

This is the parent booklet to accompany the children's activity booklet about the UNCRC and children's rights. This booklet contains information about the UNCRC and some helpful hints and tips for completing the activities in the other booklet.

The children's pack can be printed with the children recording their responses or the activities can be completed verbally as a discussion between you and your child.

If you would like to find out more about the UNCRC and children's rights then please look at the Unicef website.

*[www.unicef.org.uk](http://www.unicef.org.uk)*

# What is UNICEF?

UNICEF is the children's rights organization of the United Nations. UNICEF is the abbreviation of **United Nations Children's Fund**. The organization helps governments make laws that protect the rights of children. UNICEF also assists in setting up new schools and nutrition programmes, and it helps children themselves by providing clean water, good food and education.

UNICEF often works together with other organizations to ensure that children receive what they are entitled to. UNICEF helps children all over the world, in both poor countries and rich countries. Everywhere, there are children who are not given the treatment they deserve and whose rights must be better respected.

## Children's rights

Children's rights are the minimum standards needed to ensure that children can grow up safe and healthy. All children in the world have these rights. They are laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and apply to everyone under the age of eighteen.

## Back in time

Children's rights have not always existed. In 1924, a statement on children's rights was written down for the first time in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child. The reason was the misery that many children experienced during the First World War. Then, the Second World War brought more misery. Children died of starvation or due to bombings or were killed in concentration camps.

In 1946, UNICEF was founded as the children's organization of the United Nations, initially for children who were the victims of the Second World War. In 1948, the UN proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Eleven years later, in 1959,

an expanded Declaration of the Rights of the Child was agreed. The disadvantage of a 'declaration' is that you cannot call countries to account if they do not keep to the agreements made. The UN therefore came up with the idea of establishing a legally binding treaty in 1978. This became known as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and was adopted in 1989.

## Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a list of agreements that almost all countries in the world have made with one another. In the Convention, the countries have set out how to deal with children and what children's rights are. The Convention contains 54 articles with agreements. The first article says who the Convention applies to (everyone under the age of 18). This is followed by 41 articles describing various rights. At the end there are articles on monitoring and reporting to ensure that children's rights are actually complied with. In 2019, the Convention celebrated its 30th anniversary.

## What does UNICEF do with children's rights?

UNICEF is mentioned in the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the organization that helps countries monitor and adhere to children's rights. UNICEF stands up for the rights of children.




# Children's rights: what are they?

As a child you have the right to grow up safe and healthy. You also have the right to be heard and to have your own opinion. You also have the right to be treated with respect and to have your own choices. You also have the right to be treated with respect and to have your own choices.

## Exercise 1

What do I need?

There are also things that you really need, like being able to go to school. Do that you have the chance to develop and feel yourself a bright future. And you also need healthy food, education you will become a job, find time about a roof over your head? Can you think of three more things you really need?



Three empty boxes for writing answers to Exercise 1.

Exercise 1: Ask your child to write down or discuss three things that make them happy.

Exercise 2: Ask your child to think of three things that they really need.

The purpose of these exercises is to allow children to discover that the things you actually need to grow up safe and healthy (your rights) are not necessarily the same as the things that you would like to do or have.

## Exercise 2

What do I need?

There are also things that you really need, like being able to go to school. Do that you have the chance to develop and feel yourself a bright future. And you also need healthy food, education you will become a job, find time about a roof over your head? Can you think of three more things you really need?

Three empty boxes for writing answers to Exercise 2.

## Exercise 3

This is nice, but this is what you need!

There are things that are nice, and also things that are needed to grow up safe and healthy. Do you see the difference? Tick off the things in this list that you really need.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tablets in your class                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Protection from discrimination                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A large bed   | <input type="checkbox"/> Information from books, television and the Internet |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Crisps or popcorn                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Privacy   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A house to live in                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Love and attention from your parents                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Time to do what you want                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports activities                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A PlayStation 4                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Clothes   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A few holidays a year                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> A bed   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your own opinion (and be able to share it freely)     | <input type="checkbox"/> A nice teacher                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Your own religion (and be able to choose it yourself) | <input type="checkbox"/> A house with more than four walls                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A television  | <input type="checkbox"/> A bed friend  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A name, so that the government knows that you exist   |  |

Exercise 3: Ask your child to tick off the things they think are really needed. Discuss the different options with your child.

ANSWERS:

Things you really need are...

- A house to live in.
- Time to do what you want.
- Your own opinion (and be able to share it freely).
- Your own religion (and be able to choose it yourself).
- A name, so that the government knows that you exist.
- Protection from discrimination.
- Information from books, television and the Internet.
- Privacy.
- Love and attention from your parents.
- Sports activities.
- Clothes.



Reading Activity: Share the text with your child. After reading it, ask them a couple of questions to check that they have understood the text.

- What is UNICEF's role when it comes to children's rights? (UNICEF stands up for the rights of children and helps countries comply with these rights).
- How long has the Convention on the Rights of the Child existed? (Since 1989).
- Which organization does UNICEF form part of? (The United Nations).
- Who wrote the Convention on the Rights of the Child? (All the countries of the world have contributed to it, via the UN).



Exercise 6: In the following exercises, your child will discover that they come across children's rights every day. Read the text with your child. Ask them to choose six moments that they experience in a day. It says in the booklet to choose their favourite day of the week, but any day is fine. Look at the example together. Do they know which rights are associated with each moment in the example?

**ANSWERS:**

**moment 1:** I got up; Article 27: you have the right to a safe place to live.

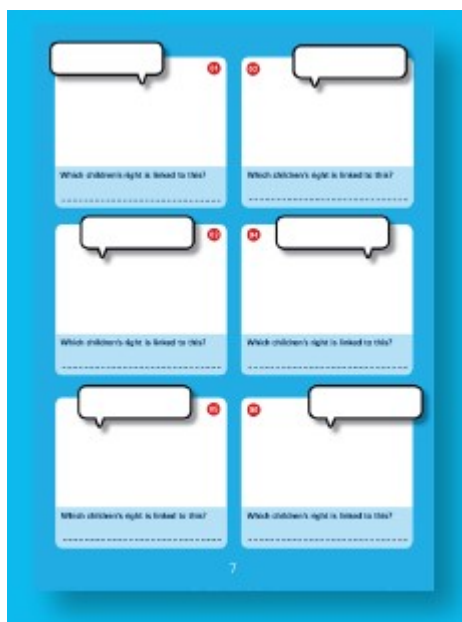
**moment 2:** I drank a glass of juice; Article 24: you have the right to healthy food.

**moment 3:** I went to football; Article 31: you have the right to play.

**moment 4:** I slipped in a puddle; Article 24: you have the right to good health care.

**moment 5:** I went to the shops with Youssef and Mila; Article 15: you have the right to meet with others.

**moment 6:** I got into bed; Article 31: you have the right to rest.



Ask your child to write down or discuss six moments and then compare them with the children's rights on the poster (included in the children's activity pack). If they find this difficult, they can choose some different moments during the day. On the next page, they draw these moments and write down the children's right associated with each of them underneath.



## Exercise 12

Twelve children's rights can be found in the picture.

Do they know which rights they are?

If your child finds it tricky, use the poster to help them.

## ANSWERS:

Protection of privacy (Article 16)

Access to information (Article 17)

Health, water, food and environment (Article 24)

Food, clothing, a safe home (Article 27)

Access to education (Article 28)

Rest, play, culture, arts (Article 31)

No discrimination (Article 2)

Family guidance as children develop (Article 5)

Name and nationality (Article 7)

Keeping families together (Article 9)

Sharing thoughts freely (Article 13)

Freedom of thought and religion (Article 14)