

A simplified version of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.¹

Article 1: Definition of the Child

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

Article 2: Non-discrimination

The Convention applies to everyone whatever their race, religion, abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3: Best Interests of the Child

All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is in the best interest for each child.

Article 4: Implementation of Rights

Governments should make these rights available to children.

Article 5: Parents, family, community rights and responsibilities

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

Article 6: Life, Survival and Development

Children have the right to live a full life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

Article 7: Name and Nationality

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

Article 8: Preservation and Identity

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

Article 9: Non-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 harm the child.

¹ http://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/Child_Rights_Flyer_FINAL.pdf

Article 10: Family Reunification

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

Article 11: Illicit Transfer and Non-return of Children

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

Article 12: Expression of Opinion

Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into consideration.

Article 13: Freedom of Expression and Information

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

Article 14: Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Religion

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 children on these matters.

Article 15: Freedom of Association

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

Article 16: Privacy, honour, and Reputation

Children have the right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their family and their home.

Article 17: Access to Information

Children have the right to reliable information from the media. Mass media such as television, radio and newspapers should provide information that children can understand and should not promote materials that could harm children.

Article 18 : Parental Responsibility

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

Article 19: Abuse and Neglect (while in family or care)

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

Article 20: Alternative Care for Children in the Absence of Parents

Children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly by people who respect their religion, culture and language.

Article 21: Adoption

When children are adopted the first concern must be what is best for them. The same rules should apply whether children are adopted in the country of their birth or if they are taken to live in another country.

Article 22: Refugee Children

Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children who are born in that country.

Article 23: Disabled Children

Children who have any kind of disability should receive special care and support so that they can live a full and independent life.

Article 24 : Health Care

Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Richer countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 25: Periodic Review

Children who are looked after by their local authority rather than their parents should have their situation reviewed regularly.

Article 26: Social Security

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

Article 27: Standard of Living

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

Article 28: Education

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

Article 29: Aims of Education

Education should develop each child's personality and talents to their full potential. It should encourage children to respect their parents, their cultures and other cultures.

Article 30: Children of Minorities and Indigenous Children

Children have the right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether or not these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live, as long as this does not harm others.

Article 31: Play and Recreation

Children have the right to relax, play and to join in a wide range of leisure activities.

Article 32: Economic Exploitation

Governments should protect children from work that is dangerous or that might harm their health or education.

Article 33: Narcotic and Psychotic Substances

Governments should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.

Article 34: Sexual Exploitation

Governments should protect children from sexual abuse.

Article 35: Abduction, Sale and Traffic

Governments should make sure that children are not abducted or sold.

Article 36: Other forms of Exploitation

Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

Article 37: Torture, Capital Punishment, Deprivation of Liberty

Children who break the law should not be treated cruelly. They should not be put in a prison with adults and should be able to keep in contact with their family.

Article 38: Armed Conflicts

Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army. Children in war zones should receive special protection.

Article 39: Recovery and Reintegration

Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

Article 40: Juvenile Justice

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

Article 41: Rights of the Child in other Instruments

If the laws of a particular country protects children better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should override the Convention.

Article 42: Dissemination of the Convention

Governments should make the Convention known to all adults and children.

Article 43-54: Implementation

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 articles in all. Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure that all children get all their rights. These articles of implementation provide for a Committee on the Rights of the Child to oversee implementation of the Convention.