

# CHILDREN'S RIGHTS<sup>1</sup> AND RESPONSIBILITIES



Children<sup>2</sup> have the right to:

- life
- a legally registered name and nationality and to know and be cared for by their parents.
- proper care and a standard of living to meet their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social needs and development so they can grow to lead full, independent and productive lives.
- free education to achieve literacy and basic community knowledge free of bias and prejudice.
- choices about things that affect their lives and to be given information and support to help them make good choices.
- think, believe and say what they want as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights.

Governments, organisations, communities, cultures, families and especially parents should work towards what is best for each child so that as they grow they learn to use their rights properly and responsibly.

Children should be protected from harm, neglect, exploitation or any other activity that could harm their development, especially sexual exploitation, harm from armed conflicts, child labour, being sold or abducted into prostitution or adult work, dangerous drugs.

Children who have been harmed, neglected or abused should receive help to restore their self-respect and to return to normalcy.

Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good.

Children who cannot be looked after by their family have the right to be properly cared for by people who respect their gender, language, culture and religion even if they are taken to live in another country.

Children whose parents are separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents unless this right might hurt the child.

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

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

Children who are accused of breaking the law should receive legal help. Children who are placed in institutions or prisons for the most serious offences should be separated from adults and should be able to keep in contact with their families.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Children have the responsibility to:

- respect the rights of others including their parents.
- not bully or harm each other.
- look after their environment.
- learn as much as their capabilities allow and, where possible, to share their knowledge and experience with others.
- help those in need, the disadvantaged, and the victims of discrimination.

<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out a number of universal, fundamental children's rights and responsibilities. These are aimed at ensuring that all children, wherever they may live and whatever their circumstances, can be protected, cared for and given the best possible chance to grow into healthy and responsible adults.

<sup>2</sup> A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.

*A child who discovers kindness and fairness  
will better care for tomorrow's children.*