

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

*A Guide for Young People on the
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*



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DID YOU KNOW

*that every child and youth in Canada has **RIGHTS** under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child? Rights identify how you can expect to be **TREATED**.*

*It is important to understand your rights so that you can **STAND UP** for yourself. Also, when you know your rights, you can **ASK** others to stand up for you as well.*

*So, **CHECK THIS OUT!**
It's good information to know.
Reach out to us if you need **HELP**.*

YOUR RIGHTS:

1

You have all of these rights until you reach the age of 18.

2

You have the right to be protected from discrimination of any kind, regardless of your: race, colour, sex, gender, language, religion, political opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, disability, or whether you are rich or poor.

3

You have the right for all adults to do what is in your best interests. This means they must do what is best for you and their decisions must make sure you are well cared for.

4

You have the right to have your rights protected by government.

5

You have the right to appropriate direction and guidance about your rights from your parents, family, or guardians.

6

You have the right to be alive and to safely grow and develop.



7

You have the right to a name and a nationality as soon as you are born.

8

You have the right to an identity including a name and a nationality. Your identity should be respected and officially recognized. It should not be taken away from you. You have a right to be who you are and to develop your own identity.

9

You have the right to live with your parents, except if it is not in your best interests or safe. If it is safe, you have the right to have contact with your family. You have the right to live with people that care for you, respect you, and can keep you safe.

10

If you and your parents are living in separate countries, you have the right to get back together and live in the same place if it is safe. If you live in different countries, you should be supported to stay in contact with your parents.

11

You have the right to be protected from kidnapping and abduction.

12

You have the right to express your views and have your voice heard and taken seriously in matters that affect you.

13

You have the right to freely express yourself, including accessing and sharing all kinds of information such as through speaking, writing, art, or any other way you choose, unless it harms or offends others.

14

You have the right to think for yourself and practice whatever religion you choose. It is your parents' or guardians' job to help you with this.

15

You have the right to make friends and get together peacefully as young people, as long as it does not cause harm to yourself or others.

16

You have the right to privacy, and to have your honour and reputation protected.



17

You have the right to see and share news and information from all around the world, and to be able to access books. You also have the right to protection from information that could be harmful to you, whether it is on social media, in books, the internet, or anywhere else.

18

You have the right to grow up with your parents. If this is not possible or safe, your guardians must care for you and keep you safe. Parents or guardians should always do what is best for you.

19

You have the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, abuse, injury, neglect, maltreatment, or exploitation.

20

You have the right to special care and protection if you cannot live with your parents. Government should consider your ethnic, religious, cultural, and linguistic background in finding a good living arrangement for you.

21

You have the right to the best care possible if you are adopted, fostered, or living in care.

22

You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee and had to leave your home country because it is not safe to live there. If you are a refugee, governments should help you to locate your family and reunite you with them, when possible.

23

If you have a mental or physical disability or condition, you have the right to dignity and to special care. This can include education, health care services, rehabilitation services, employment supports, and recreation opportunities. This is important to help you develop and lead life to your full potential.

24

You have the right to the best possible healthcare services to help you stay healthy and help you get well if you are sick. You have a right to clean drinking water and adequate nutritious food.

25

If you are in care or living away from your parents, you have the right to have your living arrangements or treatment regularly reviewed.

26

You have the right to help from governments if you are poor or in need.



27

You have the right to a decent standard of living and to have your basic needs met. This includes your right to nutritious food, clothes, and a safe place to live.

28

You have the right to a quality education, to be encouraged to learn, to attend school, and to reach the highest education level you can.

29

You have the right to an education that helps to develop your personality, talents, and abilities to your fullest potential, and to respect your cultural identity. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment, and respect other people.

30

You have the right to enjoy your own culture, practice your own religion, and speak your own language. If you are from an Indigenous or minority group, you have special protection of this right.

31

You have the right to rest and play, and to participate in cultural and recreational activities.

32

You have the right to be protected from work that could hurt you, your health, or education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

33

You have the right to protection from dangerous drugs and the drug trade. This includes protection from the use, production, or trafficking of these drugs.

34

You have the right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. No one is allowed to trick or force you into the sex trade, and this includes pornography.

35

You have the right to protection from kidnapping, being sold, or trafficked.

36

You have the right to protection from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of).



37

You have the right to be safe from being punished or treated in a way that is cruel, harmful, or degrading. If you are in custody, you should be held separate from adults, and you should be able to have contact with your family. Also, if you are in custody, you have a right to prompt legal help.

38

You have the right to protection in times of war. If you are under 15 years old, you cannot be forced to take part in a war, or be recruited into an army for armed conflict.

39

You have the right to special help if you have been neglected, exploited, abused, tortured, or experienced any other form of cruel treatment, or punishment. This help must be provided to you in a way that focuses on your health, self-respect, and dignity.

40

You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the criminal justice system if you are accused of breaking the law. This includes:

- being presumed innocent until proven guilty,
- having a lawyer,
- having a fair hearing,

- not being forced to give testimony or to confess guilt,
- having an interpreter if you cannot understand the language used,
- having your privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings, and
- understanding what you are being charged with.

41

If the laws in Canada or your province or territory give better protection of your rights than the articles in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, then those laws should apply and you should benefit from them.

42

You have the right to learn about your rights and to have them explained to you. Adults have a responsibility to help you with this.

The above is a summary of the first 42 articles of the UNCRC. For the full content of the UNCRC, go to:

<https://www.unicef.ca/en/policy-advocacy-for-children/about-the-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

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