

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Overall Objectives

- To introduce students to the Convention.
- To introduce the concepts of justice and fairness.
- To identify the rights that children are entitled to.

ACTIVITY 1 – THE RIGHT TO WHAT?

Learning Objectives

- To introduce students to the Convention.
- To develop an understanding of rights and responsibilities under the Convention.

Materials

- Copies of the Convention in plain language (one per student) (Appendix A) The full text is available at: http://globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/resources/other_resources.htm

Steps

1. Introduce the concept of children's rights to students and ask the class to brainstorm a list of rights they think children should have.
2. Distribute copies of the Convention in plain language.
3. In small groups, have students compare their list with the Convention.

Discussion

1. How did your list compare to the Convention?
2. What rights were similar? What rights were different?
3. Are there any rights listed in the Convention that you disagree with?



© UNICEF/NYHQ2008-0660/Ayano Sato

ACTIVITY 2 – RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS

Learning Objectives

- To help students make the distinction between wants and needs.
- To introduce the idea that basic needs can be considered rights.

Materials

- A set of *Rights, Wants & Needs* cards for each pair of students
- Blank Cards

Steps

1. Have students form pairs, and give each pair a set of *Rights, Wants & Needs* cards, cut into individual cards.
2. Ask students to imagine that a new government is being set up in their village, town or city. This government wants to provide all young people with the basic things that they want and need. The cards represent the list of wants and needs that the elected officials have drawn up. The officials would like young people to add any items that might be missing. Ask the pairs to decide together on four additional items, and to write them on blank cards.
3. Announce to the group that the new government has found that for political and economic reasons, it can provide young people with only 16 of the items on the list, rather than all 24. Ask the pairs to decide which eight items they are willing to give up.
4. When all pairs have completed step 3, announce that further cuts in what can be provided to young people must be made. Ask the pairs to eliminate another eight item

Discussion

1. Which items were the most commonly eliminated in the first round? Why?
2. Was the second round of elimination more difficult than the first? Why?
3. Were there any disagreements over which items to give up? Which items caused disagreement? Why?
4. What is the difference between wants and needs? Which items were wants, and which were needs?
5. Do wants and needs differ for different people? Why or why not?
6. Do wants and needs differ for different cultural groups? Why or why not?

Extension

1. Have students make a list of their top five rights, and their top five wants. Referring to the Convention, have students look at their lists and determine which of those items are included in the Convention.
2. Ask students to find and examine a local, national or international news story about a general human rights issue, or a children's rights issue in particular. Which rights are being discussed in the news story? Are these rights being infringed upon? If so, how? Is there anything being done to make sure those rights are being respected? If so, what is being done?

RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS



Decent shelter



Clothes in the latest style



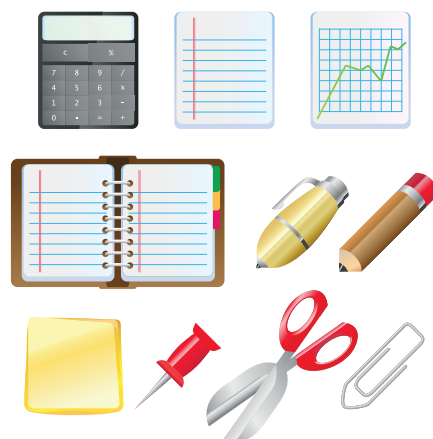
Holiday trips



Nutritious food



Protection from abuse and neglect



Education



RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS



Clean air



A personal stereo



Fast food



Playgrounds and recreation



A television set



Opportunities to practise your own culture, language and religion



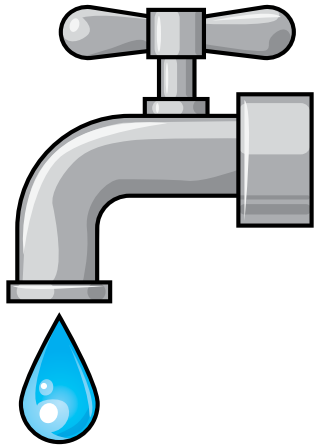
RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS



Opportunities to share opinions



Money to spend as you like



Clean water



Your own bedroom



A personal computer



Fair treatment and non-discrimination



RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS



Health care



A bicycle



ACTIVITY 3 – WORKING WITH THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Learning Objectives

- To encourage young people to examine the articles of the Convention in depth, and to reflect on the different types of rights covered in the Convention.

Materials

- Convention cards (one card per student)
- Copies of the Convention in plain language (one per student) (Appendix A) The full text is available at: http://globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/resources/other_resources.htm
- Copies of *Understanding Children's Rights* (Appendix B)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Chart paper

Steps

Part One

1. Cut out the Convention cards and give one to each member of the group. If the group is larger than 41, some students may work in pairs. If the group is smaller, eliminate an appropriate number of cards. Make sure that students read and understand their cards.
2. Instruct students to stand up, move around the room and meet with other participants. As they do, students should explain the right their card describes. If students feel that their cards have something in common or belong together, they should form a group.

3. Students should continue walking around the room, adding any number of additional people to their group if they feel that their card describes a right of a similar type.
4. As the activity proceeds, students may switch to a different group as they refine their thinking about the categories of rights covered by the Convention. Some students may find that they "stand alone" and do not belong to any of the groups. Encourage discussion and negotiation. Stress that there is no one "correct" answer to this activity.
5. Once the groups are finalized and there is no further movement around the room, ask each group to decide on a name for itself; for example, "Health," "Education," etc.
6. Have the groups sit together. Call on one group at a time to tell its name, and summarize the articles that belong to this category.

Part Two

7. Have students read the handout, *Understanding Children's Rights* (Appendix B).
8. As a class, discuss the following groupings of the articles of the Convention: survival, development, protection and participation. Have students discuss what children need for survival, what they need to develop, why they need protection and from whom, and why they need to participate. Discuss some reasons why not all children in the world have their rights respected (e.g., poverty, war, racial discrimination, geography, gender inequality, etc.).

ACTIVITY 3 – WORKING WITH THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

9. Prepare four pieces of chart paper with the following headings: "Rights to Survival," "Rights to Development," "Rights to Protection," "Rights to Participation" and post one at each corner of the room.
10. Ask students to revisit their Convention card from the previous activity with these four categories in mind. Give students a few minutes to move to the corner of the room that best represents the category of their right.
11. Once students have formed groups with all the rights in their category, have them discuss and prioritize the rights.
12. Ask students to tape their rights cards to the chart paper with the appropriate heading, making sure to maintain the prioritization they established in their groups.
13. Have each group briefly summarize their group of rights to the rest of the class, and explain the reason for their chosen prioritization.
14. Have students remain with their groups. Distribute the plain language Convention (one per student). Give students some time to read it over in its entirety, making note of the order of the rights. Have them find the category they discussed in their groups, and compare the prioritization of rights in the Convention to the one they created in their groups.

Discussion

1. Were some rights more difficult to categorize than others? If so, which ones and why?
2. What seem to be the main types of rights protected by the Convention?
3. Do some rights seem to have been given more emphasis than others? If so, which ones? Why do you think this is so?
4. Do you think there are any rights that have been left out of the Convention that should be included? Explain.
5. Do you think there are some rights, or some types of rights, that should be given priority, or are all rights equally important?
6. How do you feel the rights under the Convention are being upheld in your school? In your community? In your country?
7. Which rights, if any, do you feel deserve special attention? Why or why not?
8. How do you think Canada can work to ensure that all children's rights are protected?

Extension

1. Which children's rights under the Convention are the most at risk in a humanitarian emergency (e.g., Japan tsunami, Haiti earthquake, Pakistan flood, Côte d'Ivoire conflict, Libya conflict, Louisiana flood, Darfur conflict)? Why?
2. Why do you think children are of particular concern in times of crisis? Which of the rights under the Convention are the most important to protect in a humanitarian emergency? Why?
3. What measures are taken to ensure that children's rights are protected in a humanitarian emergency?

CONVENTION CARDS



Articles 42-54: Implementation and entry into force

These refer to the administrative aspects of implementing the CRC.



Article 1: Definition of a child

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



Article 2: Non-discrimination

All rights apply to all children, and children shall be protected from all forms of discrimination.



Article 3: Best interests of the child

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



Article 4: Implementation of rights

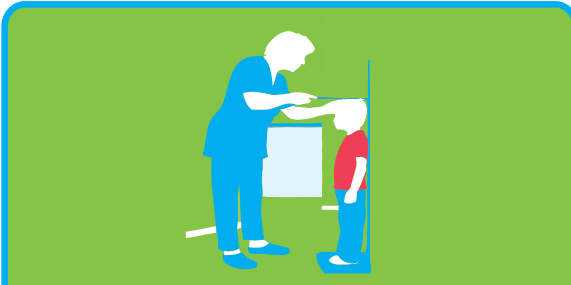
The Government must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.



Article 5: Parental guidance and the child's evolving capacities

The Government must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to provide guidance for the child that is appropriate to her or his evolving capacities.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 6: Survival and development

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



Article 7: Name and nationality

Each child has the right to a name and nationality, to know his or her parents and be cared for by them.



Article 8: Preservation of identity

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



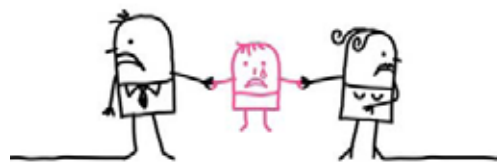
Article 9: Separation from parents

The child has a right to live with his or her parents unless this is not in the child's best interest. The child has the right to maintain contact with both parents if separated from one or both.



Article 10: Family reunification

Children and their parents have the right to leave any country or enter their own to be reunited, and maintain the parent-child relationship.



Article 11: Illicit transfer and non-return

The Government has an obligation to prevent and remedy the kidnapping or holding of children abroad by a parent or third party.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 12: The child's opinion

Children have the right to express their opinions freely, and have their opinions taken into account in matters that affect them.



Article 13: Freedom of expression

Children have the right to express their views, obtain information, and make ideas or information known, regardless of frontiers.



Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Children have the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance.



Article 15: Freedom of association

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



Article 16: Protection of privacy

Children have the right to protection from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence, and from attacks on their character or reputation.



Article 17: Access to appropriate information

Children shall have access to information from national and international sources. The media shall encourage materials that are beneficial, and discourage those which are harmful to children.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 18: Parental responsibilities

Parents have joint responsibility for raising the child, and the Government shall support them in this.



Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect

Children shall be protected from abuse and neglect. Governments shall provide programs for the prevention of abuse and treatment of those who have suffered abuse.



Article 20: Protection of a child without family

Children without a family are entitled to special protection, and appropriate alternative family or institutional care, with regard for the child's cultural background.



Article 21: Adoption

Where adoption is allowed, it shall be carried out in the best interests of the child, under the supervision of competent authorities, with safeguards for the child.



Article 22: Refugee children

Children who are refugees, or seeking refugee status, are entitled to special protection.



Article 23: Disabled children

Disabled children have the right to special care, education and training that will help them to enjoy a full and decent life with the greatest degree of self-reliance and social integration possible.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 24: Health and health services

Children have the right to the highest possible standard of health and access to health and medical services.



Article 25: Periodic review of placement

A child who is placed by the Government for reasons of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health is entitled to have that placement evaluated regularly.



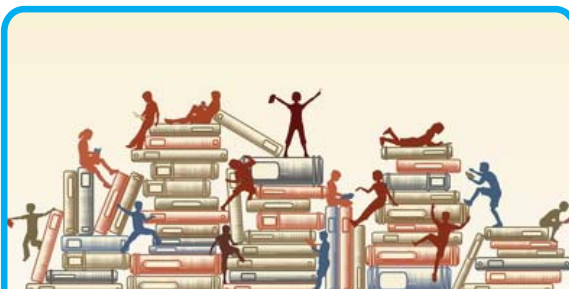
Article 26: Social security

Children have the right to benefit from social security including social insurance.



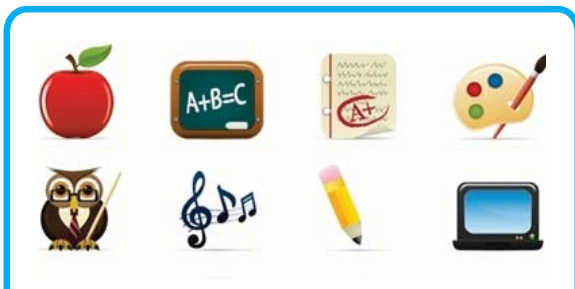
Article 27: Standard of living

Children have the right to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The Government's duty is to ensure that this responsibility is fulfilled.



Article 28: Education

Children have the right to education. Primary education should be free and compulsory. Secondary education should be accessible to every child. Higher education should be available to all on the basis of capacity. School discipline shall be consistent with the child's rights and dignity.



Article 29: Aims of education

Education should develop the child's personality, talents, mental and physical abilities. Children should be prepared for active participation in a free society, and learn to respect their own culture and that of others.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 30: Children of minorities or indigenous populations

Children have a right, if members of a minority group, to practice their own culture, religion and language.



Article 31: Leisure, recreation, and cultural activities

Children have the right to rest, leisure, play and participation in cultural and artistic activities.



Article 32: Child labour

Children have the right to be protected from economic exploitation, from having to participate in work that threatens their health, education or development. The Government shall set minimum ages for employment and regulate working conditions.



Article 33: Drug abuse

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



Article 34: Sexual exploitation

Children shall be protected from sexual exploitation and abuse, including prostitution and involvement in pornography.



Article 35: Sale, trafficking, and abduction

The Government shall take all appropriate measures to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.

CONVENTION CARDS



Article 36: Other forms of exploitation

The child has the right to protection from all forms of exploitation that can harm any aspects of the child's welfare not covered in articles 32, 33, 34 and 35.



Article 37: Torture and deprivation of liberty

No child shall be subjected to torture, cruel treatment or punishment, unlawful arrest or deprivation of liberty. Capital punishment and life imprisonment are prohibited for offences committed by persons below 18 years of age. A child who is detained has the right to legal assistance and contact with the family.



Article 38: Armed conflict

Children under age 15 shall have no direct part in armed conflict. Children who are affected by armed conflict are entitled to special protection and care.



Article 39: Rehabilitative care

Children who have experienced armed conflict, torture, neglect or exploitation shall receive appropriate treatment for their recovery and social reintegration.



Article 40: Administration of juvenile justice

Children in conflict with the law are entitled to legal guarantees and assistance, and treatment that promote their sense of dignity and aims to help them take a constructive role in society.



Article 41: Respect for higher standards

Wherever standards set in applicable national and international law relevant to the rights of the child are higher than those in this Convention, the higher standard shall always apply.

ACTIVITY 4 - WHAT'S FAIR?

Learning Objectives

- To clarify students' ideas about what is fair and what is unfair.
- To introduce the concepts of justice and injustice.

Materials

- *What's Fair?* cards (one set per pair; half of the pairs will get one set, the other half will get a different set)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Large sheet of paper (with columns for "Fair," "Unfair," and "Unsure") (one for each group of two pairs)

Steps

1. Put students in pairs and have them discuss situations in their lives in which something was unfair. Have them discuss why they believed it was unfair.
2. Discuss as a class what makes something fair as opposed to unfair.
3. Distribute a set of *What's Fair?* cards to each pair. Give half of the pairs one set, and the other half the second set.
4. Have each pair of students read through the *What's Fair?* cards together, and cut and sort them into three categories:
 - **FAIR** - Situations in which the individual was treated in a way that was consistent with his/her rights.
 - **UNFAIR** - Situations in which the individual's rights may have been violated.
 - **UNSURE** - Situations about which they are unsure.
5. Have each pair of students join another pair with a different set of *What's Fair?* cards. Ask them to reach a consensus on which category to place each situation under, and then have them glue the cards into the columns on the large piece of paper.

Discussion

1. What kinds of situations were described as fair? Why?
2. What kinds of situations were described as unfair? Why?
3. What needs to be done to make an unfair situation fair?
4. Which situations were difficult to categorize? Why?
5. What can students, teachers, governments and organizations do to ensure that young people are treated fairly?
6. What can you do when you see someone being treated unfairly?

WHAT'S FAIR? CARDS

Set A

Gina wants to play football with a group of boys at break time, but they won't let her play because she is a girl. Is this fair to Gina?

Katie just turned 16 and has received an allowance since her 10th birthday. When she was first given an allowance of \$15 per week, she and her parents decided she would put \$5 in a savings account to use for university, \$5 in a personal account to use as she pleases, and \$5 in a separate account to use for charity. Katie has spent the money from the personal account over the past 5 years and wants to use the money from her university account to buy car insurance for her first year of driving. Katie's parents tell her the money is for university and they will not allow her to use it for anything else. Is this fair to Katie?

Ali is ten years old and likes to go to school, but his family needs him to get a job and earn money because there are younger siblings to feed. Ali does not get to finish primary school. Is this fair to Ali?

Marta comes to school without having done her homework. The teacher makes her stay indoors at break time to do it. Is this fair to Marta?

Set B

Lee lives in a country that is at war. It is dangerous to travel. He cannot go to the health clinic to get his immunization shots. Is this fair to Lee?

Chris doesn't like school and he wants to leave. His parents say he can't leave because he is only ten years old. Is this fair to Chris?

Rose and Tahira have come to live in a new country and they are learning to speak a new language. Sometimes in school they speak their native language. The teacher makes them stop, and says that they must learn to speak like everyone else in the school. Is this fair to Rose and Tahira?

Sue lives in a country where it is common practice for females to eat last and eat the least amount of food. The women typically get what's leftover when the men are finished eating. Women do much of the heavy work but only eat about half as many calories as the men. Is this fair to Sue?