

Resource 17

Convention on the Rights of the Child: Child-friendly version

1. A child is recognised as any person under 18, unless national laws say otherwise.
2. All rights apply to all children without exception.
3. All actions concerning children shall take full account of their best interests.
4. A country's government must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.
5. The government must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to provide proper guidance for the child at different ages.
6. Every child has the right to life.
7. Every child has the right to a name and nationality, to know his or her parents and be cared for by them.
8. The government has an obligation to protect the child's identity, name, nationality and family ties.
9. The child has the right to live with his or her parents unless this is not in the child's best interests. The child has the right to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one or both.
10. Children and their parents have the right to leave any country or enter their own to be reunited.
11. The government must do everything possible to prevent the kidnapping or holding of children abroad by a parent or other person.
12. Children have the right to express their opinions freely, and have their opinions listened to in matters that affect them.
13. Children have the right to express their views, obtain information and make ideas or information known.
14. Children have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, with the guidance of their parents.
15. Children have the right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.
16. Children have the right to protection from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence.

17. Every child has the right to access appropriate information and materials from many different sources.
18. Parents both have responsibility for raising the child, and the government shall support this.
19. Every child has the right to protection from abuse and neglect.
20. Every child without a family has the right to protection by their country's government.
21. Adoption of any child will only be carried out in the best interests of the child.
22. Children who are refugees, or seeking refugee status, are entitled to special protection.
23. All disabled children have the right to special care, education and training to help them enjoy and experience life to the fullest.
24. Every child has the right to the best possible standard of health and medical care.
25. Children who are placed in an institution for treatment of their physical or mental health have the right to a regular review of their treatment or placement.
26. Every child has the right to social security benefits.
27. Every child has the right to an adequate standard of living.
28. Children have the right to education. Primary education should be free and all children should be required to attend. Secondary education should be accessible to every child.
29. Education should develop children's mental and physical abilities, and prepare them to live in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples. Children should learn to respect their own culture and that of others.
30. All children of indigenous and minority communities have the right to their own culture.
31. Children have the right to rest, leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.
32. Children have the right to be protected from having to participate in work that threatens their health, education or development.

33. Children have the right to protection from drug use and trafficking.
34. All children have the right to be protected from sexual exploitation and abuse.
35. No child should be subjected to abduction, trafficking or sale.
36. Children have the right to be protected from any form of exploitation that is harmful to them, and that is not already covered by Articles 32, 33, 34 and 35.
37. No child shall be tortured, cruelly treated or put in prison without a reason. A child who is arrested has the right to help from the law and contact with his or her family.
38. Governments must do everything possible to see that children under the age of 15 do not take part in armed conflict. Children under 15 should not be recruited into the armed forces. Children who are affected by armed conflict are entitled to special protection and care.
39. Children who have experienced armed conflict, torture, neglect or exploitation shall receive special treatment to help them recover.
40. Children in conflict with the law are entitled to assistance and treatment that respects their rights.
41. Wherever standards for children's rights in a country's laws are higher than in the CRC, the higher standard shall apply.
42. Children have the right to know their rights. Adults should know about children's rights and help children to learn about them too.
43. These articles explain how governments and non-government organisations must work to make sure that children's rights are protected.