

# Celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Rights of the Child

Fira barnets rättigheter

Célébre les droits de l'enfant

Celebre os Direitos da Criança

You and all other children have your own rights until you turn 18. It is the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* that gives you these rights.

All the countries of the world except the USA\* have ratified (promised to follow) the Convention. They must always put the best interests of children first, and listen to what you have to say.

#### Basic ideas of the Convention:

- All children are equal and have the same rights.
- Every child has the right to have his or her basic needs fulfilled.
- Every child has the right to protection from abuse and exploitation.
- Every child has the right to express his or her opinion and to be respected.

#### What is a convention?

A convention is an international agreement, a contract between countries. The Convention on the Rights of the Child is one of the six UN conventions on human rights.

#### Celebrate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary

On 20 November 2019, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child celebrated its 30th anniversary. On that day in 1989, the UN adopted the Convention.



CHARLES DRAWIN

\*The USA has signed the Convention, but this is not legally binding.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child contains a long list of rights that apply to every child in the world. It is divided into paragraphs that are called articles. This is what some of the 54 articles are about:

**Article 1**

These rights apply to all children under 18 in the world.

**Article 2**

All children have the same rights and should not be discriminated against.

Nobody should treat you badly because of your appearance, your skin colour, your gender, your language, your religion, or your opinions.

**Article 3**

When adults make decisions affecting children, they must think about what is in the best interests of the child. Politicians, authorities and the courts must consider how their decisions affect children, whether it is one child or many.

**Article 6**

You have the right to life, and to be able to develop.

**Article 7**

You have the right to a name and a nationality.

**Article 9**

You have the right to live with your parents unless it's bad for you.

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

**Articles 12–15**

You have the right to say what you think. Your opinions should be respected in all matters concerning you – at home, at school and by the authorities and the courts.

**Article 18**

Your parents are jointly responsible for your upbringing and development. They must always put your interests first.

**Article 19**

You have the right to protection from all forms of violence, neglect, abuse and mistreatment. You should not be exploited by your parents or other guardians.

**Articles 20–21**

You are entitled to receive care if you have lost your family.

**Article 22**

If you are a refugee, you have the right to protection and assistance. If you are in a new country, you have the same rights as all other children there. If you arrived alone, you should be given help to reunite with your family.

**Article 23**

All children have the right to a good life. If you are differently abled you have the right to extra support and help.

**Article 24**

When you are sick, you have the right to receive all the help and care you need.

**Articles 28–29**

You have the right to go to school and to learn about important things, including respect for human rights, your own and other cultures and the equal value of all people.

**Article 30**

The thoughts and beliefs of every child should be respected. If you belong to a minority, you have the right to your own language, your own culture and your own religion.

**Article 31**

You have the right to play, rest and free time, and the right to live in a healthy environment.

**Article 32**

You should not be forced to do hazardous work that prevents your schooling and damages your health.

**Article 34**

No one should subject you to abuse or force you into commercial sexual exploitation. If you are treated badly, you are entitled to protection and help.

**Article 35**

No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

**Article 37**

No one should punish you in a cruel and harmful way.

**Article 38**

You never have to be a soldier or take part in armed conflict.

**Article 42**

You have the right to information and knowledge about your rights. Parents and other adults should know about the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## The right to complain!

Children whose rights have been violated can submit complaints directly to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, if they have not received help in their home country. This has become possible thanks to a relatively new protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children in countries that have approved the protocol therefore have better opportunities to make their voices heard regarding their rights. Sweden has not yet approved the protocol. You and your friends can contact your politicians and demand that they do so.

Find out more at  
[worldschildrensprize.org/](http://worldschildrensprize.org/)  
childrights

