Every child has rights. Rights are what you should have or be able to do to have the best start in life. These rights are listed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. They are for all children under age 18, in every part of the world. All rights are equally important and are connected to each other. You are born with these rights, and no one can take them away. Many adults are responsible to help protect your rights and do what is best for you. As you grow, you have more responsibility to make choices and exercise your rights. You can also respect the rights of others and help children around the world through organizations like UNICEF.

**Article 1** Everyone under 18 has these rights.

**Article 2** All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their size is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

**Article 3** All adults should do what’s best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

**Article 4** The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help you protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

**Article 5** Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

**Article 6** You have the right to be alive.

**Article 7** You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

**Article 8** You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

**Article 9** You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

**Article 10** If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.

**Article 11** You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

**Article 12** You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

**Article 13** You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing, or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

**Article 14** You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

**Article 15** You have the right to choose your friends and join in or start up groups, as long as it isn’t harmful to others.

**Article 16** You have the right to privacy.

**Article 17** You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

**Article 18** You have the right to be raised by your parents if it is possible.

**Article 19** You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated in body or mind.

**Article 20** You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

**Article 21** You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

**Article 22** You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

**Article 23** You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

**Article 24** You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

**Article 25** If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

**Article 26** You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

**Article 27** You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can’t do many of the things other kids can do.

**Article 28** You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

**Article 29** Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

**Article 30** You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

**Article 31** You have the right to play and rest.

**Article 32** You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

**Article 33** You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

**Article 34** You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

**Article 35** No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

**Article 36** You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

**Article 37** No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

This text is not an official version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Access the official text at http://www.unicef.org/crc