



## Part 3: Documents and Teaching Materials

On the following pages there are important documents on the theme of children's rights for use in lessons and guidance on how to use them. They are: a pupil's version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1), possible groupings of the children's rights into four dimensions (2), the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989 (3), as well as children's rights cards

to be copied and used in lessons (4). The definitions used in the pupil version of the children's rights convention correspond to those used in the short texts on the children's rights cards. A wealth of further material for use in lessons can be found on the internet.

### 1. Pupil's version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

#### Why have a pupil's version of the Convention?

The version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, opened by the general assembly of the United Nations and adopted and ratified by most states world-wide, is a legal document that is written in a very technical, complicated language. If young people are to understand their rights, then we need to start expressing documents such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child in accessible language. In addition, Article 42 of the Convention states that it is the duty of governments to inform young people of their rights in various different ways. Without a doubt, this version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is different than the original text and allows young people an active access to their rights. In this way, more people can be made aware of their rights.

#### After all this talk of rights, what are our responsibilities?

Rights and responsibilities can not be regarded independently of one another. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child describes rights that are guaranteed to young people by their governments. As with all functional relationships, be this amongst friends, family, at school, in sports clubs or between countries, we must be aware that we have responsibilities towards other people and that they have responsibilities towards us. Two of these basic responsibilities towards others are respect and tolerance. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child describes these basic responsibilities of governments towards people under 18 years of age.

#### Pupil's version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article	Short Title	Short Description
1	Definition of the child	A child is a person under 18 years of age.
2	Non-discrimination	No child should be discriminated against due to skin colour, gender, language, religion, opinion, country of origin, poverty or wealth, disability or belonging to an ethnic minority.
3	The well-being of the child is paramount	In all laws and judicial decisions, the well-being of the child comes first.
4	Implementation of rights	Each state must ensure, to the best of its ability, that children's rights are implemented.



5	Respect of parental rights	Each state is responsible for making sure that the duties, rights and responsibilities of parents are carried out in such a way as to ensure that children are free to exercise their rights. (Governments must respect the rights and duties of the parents, family members and/or legal guardians by informing and advising children about their rights.)
6	Survival and development of the child	Every child has the right to life and survival. The state must ensure that children and young people can develop well.
7	Name and state membership	Every child has, from birth onwards, the right to a name, to state membership and to be cared for by their own parents.
8	Protection of identity	Every child has the right to keep or to restore their name, state membership and family relations.
9	Separation of parents	Every child has the right to live with his or her parents, apart from when they need to be protected from their parents. If a child must be separated from either or both of their parents, they have the right to be heard. If a child is separated from either or both of their parents, they have the right to know where they are.
10	Family reunification	Every child has the right to leave each state and travel to their own country in order to be reunified with their family.
11	Protection from kidnapping and abduction	Every state must fight against kidnapping and abduction to another country and non-return of children by a parent or another person.
12	The child's freedom of opinion	Every child has the right to be heard and to express their opinion on all questions and matters relating to their life. This is particularly valid in legal or administrative processes. The older the child, the more their opinion should be listened to.
13	Freedom of expression	Every child has the right to express their opinion freely and to obtain and disseminate information through the media. Every child also has the responsibility to express their opinion in such a way as to respect the rights of others.
14	Freedom of thought, conscience and religion	Every child has the right to freely practise their religion and freely exercise their thought and conscience. The state must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents when children implement these rights.
15	Right to peaceful public gathering	Every child has the right to gather together with other children, to join or found an association or union, as long as the rights of others are not injured in the process.
16	Protection of privacy	Every child has the right to not have anyone interfere with their private life, family, dwelling or written exchanges. In addition, every child has the right to not have anyone damage their honour.



17	Access to appropriate information	Each state must ensure that children have access to information through various forms of media and that they can acquire knowledge that is important for their well-being. The state also has the duty to protect kids from damaging information.
18	Responsibility of parents	Parents or guardians are jointly responsible for the upbringing of the child. The state has the responsibility to support them in this and, for example, to make childcare available should the parents need to work.
19	Protection from abuse	The state is responsible for protecting the child from abuse by parents or other people. Every child has the right to learn how to avoid or deal with every form of abuse.
20	Young people without families	Every child that doesn't live with their family, has the right to special protection and support. They then have the right to a foster family or care in an appropriate institution that is considerate of their religious, cultural or linguistic background.
21	Adoption	A child can be adopted if adoption is authorised, recognised and approved by the country and if it serves the well-being of the child.
22	Refugee children	Every child who is forced to leave their country, who is a refugee and seeking asylum, has a right to special protection by the state.
23	Disabled children	Every child with a disability has a right to special care and education. They should be helped to be independent and to participate actively in their communities.
24	Health and medical services	Every child has the right to the best possible medical care. The state has the duty to combat child mortality, to ensure medical provisions for young people, to combat poor diet and illness, to guarantee medical care for pregnant women and young mothers, to make accessible health education, to develop prevention in the public health sector and to abolish customs that harm children.
25	Review of treatment or care	Every child that has been admitted to an institution for their protection, care or treatment has the right to have their admission checked and reviewed.
26	Social security	Every child has the right to social security such as a social insurance. The state guarantees the child payments which take into consideration the financial situation of the family or carers.
27	Standard of living	Every child has the right to a standard of living appropriate to their physical, spiritual, moral and social development. The parents or guardians are above all responsible for ensuring this. The state has the duty to support them in this.



28	Education	Every child has the right to an education and to school. The state has the duty to make primary education free and obligatory and similarly to make secondary education accessible to all children and young people. The state has the duty to ensure that children and young people are treated appropriately at school and that their human rights are not infringed upon.
29	Educational aims	School education should develop each child's personality and talents, prepare each child for adult life and should encourage children to respect human rights and their own and other cultures and values.
30	Children of minorities	Every child belonging to a minority has the right to learn about and practise their own culture, religion and language.
31	Rest, play and free time	Every child has the right to rest and free time in which they can play and participate freely in cultural and artistic life.
32	Child labour	Every child has the right to be protected from every form of exploitation and work that could damage their education or development. The state has the duty of determining a minimum age for the permission to work, the amount of hours per day and working conditions.
33	Protection form narcotic drugs	Every child has the right to be protected from the production and trade of illegal drugs.
34	Protection form sexual exploitation	Every child has the right to be protected from sexual exploitation and abuse and from prostitution and pornography.
35	Protection from sale and trafficking	The state must undertake everything within its power to ensure that children and young people are not abducted or trafficked.
36	Protection from all other forms of exploitation	Every child has the right to be protected from all other forms of exploitation (e.g. begging)
37	Torture and imprisonment	Every child has the right to protection from torture, cruel treatment or punishment, illegal arrest or any other forms of injury to their personal freedom. The state has the duty to prohibit the death penalty and life imprisonment for young people. If a child is imprisoned, they have the right to humane and respectful treatment. If a child or young person is arrested, they must not be held in confinement with adults, be able to keep in contact with their families and have the right to legal assistance.
38	War and armed conflict	Children and young people under 15 years of age have the right to not take part in war and armed conflict. The state has the duty to grant special protection to children who are affected by war.



39	Rehabilitation and integration	Every child who is the victim of armed conflict, torture, neglect or exploitation has the right to appropriate care to enable them to become mentally and physically healthy and to be integrated in a community.
40	Juvenile justice	Every child accused of committing a crime has the right to be treated with dignity in court. They are innocent until proven guilty. Every child has the right to a fair trial, an interpreter (if needed), the protection of their privacy and to have a court decision re-examined. The state has the duty to set a minimum age below which children cannot be held criminally responsible. The state also has the duty to provide alternatives to imprisonment for convicted children and young people.
41	Higher national standards have priority	If a country has laws that protect children and young people better than the children's rights convention, then those laws apply.
42	Disclosure of children's rights	Every state has the responsibility to make children's rights known to adults and children in an understandable way.

