

THE RIGHTS OF A CHILD

Definition of a Child

A child is recognized as a person under 18, unless national laws recognize the age of majority earlier.

Non-discrimination

All rights apply to all children without exception. It is the States' obligation to protect children from any form of discrimination and to take positive action to promote their rights.

Best interest of the child

All actions concerning the child shall take full account of his or her best interests. The State shall provide the child, with adequate care when parents or others charged with that responsibility, fail to do so.

Implementation of rights

The State must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.

Parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities

The State must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and the extended family to provide guidance for the child which is appropriate to her or his evolving capacities.

The Rights of a child

1) **The right to survival and development**

Every child has the inherent right to life, and the State has an obligation to ensure the child's survival and development.

2) **The right to name and nationality**

The child has the right to name at birth. The child also has the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, to know his or her parents and be cared for by them.

3) **The right to preservation of identity**

The State has an obligation to protect, and if necessary, re-establish basic aspects of the child's identity. This includes name, nationality and family ties.

4) **The right to live with his parents**

The child has a right to live with his or her parents unless this is deemed to be incompatible with the child's best interests. The child also has the right to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one both.

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5) The right to family reunification

Children and their parents have the right to leave any country and to enter another for purposes of reunion or the maintenance of the child-parent relationship.

6) The right to the child's opinion

The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.

7) The right to freedom of expression

The child has the right to express his or her views, obtain information, make ideas or information known, regardless of frontiers.

8) The right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

The State shall respect the child's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance.

9) The right to freedom of association

Children have a right to meet with others, and to join or form associations.

10) The right to protection of privacy

Children have the right to protection from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence, and from libel or slander.

11) The right of disabled children

A disabled child has the right to special care, education and training to help him or her enjoy a full and decent life in dignity and achieve the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible.

12) The right to health and health services

The child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. States shall place special emphasis on the provision of primary and preventive health care, public health education and the reduction of infant mortality. They shall encourage international co-operation in this regard and strive to see that no child is deprived of access to effective health services.

13) The right to social security

The child has the right to benefit from social security including social insurance.

14) The right to standard of living

Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility can be fulfilled, and is. State responsibility can include material assistance to parents and their children.

15) The right to education

The child has a right to education, and the State's duty to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child and to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity.

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School discipline shall be consistent with the child's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international co-operation to implement this right.

16) The right of children of minorities or indigenous populations

Children of minority communities and indigenous populations have the right to enjoy their own culture and to practice their own religion and language.

17) The right to leisure, recreation and cultural activities

The child has the right to leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.

18) The right to protection against child labor

The child has the right to be protected from work that threatens his or her health, education or development. The State shall set minimum ages for employment and regulate working conditions.

19) The right to protection against drug abuse

Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.

20) The right to protection against sexual exploitation

The State shall protect children from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.

21) The right to protection against sale, trafficking and abduction

It is the State's obligation to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

22) The right to protection against torture and deprivation of liberty

No child shall be subjected to torture, cruel treatment or punishment, unlawful arrest or deprivation of liberty. Both capital punishment and life imprisonment without the possibility of release are prohibited for offences committed by persons below 18 years. Any child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interests not to do so. A child who is detained shall have legal and other assistance as well as contact with the family.

23) The right to protection against armed conflicts

States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that children under 15 years of age have no direct part in hostilities. No child below 15 shall be recruited into the armed forces. States shall also ensure the protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflict as described in relevant international law.

24) The right to rehabilitative care

The State has an obligation to ensure that child victims of armed conflicts, torture, neglect, maltreatment or exploitation receive appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.

25) The right to administration of juvenile justice

A child in conflict with the law has the right to treatment which promotes the child's sense of dignity and worth, takes the child's age into account and aims at his or her reintegration into society. The child is entitled to basic guarantees as well as legal or other assistance for his or her defense. Judicial proceedings and institutional placements shall be avoided wherever possible.