

UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, or the Children's Rights Convention (UNCRC) as it is often called, was adopted in 1989. The Children's Rights Convention contains rights that every child is to have and applies for everyone up to age 18 who live or stay in a country. In the Children's Convention, "children" refers to both young children and adolescents – everyone up to age 18.

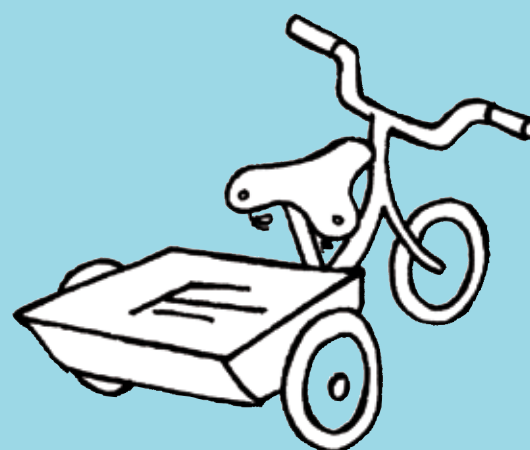
Sweden must do its utmost to make what is stated in the Convention a reality in fact. For example, Sweden's own laws and regulations must be consistent with the rights in the UNCRC. Sweden must ensure that children's rights are not forgotten, but rather are respected everywhere in the society, each and every day. The Government must also ensure that both children and adults are able to easily find out what rights children have.

The rights are enumerated the different paragraphs, referred to as Articles. There are 54 Articles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and 41 of them speak about rights. The rest of the Articles deal with what work the countries need to do to make the rights in the UNCRC a reality.

Articles 2, 3, 6 and 12 are referred to as the UNCRC's core principles, or Guiding Principles. These Articles will help you understand the other Articles. All Articles in the UNCRC are related to each other.

We have written about the Articles in a brief manner on this poster, so that the text will be a bit easier to understand. We also arranged the Articles into 10 different areas, so that it is easier to get overview of what they are all about.

For my best



I think what I want to think!

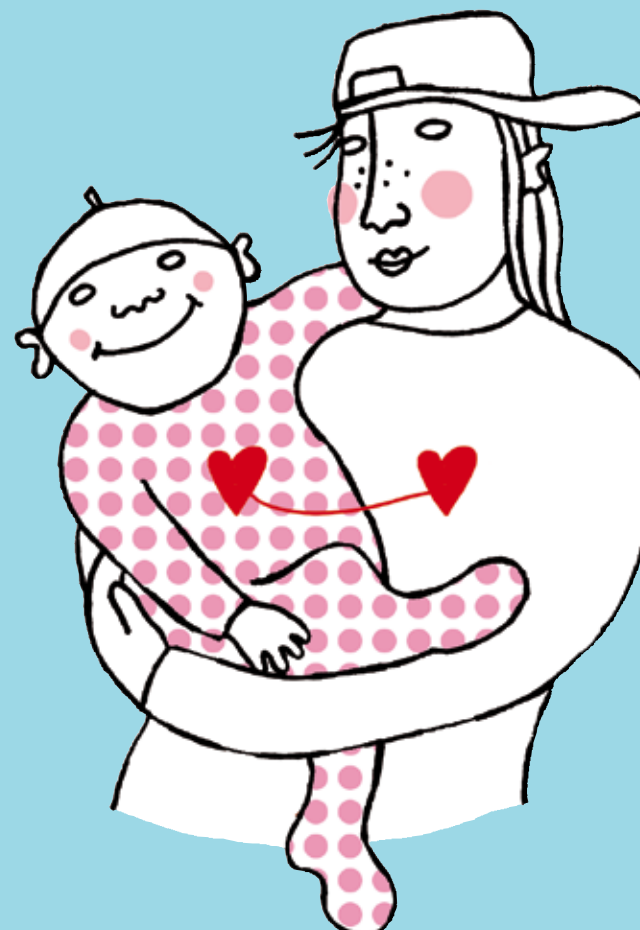


INFLUENCE

- You have the right to express your views on any issue that concerns you. Adults should listen and take your opinions into account. When a public authority or court is dealing with or makes a decision which concerns you, you have the right to be heard.
- You have the right to freedom of speech. This means that you have the right to search for and receive information and ideas, as well as provide information and express ideas to others.
- You have the right to think and feel what you want. You have the right to follow your beliefs and be a part of whatever religion you want to. Your parents may guide you, but never determine your thoughts.
- You have the right to belong to associations, and the right to leave associations. You also have the right to attend meetings, as long as they are peaceful.

IDENTITY

- You have the right to have a name and to be a citizen of a country. You also have the right, as far as it is possible, to know who your parents are and to be well taken care by them.
- You have the right to your identity. What is meant by "identity" includes your citizenship in your country, your name, and your family relations. If you have been deprived of your identity or any part of it, you must receive assistance to regain it.



FAMILY

- Your parents have the responsibility to care and protect you. They will advise you and guide you as you do the things that Child Rights Convention entitles you to.
- No one may separate you from your parents, except when it is necessary for your own good. This may be necessary and occur if for instance your parents do not take care of you in an appropriate manner. You have the right to see both of your parents, unless this would be harmful in some serious way for you.
- If you and your parents want to be reunited after having been separated, you must be allowed to seek help with this, and so to the extent feasible get help in the country where you live. If your parent(s) live in a different country and you want to see them, you should be able to get help for this by the country where you live.
- Your parents have joint responsibility for your upbringing and development. They should always think about what is best for you. If your parents need support, the society at large should ensure such support is available, for instance to get such social care, health care, or assistance with schooling.
- If you cannot remain in your family for some reason, you have the right to receive special care and assistance. You have the right to be taken care of in a way that is good for you.
- The countries that allow adoption must ensure that the adoption is properly done and that you who are adopted are treated well. All countries must always base the rules and procedures on what is best for the child.

EQUAL VALUE

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child gives you and all other children the same rights and equal value. No one may discriminate against you. This means that no one should treat you worse than they do someone else. Nor may you be discriminated against or punished for something that your parents are or do.
- If you have a physical disability, you still have the right to a good life. Just like everyone else, you should be able to feel pride and have self-confidence. You should be able to actively participate in the community. However you also have the right to special care and extra support.
- If you belong to a minority group or indigenous group, you have the right to your language, the culture and the religion that you share and exercise along with the others in your group.



INFORMATION

- You have the right to know what's happening in your country and in the world, in a way that you can understand, such as from newspapers and television. The information you receive will help you to develop and live a healthy life.

FEEL GOOD

- When adults make decisions relating to children, they should ensure that this is done with the child's "best interests" in mind. This means that adults should always consider what is good for you and how the decision will impact on you. You must get the protection and care you need. It is equally important that adults think of the "best interests" of children in general when the decision affects many children or children as a group.
- You have the right to live and develop with your personal growth. Your country must do everything it can so that you will be able to do that.
- Those of you who come as refugees, whether on your own or with someone else, have a right to protection and assistance. You should also receive help to be reunited with your family.
- You have the right to be as healthy as possible. If you become ill, you have the right to medical treatment and exercise so that you become healthy. You also have the right to be protected against traditional practices that can be harmful.
- If you have been taken under care in order to protect you or be well looked after, you are entitled to have your care monitored, so that everything relating to your care goes right for you.
- You have the right to social protection. If necessary, community can help to ensure that you receive housing, food and clothing.
- You have the right to live in a way that gives you the opportunity to develop physically, mentally, spiritually, morally and socially. Your parents have the primary responsibility for ensuring this, but if they need support, they should get it.
- If you have been subjected to any form of neglect, exploitation or abuse, you are entitled to get help so that you feel good again. This applies even if you have been subjected to torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, or if you have been in a war.

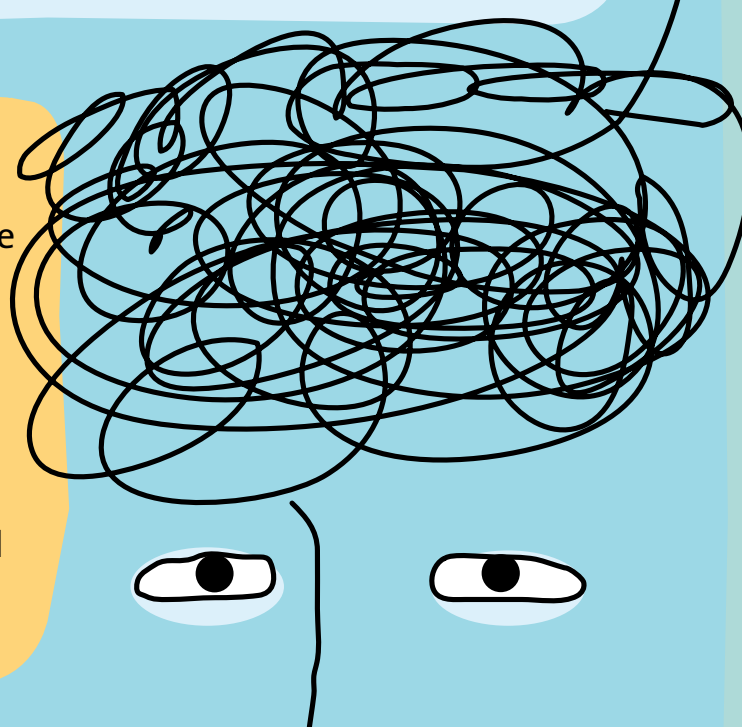


PROTECTION AND SECURITY

- You may not be brought to another country without both of your parents' permission.
- You have the right to be protected from illegal invasion of your privacy or private life. This applies to your home, or where you are temporarily staying. For example, no one may read your letters or diaries without your permission. This also applies to all other situations in which information about you is obtained and/or retained. No one may not harm your honour or your reputation. The law must give you strong protection against any intrusion.
- You have the right to protection from all forms of physical or mental violence, neglect, maltreatment, molestation, abuse or other exploitation.
- You are to be protected against performing any work that may be harmful to you, that which prevents you from going to school, or from developing in another way. You may not be subjected to financial exploitation, for example, that someone else makes money from your work without you yourself being paid.
- It is the State's responsibility to protect you against narcotics and other illegal drugs. The States must ensure that you are not exploited for the manufacture or sale of drugs.
- You have the right to protection from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For example, you must be protected from exploitation in prostitution and pornography.
- You may not be taken away or sold. Your country must ensure that this does not occur.
- You have the right to protection from all forms of exploitation that may harm you.
- Under no circumstances may you be subjected to torture or other cruel and inhuman treatment. Also, nor may you not be sentenced to the death penalty or life imprisonment. If you are arrested, detained or are being held against your will, this must be as a last resort and for as short a time as feasible. You must always be treated with respect and you have the right not to be placed among adults. You have the right to contact with your family while you are incarcerated, and that your case is dealt with promptly. Your rights in the UNCRC apply even if you are held against your will.
- If you are under 15, you must be protected from participating in war. If you have suffered from a war, you are to get the protection and the care you need.
- If you are suspected of a crime, or if it is proven that you are guilty of a crime, you have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. The governmental authorities and institutions that you come in contact with during the judicial process must be adapted for youth. You have the right to obtain assistance from an individual is well-versed in the law and legal system. Your case must be dealt with as quickly as feasible. No one may force you against your will to tell what you know, or to admit to something you have not done.

EDUCATION

- You have the right to an education. You must be able to attend primary school, and it should be free.
- In school, you must be allowed to develop in every way, and to become prepared for a responsible life in a free society. You should also learn to respect human rights and freedoms, your parents, your own culture and the culture and traditions of others, and to protect nature and the environment.



RESPECT HUMAN NATURE

PLAY, RECREATION, CULTURE AND REST

- You have the right to recreation, to play, and to rest. You have the right to participate in cultural and artistic activities and events.

ABOUT THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child applies to individuals until age 18. In the UNCRC, everyone under 18 years old is referred to as a "child."
- All countries must do all they can to implement the rights in the UNCRC. That means they should always try to comply with what is stated in the UNCRC.
- If the laws and rules of your country already give you more or better rights than those stated in the UNCRC, the country's laws and rules apply.
- Your country has the responsibility to ensure that children and adults know what is contained in the UNCRC.

Teddy bear or mustache. For child's rights - until your 18th birthday, you are protected by the rights for children.

About the Ombudsman for Children

In Sweden, all children and adolescents under 18 years old have an Ombudsman. The individual called the Children's Ombudsman is appointed by the government and is head of a government agency called the Ombudsman for Children. There are 20 of us working at the Ombudsman for Children, all working on issues concerning the rights of children and adolescents.

We investigate how the Children's Rights Convention is working out in the community, and inform people about it. The Ombudsman for Children makes recommendations concerning how laws and regulations in Sweden should be

amended to conform to the UNCRC.

We at the Ombudsman for Children speak to children and adolescents in order to find out how they are doing and hear their opinions about different matters. The knowledge we gain about how children and adolescents are doing in their everyday life is invaluable, and we pass this on to those in charge of municipalities, counties and other governmental authorities.

The Ombudsman for Children talks with those who are making decisions for the entire country: the Riksdag, the Cabinet, and Ministries, about matters of specific concern to children and adolescents.

It is the responsibility of the office of the Ombudsman for Children to:

- Represent child and youth rights.
- Push for the full implementation of the UNCRC.
- Monitor compliance with the provisions of the UNCRC.
- Inform and generate debate.
- Gather knowledge about the living conditions that children and adolescents have.
- Conduct an international exchange of knowledge concerning matters the UNCRC deals with.

Anyone under 18 can contact us on our kids telephone: 020-23 10 10 Monday to Friday, from 9:00 to 15:00. The phone call costs nothing and will not appear on the phone bill



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