

Child-Friendly Text UN Disability Convention

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**UNICEF
The Victor Pineda Foundation**

Contents

- Getting started
- About this document
- About the Convention
- What are your rights?
- How your rights become real in your daily life
- Words you may not understand

Getting Started

This text was created to help make sure that children with and without disabilities know about the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*

BOX: What is a Convention? A **Convention** is an agreement between countries. When a country signs and ratifies a Convention, it becomes a legal promise and guides the actions of the government.

The Disability Convention is an agreement to help make sure that children and adults with disabilities are treated fairly and can equally participate in all aspects of life. The rights in the Disability Convention are not new. They are the human rights for all children and adults. The Disability Convention is needed to guarantee that these rights are respected for persons with disabilities.

BOX: What is a Disability?

A person has a disability when they have difficulty to see, learn, walk, hear or do other activities. There are many types of disabilities and some we cannot see. Changes to buildings, rules, and attitudes are sometimes needed to help make sure a child with a disability can play, participate and go to school.

A school that has audio books, sign language interpreters, and ramps is a school that treats children with disabilities fairly by giving them an equal chance to learn. We should all have the chance to go to school. The Convention helps to make this possible.

About this document

This document is a child-friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

People from many different countries around the world worked together to develop this Convention. They looked at good actions and laws that were helping people with disabilities go to school, get a job, and live happily in their communities.

In the next chapters you will learn all about your rights and what they mean in your life. When people respect each other's rights it helps to create a more fair and peaceful world.

Box: What are rights? “Rights” are things every child should have or be able to do. All children have the same rights, including kids with disabilities. All the rights are equally important.

The Convention lists the rights of adults and children with disabilities and establishes rules on how to put these into practice. Every country that joins the Convention agrees to follow these rules.

At the end of this document, you will find a list of words and their meanings. It will help you to understand words that may be new to you.

About the Convention

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities recognizes that every person has equal “rights” and that the rights of each person should be respected by everyone. It helps to make sure that the laws and rules in a country fully protect the rights of people with disabilities including children with disabilities.

This Convention guides your government and your family on how to help you achieve your rights. All these rights are important and need to be respected at all times.

Box: Sometimes, we have to think about rights in terms of what you need to have an equal chance at achieving your goals. As you grow, you have more responsibility to make choices and exercise your rights.

The rights that are guaranteed in the Convention for persons with disabilities are the same human rights that are recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. These rights are intended to make sure children have what they need to grow, develop and learn in safety and good health, and to reach their full potential as members of their community.

What are your rights?

- **Article 1**

Children with disabilities have the same equal rights and freedoms that are guaranteed for all children. When children have difficulty seeing, learning, walking or hearing they may face barriers that other children do not face. The equal rights of children with disabilities should be respected and they should be treated fairly and with dignity.

- **Article 2**

The meaning of some words used in the Convention:

- “Communication” is the way we overcome barriers to read, listen, speak and understand. It may be through Braille, sign language, large print, having someone read to us, or other helpful means.
- “Language” may be spoken or signed or other non spoken languages.
- “Discrimination on the basis of disability” occurs when people are not treated fairly because of a disability. Children with disabilities should never be prevented from enjoying their equal rights.

What are your rights?

- “Reasonable accommodation” means that if something needs to be changed so that persons with disabilities are able to take part, and it can be changed within reason – it must be done.
- “Universal design” means that things are designed to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible.

- **Article 3**

You have the right to:

- Dignity.
- Fairness without discrimination.
- Be included in activities.
- Be accepted, with or without disabilities, just as you are.
- Equal opportunity, to reach your dream.
- Accessibility, to enter a public place and not be prevented or refused.
- Equal possibility whether you’re a boy or a girl.
- Respect for your abilities and to preserve who *you* are.

What are your rights?

- **Article 4**

There will be no laws that discriminate against disabled kids! Children with disabilities must be involved in decisions that affect them.

- **Article 5, 6**

The law says that everyone is equal. This especially includes women and girls with disabilities.

- **Article 7**

Children, with or without disabilities, have opinions and ideas and should be able to express them. We should enjoy the full freedoms guaranteed to all children!

- **Article 8**

It is wrong to label children with disabilities or treat them unfairly. Kids with disabilities can do wonderful things. And people need to know about it!

What are your rights?

- **Article 9**

When we are grown up we can live independently and take part in all aspects of life without barriers to stop us from going to school or to work, to reach our dreams.

- **Article 10**

You have the right to life, it is your gift and no one, by law, can take it from you.

- **Article 11**

You have the right to be protected and to be safe during a war or an emergency or a storm or natural disaster.

- **Article 12**

With or without disabilities, you are equal in all legal measures of life.

- **Article 13 & 14**

You have the right to have access to justice, and the right to liberty and security.

What are your rights?

Article 15

You have the equal right not to be tortured or treated in a cruelly.

Article 16

You have the right to be protected from violence and abuse, and not to be misused or mistreated.

Article 17

You have the right to have respect for your physical and mental abilities, just as you are.

Article 18

With or without disabilities, you have the right to a name, a nationality and the right to know and be cared for by your parents. You also have the right to live where you want, in whatever country you wish.

What are your rights?

Article 19

You have the right to make choices where you wish to live, if you wish to live independently and to be included on equal terms in the community.

Article 20

You have the right to move about and be independent. If you need help to move about, you will get it.

Article 21

If you need to use sign languages, Braille, or other help in expressing yourself you will get it! You have the right to express yourself and express your opinion. You have an equal right to information.

Article 22

With or without disabilities, you have the right to privacy.

What are your rights?

- **Article 23**

You have the right to live with your family, and your government should support your family to care for you. If you cannot live with your immediate family, the government should help provide care within the wider family or community. When you grow up, you also have the right to get married and have a family.

- **Article 24**

You have the right to go to school and cannot be excluded from education because of a disability. Your government must provide the help you need to realize this right. For example, it must provide appropriate ways for you to communicate, and make sure that teachers are prepared to respond to your needs.

What are your rights?

- **Article 25 & 26**

You have the right to good health care without discrimination because of disability and you have the right to take part in all aspects of life and to receive help needed.

- **Article 27**

With or without disabilities, you have the equal right to work at a job, without discrimination.

- **Article 28**

You have a right to have food, clothing and access to housing, without discrimination.

- **Article 29**

With or without disabilities, you have the right to take part in politics and to serve the public, to vote and to be elected.

What are your rights?

- **Article 30**
You have the equal right to take part in the arts, sports, games, and fun activities in theatres, museums, playgrounds, libraries and have equal access to these places, without discrimination.
- **Article 31**
You have the right to privacy and to ethical treatment in all matters of research and information collected on disabilities.
- **Article 32**
You have the right to expect international cooperation in access, sharing information, and providing assistance to overcome barriers related to disability.

What are your rights?

- **Article 33**

Your government must give attention to this Convention and make sure it is followed and that steps are taken to keep the promise to respect the rights of all persons with disabilities. You have the right to participate in these efforts.

- **Article 34**

A special Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities will meet regularly to make sure that the Convention is followed, and to answer questions and guide countries and communities in protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

What are your rights?

- **Articles 35, 36, 37, 38 & 39**

Every country that is a member or party to the Convention will write a report to the special Committee telling about what they have done to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. The special Committee will work with many experts and groups around the world to make sure your voice is heard.

- **Article 40**

Regular meetings will take place when needed so that countries can share experience and ideas and help each other to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, and fulfill the promise of the Convention.

What are your rights?

- **Article 41**

The Secretary-General of the United Nations will keep the promises submitted by Countries when they sign the Convention in a safe and secure place.

- **Article 42**

Starting the 30 March 2007 all countries of the United Nations will be able to agree with the principals to protect the rights of persons with disabilities by signing the Convention.

- **Articles 43, 44, 45, 46, 47 & 48**

Your government agrees to be bound to the principles once it makes the Convention national law. Then, it is a “State party” to the Convention.

What are your rights?

- **Articles 49 & 50**

All children can learn about the Convention as it will be available in many languages and in many formats.

How your rights become real in your daily life

- The adults in your life should help and assist you to move around, communicate, and interact with other children no matter what kind of disability or difficulty you may face.
- Every child in the world looks different and has different ideas, experience, traditions and ABILITIES. These differences create new possibilities, new hopes, new dreams and new friendships. The differences among the people of our world are a treasure for all to appreciate and share. Each child is part of the world family and contributes their unique ABILITIES. No child is excluded.

Words you may not understand

- Accessibility
- Accommodation
- Committee
- Communication
- Community
- Convention
- Dignity
- Discrimination
- Language
- Ratification
- Rights
- UNICEF
- United Nations
- Universal Declaration on Human Rights
- Universal Design