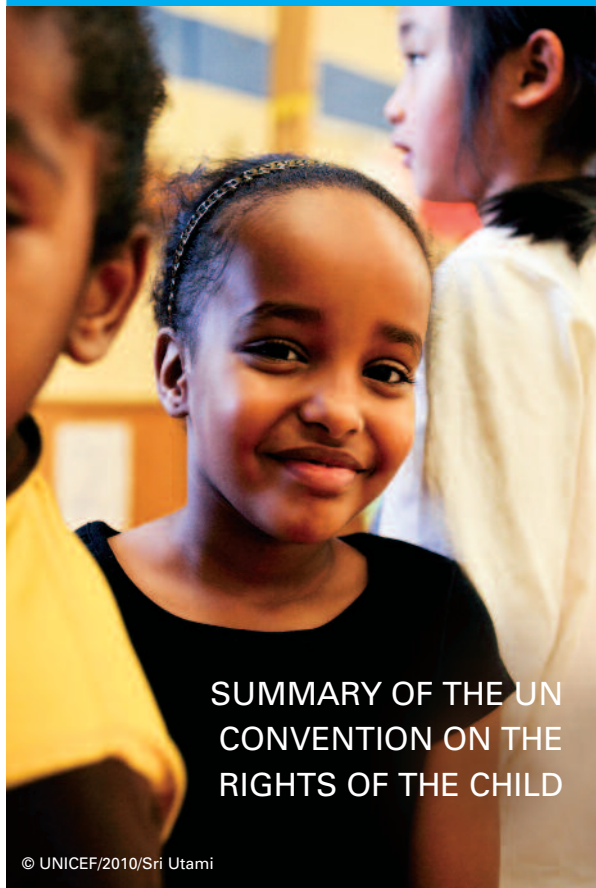


CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

and Responsibilities



SUMMARY OF THE UN
CONVENTION ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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Every child has rights

Rights are what you should have or be able to do to have the best start in life. These rights are listed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All rights are equally important and are connected to each other. You are born with these rights, and no one can take them away. Many adults are responsible to help protect your rights and do what is best for you. As you grow, you have more responsibility to make choices and exercise your rights. You can also respect the rights of others and help children around the world through organizations like UNICEF.

- 1 Everyone under 18 has these rights.
- 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.
- 3 All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.
- 4 The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

Whose responsibility?

Governments have the main responsibility to make sure the rights of children in the Convention on the Rights of the Child are protected and provided for. All citizens have responsibilities to respect the rights of children as well. Children can show their respect for the rights of others in different ways. For example, children can:

- Respect others' right to education by helping them learn
- Respect others' right to protection from harm by being kind and stopping bullying
- Respect others' right to share their views by asking what they think or want to do

A convention is an agreement between countries to obey the same laws. Canada agreed to obey (ratified) the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991. Doing so, it made a promise to make sure all children in Canada get their rights met.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 parts, called articles.



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For more information:
www.globalclassroom.unicef.ca

For children and youth:
www.moveyourworld.unicef.ca
www.unicef.org/voy/

For the convention in full text:
www2.ohchr.org/English/law/crc.htm



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5 Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

6 You have the right to be alive.

7 You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

8 You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.



9 You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

10 If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.

11 You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

12 You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

13 You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

14 You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

15 You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

16 You have the right to privacy.

17 You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

18 You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

19 You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

20 You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

21 You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

22 You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

23 You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

24 You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.



25 If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

26 You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.



27 You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

28 You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

29 Your education should help you to use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

30 You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

31 You have the right to play and rest.



32 You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

33 You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

34 You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

35 No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

36 You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

37 No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

38 You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

39 You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.



40 You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in a justice system that respects your rights.

41 If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.

42 You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.

43 to 54 These articles explain how governments and international organizations like UNICEF will work to ensure children are protected with their rights.