

United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child

Youth-
friendly
version

1. DEFINITION OF A CHILD

Until you are 18, you are considered a child and have all the rights in this convention.

2. FREEDOM FROM DISCRIMINATION

You should not be discriminated against for any reason, including your race, colour, sex, language, religion, opinion, origin, social or economic status, disability, birth, or any other quality of your parents or guardians.

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.

4. ENJOYING THE RIGHTS IN THE CONVENTION

Government should make these rights available to you and all children.

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.

6. RIGHT TO LIFE AND DEVELOPMENT

You have the right to live and grow well.

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.

8. PRESERVATION OF IDENTITY

Governments should respect your right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

9. SEPARATION FROM PARENTS

You should not be separated from your parents unless it is for your own good.

10. FAMILY REUNIFICATION

You have the right to be reunited with your parent/s if they have to move to another country.

11. PROTECTION FROM ILLEGAL TRANSFER TO ANOTHER COUNTRY

You should not be taken out of your country illegally.

12. RESPECT FOR THE CHILD'S OPINION

When adults are making decisions that affect you, you have the right to have an opinion.

13. FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND INFORMATION

You have the right to seek, get and share information through writing, art, television, radio and internet as long as the information is not damaging to you or to others.

14. FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION

You have the right to think and believe what you want and to practice your religion as long as you do not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

15. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND PEACEFUL ASSEMBLY

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

16. PRIVACY, HONOUR AND REPUTATION

You have a right to privacy. No one should harm your good name or interfere with your property.

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 internet.

18. PARENTS' JOINT RESPONSIBILITIES

You have the right to be brought up by both your parents if possible.

19. PROTECTION FROM ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Governments should ensure that you are protected from violence, abuse and neglect by your parents or anyone else.

20. ALTERNATIVE CARE

If your family cannot care for you properly, then you must be looked after by people who respect your religion, traditions and language.

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 taken to live in another country.

22. REFUGEE CHILDREN

Refugee children should receive special protection and support. You have the same rights as children born in that country.

23. DISABLED CHILDREN

Children with disabilities should receive special care, support and education to lead a full and independent life.

24. HEALTHCARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

You have the right to good quality healthcare (i.e. medicine, hospitals, health professionals). You have the right to clean water, nutritious food, a clean environment and health education.

25. PERIODIC REVIEW OF TREATMENT

You should have your situation reviewed regularly if you are looked after by local authorities or institutions.

26. BENEFIT FROM SOCIAL SECURITY

You should receive help from the government if you are poor or in need.

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.

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.

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 all nations and cultures. You have a right to learn about your rights.

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.

31. LEISURE, PLAY AND CULTURE

You have a right to relax and join in recreational and cultural activities.

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.

33. CHILDREN AND DRUG ABUSE

You should be protected from dangerous drugs and their trade.

34. PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

You should be protected from sexual abuse.

35. PROTECTION FROM TRAFFICKING, SALE AND ABDUCTION

You should be protected from kidnapping and exploitation.

36. PROTECTION FROM OTHER FORMS OF EXPLOITATION

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

37. PROTECTION FROM TORTURE, DEGRADING TREATMENT AND LOSS OF LIBERTY

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

38. PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT

If you are under 15 (under 18 in most European countries), governments should not allow you to join the army or take any part in warfare. Children in war zones should receive special protection.

39. REHABILITATION OF CHILD VICTIMS

If you were neglected, tortured or abused, were a victim of exploitation or warfare, or were put in prison, you should receive special help to regain your physical and mental health.

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.

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.

42. MAKING THE CONVENTION WIDELY KNOWN

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

43–54. DUTIES OF GOVERNMENTS

These articles explain how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights.