The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an important agreement by countries who have promised to protect children’s rights.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child explains who children are, all their rights, and the responsibilities of governments. All the rights are connected, they are all equally important and they cannot be taken away from children. These articles explain how governments, the United Nations – including the Committee on the Rights of Child and UNICEF – and other organisations work to make sure all children enjoy all their rights.

A child is any person under the age of 18.

Children have the right to be born free. Primary education should be free. Secondary and higher education should be available to every child.

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

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.

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.

Children who 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.

Children have the right to be protected from any attack.

Children should not be separated from their parents unless this is needed for a child. Governments should make sure that children have the right to rest, relax, play and to take part in cultural and creative activities.

Every child should 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.

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

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