



DID YOU KNOW THAT CHILDREN HAVE THEIR OWN RIGHTS?

EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR AGE.

THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD HAS BEEN ADOPTED TO SAFEGUARD THE SPECIFIC NEEDS AND INTERESTS OF THE CHILD.

ALL CHILDREN ARE EQUAL

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

was adopted at the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. All countries of the world, except for two, are parties to the Convention. Finland acceded to it in 1991. In Finland, the Convention obliges the state, local authorities, children's parents and other adults to observe it.



THE CONVENTION APPLIES TO EVERYONE BELOW THE AGE OF 18 YEARS

THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ARE OBLIGATIONS OF THE ADULTS.

The authorities must evaluate the impact on children of all their measures and decisions relating to children, take into account the interests of the children and listen to their opinions.

PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS HAVE THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR TAKING CARE AND FOR THE UPBRINGING OF THEIR CHILDREN.

They are entitled to obtain support, guidance and advice for that task. If the parents or guardians are not, despite support, able to take care of the wellbeing of their child, the State must safeguard good care for the child through foster care or adoption.

THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD MONITORS THE COMPLIANCE WITH THE CONVENTION AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD.

The countries that have acceded to the Convention shall submit to the Committee every five years a report on the progress it has made in the implementation of the rights of the child. The Committee will present its concerns and recommendations regarding the situation in each country based on the regular reports it has received. In Finland the Ministry for Foreign Affairs is responsible for the reporting.

THE CONTENT OF THE CONVENTION CAN BE SUMMARISED UNDER THREE THEMES:

- PROTECTION**
The child is entitled to special protection and care.
- PROVISION**
The child is entitled to provision of resources by society.
- PARTICIPATION**
The child is entitled to participation in the decision-making concerning himself or herself with respect to his or her age and maturity.

The task of the Ombudsman for Children is to monitor and promote the implementation of the rights of the child in Finland.

The United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF has the right and responsibility to monitor the implementation of the Convention.

In Finland, other children's organisations and youth organisations (NGOs) also render expert assistance and promote the implementation of the rights of the child in various ways.

THE VIEWS OF THE CHILD SHALL BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD IN BRIEF



**THE CHILD
IS ENTITLED TO
A GOOD LIFE**

1. Every person below the age of 18 years is a child.
2. Every child is entitled to the rights of the child. No child shall be discriminated against due to his or her parents' traits, opinions or origin.
3. When making decisions concerning a child the child's best interests shall always be a primary consideration.
4. The State shall implement the rights provided for in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
5. The State shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or legal guardians in the child's upbringing.
6. The child has the right to life. The State shall guarantee to the maximum extent the survival and development of the child at his or her individual pace.
7. The child shall be registered immediately after birth. The child born has the right to a name and nationality. Every child has the right to know and be cared for in the first place by his or her parents.
8. The child has the right to preserve his or her identity, nationality, name and family relations.
9. As a rule, the child has the right to live with his or her parents if the child feels happy and safe living with them. A child who is separated from his or her parents has the right to meet and maintain regular contacts with both parents. Such a meeting can be prevented if it is contrary to the child's best interests.
10. If a child has been separated from his or her parents and they are staying in different states, the State is responsible for dealing with their application for family reunification favourably and without delay.
11. The State shall prevent any illicit transfer of children from one country to another.
12. The child has the right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child. The view of the child shall be taken into account in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
13. In order to express his or her views the child has the right to seek, receive and impart information and ideas freely, provided that it does not violate the rights of others.
14. The child has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The guidance provided by the parents to the child in the exercise of this right shall be respected.
15. The child has the right to join associations and to participate actively in their activities.
16. The child has the right to privacy, domestic peace and secrecy of correspondence. No child shall be subjected to attacks on his or her honour or reputation.
17. The child has the right to obtain such information through the mass media that is important for his or her development and well-being. Children shall be protected from information and material injurious to their well-being.
18. The parents have the primary and joint responsibility for the upbringing of the child. They are entitled to obtain support for managing this task. The parents shall act in the best interests of the child. The State shall ensure day care and child welfare services.
19. The child shall be protected from all forms of violence, negligent treatment and abuse.
20. A child who cannot live with his or her family is entitled to special protection and support. In that case attention shall be paid to continuity in the child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious and linguistic background.
21. A child can be adopted if it is the best alternative for him or her.



IF YOU NOTICE THAT YOUR RIGHTS ARE NEGLECTED YOU CAN DISCUSS THE MATTER FOR INSTANCE WITH YOUR PARENTS, TEACHER, PUBLIC HEALTH NURSE, SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER, OR SOME OTHER RELIABLE ADULT.

22. A refugee child is entitled to special care needed by him or her.
23. A child with disabilities must obtain the best possible care and assistance that promotes the child's self-reliance and participation.
24. The child has the right to live as healthy a life as possible and to have access to the health and medical care needed by him or her. Appropriate health care shall be guaranteed for expectant mothers.
25. A child placed outside his or her native home has the right to a periodic review of the care provided to him or her and of the criteria for the placement.
26. The child has the right to social security.
27. The child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her development.
28. The child has the right to free primary education. The State shall promote secondary education and educational guidance, and prevent dropping out of school.
29. Education shall develop the child's individual skills, respect for the human rights and the child's own language and culture, responsible citizenship, tolerance and environmental protection.
30. A child belonging to a minority group or who is indigenous has the right to his or her own culture, religion and language.
31. The child has the right to rest, play and leisure as well as to participate in the arts and cultural life.
32. The child shall not be made to perform work that interferes with the child's education or is harmful to his or her health or development.
33. The child shall be protected from narcotic drugs and illegal trafficking in narcotic drugs.
34. The child shall be protected from all forms sexual abuse.
35. The States shall prevent child trafficking.
36. The child shall be protected from all forms of exploitation that jeopardises his or her welfare.
37. The child shall not be tortured. The child shall not be punished cruelly or in a degrading manner. The arrest or imprisonment of a child must be used only as a measure of last resort and even then the child's needs according to his or her age must be taken into account.
38. A child below the age of 18 years may not be recruited to an army and the child may not participate in warfare. Children shall be protected in armed conflicts.*
39. A child subjected to abuse shall be helped to recover and his adaptation to society shall be promoted.
40. A child who has broken the law shall be protected and his or her rights shall be respected.
41. If the national legislation of a State secures the child better rights than this Convention that legislation shall be complied with.
42. The State shall see to it that all citizens are aware of the rights of the child.
43. The compliance with this Convention is monitored by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- 44.–54. These articles refer to decisions on acceding to, amending, reporting on, and other validity of the Convention.

* In the Optional Protocol the age limit was raised from 15 to 18 years.