

Children's Parliament meets the Scottish Cabinet

2020

Key messages from Children's Parliament

Cabinet Meeting with
Children and Young People



To get ready for this year's Cabinet meeting, we discussed the issues, key messages and calls to action that over 1,000 Members of Children's Parliament, from ten local authorities, raised during 2019. From all the work, we identified three key issues that we have decided to take to the Scottish Cabinet in 2020.

For each issue, we identified the ways our children's human rights are not being respected today and what we think needs to change to make rights real for Scotland's children.

"It's important that children go to Cabinet, so that we can influence how Scotland works and make Scotland a better place."

#MakeRightsReal

- MCP, aged 11

The Right to Protection: a childhood free from the impact of alcohol

Alcohol is something we see in all parts of our lives: at home, on the streets, in shops, next to bins, in parks, on transport, at sports games and festivals, in airports, train stations and hotels.

Alcohol affects our lives in lots of ways: seeing people around us drinking; seeing adverts for alcohol on the street, at events and on TV; and seeing bottles and smashed glass in our parks and communities.

We aren't usually asked what we think about alcohol, but it can make us feel scared, ignored, worried, annoyed and pressured, so it's important that our views about alcohol are listened to.

"No one asks us about alcohol and suddenly when you think about it, you realise it's all around you all the time."

- MCP, aged 9

How can we make alcohol less visible for Scotland's children?



What needs to change

Make alcohol less visible for children

We don't want adverts to be in places that children might be and want alcohol sponsorship of events to be stopped too. We want to make sure that alcohol is not visible inside or outside shops; alcohol should be kept in adult-only spaces or separate shops.

Stop people drinking in public spaces and parks

We know that in some parts of Scotland drinking alcohol in public is not allowed. We want all children in Scotland to grow up in communities where they can live and play safely.

“The self-awareness, understanding and unrelenting determination of children across Scotland to bring the UNCRC home is inspirational”

- Kate Gilmore, UN Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights.



#MakeRightsReal March
Supporting UNCRC incorporation into Scots Law
Wednesday 6th November 2019

The Right to food: food security in Scotland



Lots of families in Scotland are living in poverty and many children don't have enough good food to eat. This can mean we don't have enough energy to do the things we enjoy. It can make us feel hungry, ill, and tired.

Lots of children get food from food banks. We know that this can help, but having to get food from food banks can also make us feel more embarrassed.

Not having enough good food can also make it difficult for us to concentrate and to learn at school. Getting food when we're at school is important, but what about during school holidays or at the weekends?

"Although children have a right to food, not all children in Scotland have enough food"

- MCP, aged 10



How do we make sure that children have enough food when they're not at school?

What needs to change

Make sure children have enough good food inside and outside school

We want all children, not just in P1 – 3, to be offered free food at school. We also want all children to be able to get enough nutritious food at the weekends and during school holidays, maybe by giving children under 11 a card with money on it.

Make good food less expensive and more accessible

We have the right to food and the right to be healthy, but we can only make these rights real if good food is affordable and can be bought in all parts of Scotland. Food banks can help with hunger, but they can be embarrassing which can make things worse for us.

The Right to education: children's human dignity at school



We see children being punished in lots of ways when they do something “wrong” at school. Sometimes this takes away our human dignity and gets in the way of our learning.

We have all been shouted at or seen adults shouting at children in school. This can make us feel worthless, unsafe, afraid, stressed, upset and not listened to. It can also stop us having good relationships with teachers, which is really important for our learning and keeping us safe at school.

We understand that there will be consequences for some behaviour, but these shouldn't make us feel ashamed or embarrassed. When we learn from our mistakes, it should never cost us our human dignity.

“Try and understand what is going on in our life and in our heads instead of automatically giving out detention or worse, abuse.”

- MCP, aged 12



How can Scotland support its teachers to use approaches that don't take away children's human dignity?

What needs to change

Make schools shout-free

Lots of teachers don't raise their voices in school, and some schools are already shout free, so we know it's possible. We want all children in Scotland to be able to learn in shout-free environments.

Help teachers act in ways that respect our human dignity

No matter how we behave, we have the right to be treated with respect. We don't think all teachers know this. We think new and old teachers need to understand this and to learn how to act in ways that don't shame us or take away our human dignity.

“The Cabinet Meeting is important. One, so people can see children are serious about these issues and are trying to change things and, two, because obviously there’s some things only the Scottish Government can change.”

- MCP, aged 11



As well as our three issues, we have two suggestions for how adults can make rights real for children.

Make sure all children know about their human rights

It’s our right to know our rights and that they’re becoming law. This will help children to understand the laws that keep them safe, healthy and happy, and that they can speak up if their human rights aren’t respected.

Make sure all adults know about children’s human rights

All adults should know about and understand children’s human rights, and that our rights are becoming law, so they can support us when they aren’t being respected. Some adults will need to know about our rights because they have a special duty to make our rights real.

“A defender of children’s rights should be a fusion of Neil Armstrong, Robin Hood and a dragon! They need to wear a badge, so that people know they care about children and their rights”

- MCP, aged 11

- we invite you to join the **#Unfearties** and stand up for and alongside children. Visit: bit.ly/Unfearties





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giving ideas a voice

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