

# Know your rights!



Exercise notebook for  
children and young people

With  
Child Rights  
poster

# Children's rights...

## What are they?

**Children's rights apply to all children and young people under the age of 18. All over the world. That means you, too.**

Every child in the world has the right to grow up healthy and safe, to develop in the best way possible, to be listened to and to be taken seriously. This is what all the countries in the world have agreed to in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The CRC is an international human rights treaty. It contains 54 articles which define children's rights. These rights are organized into three groups: the rights to protection, provision and participation.



Children can advocate for their own rights if they want. Adults must ensure that children's rights are respected so that children can grow up well. Governments bear a large responsibility for this through the laws and regulations that they make. But law enforcement, educators and parents must also respect children's rights.

**UNICEF advocates for children's rights worldwide – so that every child is given protection, encouragement and respect.**

## What do you actually need?

- Clothing
- A place to sleep
- Teachers
- Freedom of expression
- Personal space
- A name
- A home
- Food
- Exercise
- Rest
- A clean, healthy environment
- Play

# What do you know about children's rights?



Take this quiz to test your knowledge!

1

**Who are child rights for?**

- (A) For children in poor countries
- (B) For children all over the world
- (C) For child refugees

2

**What right does Article 31 of the CRC recognize?**

- (A) To take time off from school
- (B) To go to the cinema
- (C) To have the time and space to do the things you like

3

**What can you do if someone doesn't respect your rights?**

- (A) You can talk about it with someone you trust
- (B) You can call 147 or chat at 147.ch
- (C) You can contact the Children's Ombuds Office at kinder-ombusstelle.ch

4

**What does Article 13 of the CRC say? You can express your opinion...**

- (A) ... as long as it doesn't violate the rights of others
- (B) ... if your parents or other adults say it's OK
- (C) ... only to people you can trust

5

**According to Article 16 of the CRC, what must be protected?**

- (A) Privacy
- (B) Name
- (C) Nationality

6

**What do the rights of child refugees include?**

- (A) A free plane ticket
- (B) Protection
- (C) Security



 **Tip: Find the answers in the Child Rights poster**

# Child rights are everywhere!

Child rights are all around you. At home, in school and everywhere in between! What do these rights look like in your life?

- Read the question
- Look for the article in the Child Rights poster
- Draw or write your answer




12

**When was your opinion respected?**

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RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS


15

**Do you belong to an organization, club or other group?**

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SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS


17

**How do you learn about new things?**

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION


29

**What can you do especially well?**

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AIMS OF EDUCATION


24

**How are you cared for?**

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HEALTH, WATER, FOOD, ENVIRONMENT


31

**How do you relax? What do you like to do?**

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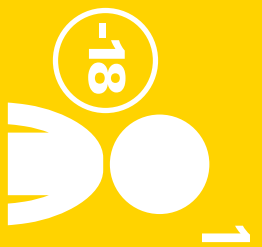


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REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS



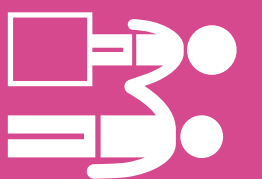
DEFINITION OF A CHILD

1



NO DISCRIMINATION

2



BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

3



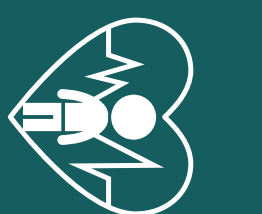
MAKING RIGHTS REAL

4



FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP

5



LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

6



NAME AND NATIONALITY

7



IDENTITY

8



KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

9



CONTACT WITH PARENTS ACROSS COUNTRIES

10



PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING

11



RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS

12



SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY

13



FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION

14



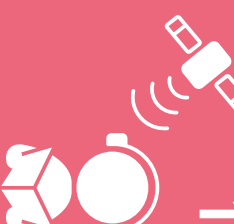
SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS

15



PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

16



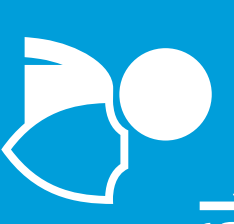
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

17



RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

18



PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

19



CHILDREN WITHOUT FAMILIES

20



CHILDREN WHO ARE ADOPTED

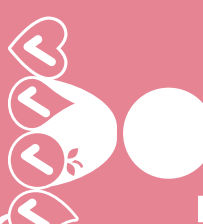
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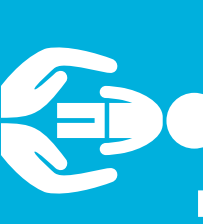
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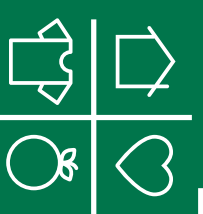
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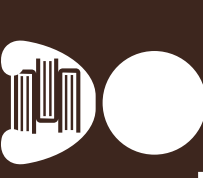
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26



27



28



### 1 DEFINITION OF A CHILD

A child is any person under the age of 18.



### 2 NO DISCRIMINATION

All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.



### 3 BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children. Governments should make sure children are protected and looked after by their parents, or by other people when this is needed. Governments should make sure that people and places responsible for looking after children are doing a good job.



### 4 MAKING RIGHTS REAL

Governments must do all they can to make sure that every child in their countries can enjoy all the rights in this Convention.



### 5 FAMILY GUIDANCE AS CHILDREN DEVELOP

Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.



### 6 LIFE, SURVIVAL AND DEVELOPMENT

Every child has the right to be alive. Governments must make sure that children survive and develop in the best possible way.



### 7 NAME AND NATIONALITY

Children must be registered when they are born and given a name which is officially recognized by the government. Children must have a nationality (belong to a country). Whenever possible, children should know their parents and be looked after by them.



### 8 IDENTITY

Children have the right to their own identity – an official record of who they are which includes their name, nationality and family relations. No one should take this away from them, but if this happens, governments must help children to quickly get their identity back.



### 9 KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER

Children should not be separated from their parents unless they are not being properly looked after – for example, if a parent hurts or does not take care of a child. Children whose parents don't live together should stay in contact with both parents unless this might harm the child.



### 10 CONTACT WITH PARENTS ACROSS COUNTRIES

If a child lives in a different country than their parents, governments must let the child and parents travel so that they can stay in contact and be together.



### 11 PROTECTION FROM KIDNAPPING

Governments must stop children being taken out of the country when this is against the law – for example, being kidnapped by someone or held abroad by a parent when the other parent does not agree.



### 12 RESPECT FOR CHILDREN'S VIEWS

Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.



### 13 SHARING THOUGHTS FREELY

Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.



### 14 FREEDOM OF THOUGHT AND RELIGION

Children can choose their own thoughts, opinions and religion, but this should not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents can guide children so that, as they grow up, they learn to properly use this right.



### 15 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS

Children can join or set up groups or organizations, and they can meet with others, as long as this does not harm other people.



### 16 PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Every child has the right to privacy. The law must protect children's privacy, family, home, communications and reputation (or good name) from any attack.



### 17 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.



### 18 RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS

Parents are the main people responsible for bringing up a child. When the child does not have any parents, another adult will have this responsibility and they are called a "guardian". Parents and guardians should always consider what is best for that child. Governments should help them. Where a child has both parents, both of them should be responsible for bringing up the child.



### 19 PROTECTION FROM VIOLENCE

Governments must protect children from violence, abuse and being neglected by anyone who looks after them.



### 20 CHILDREN WITHOUT FAMILIES

Every child who cannot be looked after by their own family has the right to be looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture, language and other aspects of their life.



### 21 CHILDREN WHO ARE ADOPTED

When children are adopted, the most important thing is to do what is best for them. If a child cannot be properly looked after in their own country – for example by living with another family – then they might be adopted in another country.



### 22 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS



### 23 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS



### 24 ACCESS TO INFORMATION



### 25 REVIEW OF INFORMATION



### 26 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS



### 27 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS



### 28 SETTING UP OR JOINING GROUPS



Children who move from their home country to another country as refugees (because it was not safe for them to stay there) should get help and protection and have the same rights as children born in that country.

Every child with a disability should enjoy the best possible life in society. Governments should remove all obstacles for children with disabilities to become independent and to participate actively in the community.

Children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.

Every child who has been placed somewhere away from home – for their care, protection or health – should have their situation checked regularly to see if everything is going well and if this is still the best place for the child to be.

Governments should provide money or other support to help children from poor families.

Children have the right to food, clothing and a safe place to live so they can develop in the best possible way. The government should help families and children who cannot afford this.

Every child has the right to an education. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child. Children should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level possible. Discipline in schools should respect children's rights and never involve violence.

**29**  
AIMS OF EDUCATION

Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.

**30**  
MINORITY CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

Children have the right to use their own language, culture and religion – even if these are not shared by most people in the country where they live.

**31**  
REST, PLAY CULTURE, ARTS

Every child has the right to rest, relax, play and take part in cultural and creative activities.

**32**  
PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL WORK

Children have the right to be protected from doing work that is dangerous or bad for their education, health or development. If children work, they have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

**33**  
PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL DRUGS

Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.

**34**  
PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.

**35**  
PREVENTION OF SALE AND TRAFFICKING

Governments must make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold, or taken to other countries or places to be exploited (taken advantage of).

**36**  
PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION

Children have the right to be protected from all other kinds of exploitation (being taken advantage of), even if these are not specifically mentioned in this Convention.

**37**  
CHILDREN IN DETENTION

Children who are accused of breaking the law should not be killed, tortured, treated cruelly, put in prison forever, or put in prison with adults. Prison should always be the last choice and only for the shortest possible time. Children in prison should have legal help and be able to stay in contact with their family.

**38**  
PROTECTION IN WAR

Children have the right to be protected during war. No child under 15 can join the army or take part in war.

**39**  
RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION

Children have the right to get help if they have been hurt, neglected, treated badly or affected by war, so they can get back their health and dignity.

**40**  
CHILDREN WHO BREAK THE LAW

Children accused of breaking the law have the right to legal help and fair treatment. There should be lots of solutions to help these children become good members of their communities. Prison should only be the last choice.

**41**  
BEST LAW FOR CHILDREN APPLIES

If the laws of a country protect children's rights better than this Convention, then those laws should be used.

**42**  
EVERYONE MUST KNOW CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Governments should actively tell children and adults about this Convention so that everyone knows about children's rights.

**43-54**  
HOW THE CONVENTION WORKS

These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of the Child and UNICEF – and other organizations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.

**CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

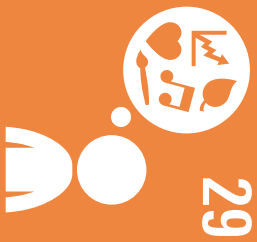
The Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important international treaty of the United Nations.

By signing it, all states have committed themselves to implementing and upholding children's rights in their territory. This means that states must ensure that children are protected, supported and taken seriously. The situation of children's rights is regularly reviewed in every state.

All children's rights apply unconditionally to every child from birth, are interrelated, are equally important and cannot be taken away. Children up to the age of 18 are the bearers of these rights and the state and all adults are obliged to respect children's rights.



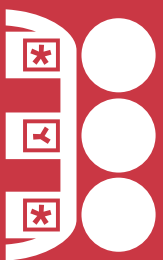
REFUGEE CHILDREN



29

AIMS OF EDUCATION

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES



30

MINORITY CULTURE, LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

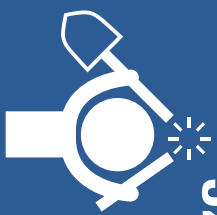
HEALTH, WATER, FOOD, ENVIRONMENT



31

REST, PLAY, CULTURE, ARTS

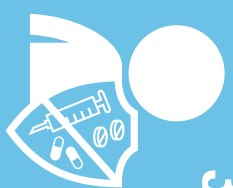
REVIEW OF A CHILD'S PLACEMENT



32

PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL WORK

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC HELP



33

PROTECTION FROM HARMFUL DRUGS

FOOD, CLOTHING, A SAFE HOME



34

PROTECTION FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

ACCESS TO EDUCATION



35

PREVENTION OF SALE AND TRAFFICKING



36

PROTECTION FROM EXPLOITATION



37

CHILDREN IN DETENTION



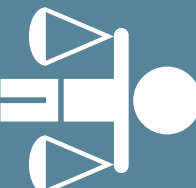
38

PROTECTION IN WAR



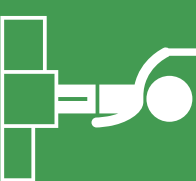
39

RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION



40

CHILDREN WHO BREAK THE LAW



41

BEST LAW FOR CHILDREN APPLIES



42

EVERYONE MUST KNOW CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

43-54

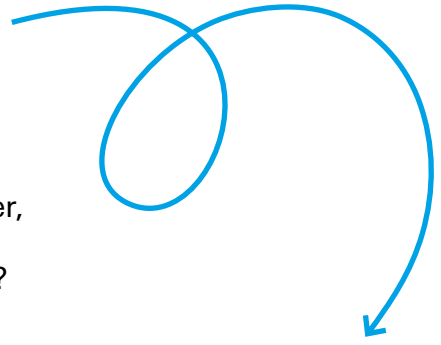


HOW THE CONVENTION WORKS

# CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



# Imagine that...



You have rights! And so do your classmates, your little brother, the girl who lives next door, and children and young people all over the world. Are you always thinking about your rights? Or do you forget them sometimes? **Imagine that...**

## ... it's your birthday, and you invite ten classmates to your birthday party.

Does the rest of your class have the right to show up?

- Yes
- No

What makes you think that?

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## ... you take a friend's mobile phone for fun and scroll through their photos.

Is that funny? Or are you violating their rights?

- Funny!
- Not funny!

What makes you think that?

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## ... you make fun of a classmate's new haircut.

Is that OK?

- Totally OK!
- Not OK!

What makes you think that?

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# Quiz time!

Tip: Find the answers in the Child Rights poster

Now you know lots more about child rights. Discuss which of the following two rights is more important.

Play area nearby (CRC Article 31)



OR

Membership in a sports club (CRC Article 15)

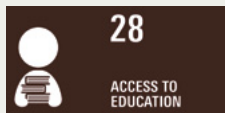


Healthy nutrition (CRC Article 24)



OR

Access to education (CRC Article 28)



To have a name (CRC Article 7)



OR

A home (CRC Article 27)



## Find the answers in the Child Rights poster

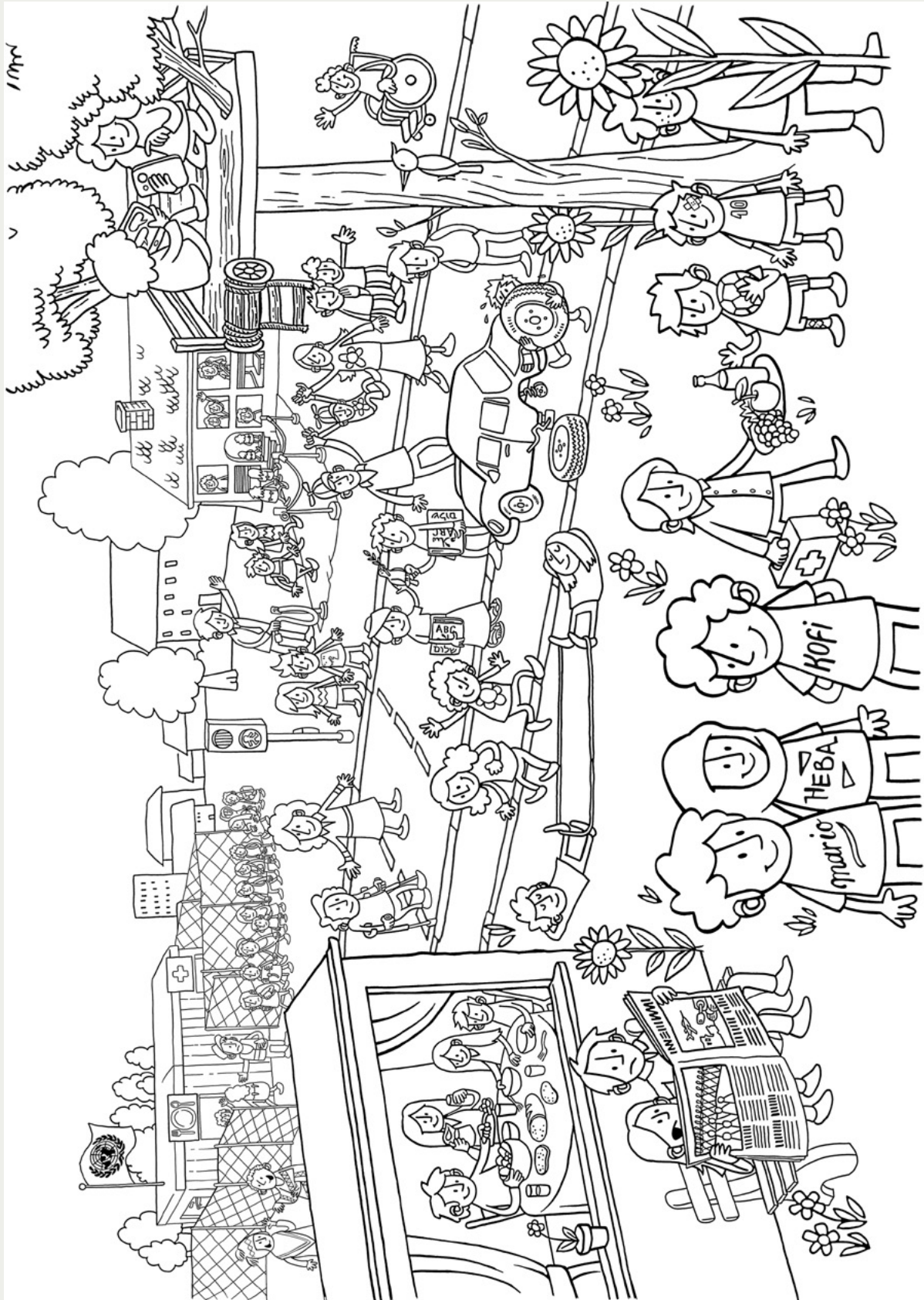
1. What right do all children have according to Article 6 of the CRC?
2. What are you allowed to say according to Article 13 of the CRC?
3. For whom do children's rights apply? Everyone under ... years old.
4. Which place is particularly important for Article 28 of the CRC?
5. Which article of the CRC is about the right of privacy?
6. What are you entitled to according to Article 17 of the CRC?

				1										
		2												
				3										
				4										
	5													
			6											

What do you now read from top to bottom in the blue boxes?

\_\_\_\_\_

# Find your rights!



© UNICEF Germany. Illustration: Wolfgang Friesslich

# Stand up for children's rights!

There are lots of ways to advocate for children's rights. Here are some ways you can get involved.

youth<sup>+</sup>



Contact UNICEF youth, our community for young people. There you'll find lots of ways to get involved: [unicef.ch/youth](https://unicef.ch/youth)

Sternen-  
Wochen



Get involved in Star Weeks, the fundraising campaign for children, by children. You can work alone, with friends or with your whole class: [sternenwochen.ch](https://sternenwochen.ch)



Do you have some great ideas on how to make a change? Then our brochure "Participate!" is for you. Available in German, French and Italian: [unicef.ch/participate](https://unicef.ch/participate)

KIDIMO



At [kidimo.ch](https://kidimo.ch) you can learn about children's rights through games and create your own avatar (available in German, French and Italian).

For educators:  
Subscribe to the  
UNICEF Children's  
Rights Newsletter:  
[unicef.ch/  
cranewsletter](https://unicef.ch/cranewsletter)



For more informa-  
tion and materials  
on children's rights:  
[unicef.ch/  
childrights](https://unicef.ch/childrights)



## Do you need help?

If everyone honored children's rights, all children would be protected. Unfortunately, that's not the case. In every country, there are children who need our help. Children who are neglected, abused or bullied. Does this describe you or someone you know? Here are some things you can do:

- Talk about it with someone you trust. Like your parents or a teacher.
- Contact 147, either by phone (147) or online ([147.ch](https://147.ch)). It's free and completely anonymous.
- Contact the Children's Ombuds Office at [kinderombudsstelle.ch](https://kinderombudsstelle.ch)