

# UNCRC

## THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

### THE UNITED NATIONS

The United Nations (UN) is a gathering of 192 countries. It was set up after World War 2 to bring about a peaceful and fair world. The countries meet in the General Assembly, which is the closest thing to a world parliament.

The countries of the UN have written some conventions which say what they agree to do to make the world peaceful and fair. A convention is a collection of rules or things that should be done. One of the most important UN Conventions is about children's rights; your rights.

### THE UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is about your life and your rights. The rights in the Convention belong to every child from birth to the age of 18.

The United Kingdom has signed the UNCRC which means that in all the countries of the UK, including Scotland, children and young people should have the rights that have been promised. The UNCRC has 54 parts which are called articles.

On the following pages **Children's Parliament** has put together a short version that explains what each article says.

**Children's Parliament** gives children the opportunity to voice their ideas, thoughts and feelings honestly so that their concerns and opinions can be listened to and included in our social and political landscape. Children's human rights and the idea of human dignity form the foundation of the work of Children's Parliament.



### Children's Parliament

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1. Everyone from birth to the age of 18 has the rights we tell you about here.
2. The rights in the Convention belong to everyone – that includes you! Nobody should treat you unfairly because of who you are.
3. When adults make a decision about you it is what's best for you that should be the most important thing to consider.
4. It is the Government's job to make sure you get the rights promised to you in the Convention.
5. The Government must respect that it is your family's job to guide and support you. The adults in your family should listen to your opinions; and you should listen to them.
6. You have the right to life and to be healthy.
7. You should have a name and belong to a country. You should know who your parents are and be cared for by them if possible.
8. The Government must respect your right to a name, to belong to a country and to have a family because these are all important parts of who you are.
9. You should not be separated from your parents unless they are mistreating or neglecting you. If your parents don't live together you have the right to stay in touch with them both, unless this might harm you.
10. If you and your parents are living in different countries you have the right to get back together and live in the same place.
11. It is the Government's job to make sure children are not taken out of their own country illegally.
12. You should have your say when adults are making decisions that affect you. The adults should take your opinions seriously.
13. You can find out things, and say what you think through speaking, writing or making art, as long as it doesn't hurt you or other people.
14. You can think and believe what you like and have what religion you want. Your parents should guide you when they can.
15. You can meet with other people and join in groups or clubs. When you get together with other people you must not break the rights of other children and young people.
16. You should have privacy. Other people should not open your private letters or diary or listen to your phone calls. Adults should not say or write things that damage your reputation.
17. You can get information from the radio, television, books or on the internet. But you should be protected from information that might harm you.
18. You should be brought up by your parents if possible and they should do what's best for you.
19. You should never be hurt or abused or neglected by someone who looks after you. The Government should make sure these things never happen to any child.
20. If you cannot be looked after by your family you should be looked after by someone who will care for you. Your carers must respect your religion, culture or language.
21. If you are adopted or fostered or living in care you should be cared for properly.
22. If you are a refugee you should be cared for properly and have the same rights as other children who were born here.
23. If you have a disability you should get the care and support you need so that you can live a full and independent life and grow up the same way as other children.

24. You should be as healthy as possible. Adults should take good care of you. If you are ill you should get the medical care you need.
25. If you have to live away from your parents your situation must be looked at regularly and you should have your say too about where you live.
26. The Government should provide extra money to your family if they need it, so that they can still take good care of you.
27. Your family should have enough money to make sure you and other children in your family are healthy, happy and looked after properly.
28. You have a right to an education. School rules should be fair and you should be treated with respect and dignity. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries to provide free primary education for all children.
29. Your education should help you develop your talents and help you learn about your rights. You should learn to care for other people and for the environment.
30. If you come from a minority group you have the right to speak your own language and practice your own religion if it is different from most other people.
31. You have the right to play and join in other activities. The government should help you get involved in art and cultural things.
32. You should not have to do any work that has a bad effect on your education or health. If you do work it should not be for too long and you should get paid fairly.
33. You should be protected from getting involved in making, taking or selling harmful drugs.
34. You should be protected from sexual abuse. Nobody should do anything to your body that you do not want them to do, like touching you or taking pictures of you or making you say things you don't want to say.
35. The Government must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold.
36. No-one should do anything to you that will harm your growth and development.
37. No-one should treat you cruelly. If you break a law you should be able to keep in contact with your family. You must not be put in a prison with adults
38. If you are under 16 you cannot join the army and must not fight in a war. You have the right to be protected if a war is happening.
39. If you have been harmed or abused you should get the help you need to recover.
40. If you are accused of breaking the law you must be treated fairly and get the help you need to understand what is happening.
41. The rights in this Convention are the basic rights you have. Your country can give you better rights and protection if they are able to.
42. It is the Government's job to make sure all children and adults know about the Convention.

Articles 43 to 54 of the Convention are about what adults and the Government need to do to make sure children and young people get their rights. This includes getting reports from the Government every 5 years about what they are doing to give children and young people their rights.