

# The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:

## An overview for CHILDREN and TEENAGERS

### What is the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)?

- > The UNCRC is a human rights treaty created by the United Nations that provides a full list of rights for all children up to the age of 18.
- > Almost every country in the world has signed the Convention. Signing the Convention means these countries promise to protect and promote these rights. Canada signed the convention in 1991.
- > The Convention says that governments are in charge of making sure that children's rights are respected and that children know about their rights.

### What are the Convention's basic principles?

1

#### Non-discrimination

The rights of all children must be respected without discrimination of any kind. It does not matter their gender; if they are rich or poor; what their religion, ethnicity, or language is; or whether they have special needs.

2

#### The best interests of the child

When decisions are made that affect the lives of children, the Convention says that it is very important to think about what is best for the child.



3

#### The right to life and development

The Convention says that governments should do their best to help children live and grow to be the best they can be.



4

#### Participation

Children have the right to give their opinions in all matters that affect them and to have their voices heard. Children's views should always be taken seriously, no matter their age.

### Why is it important for me to learn about my rights?

- > It can help you understand what rights are, that rights come with responsibilities, and how you can help others practice their rights.
- > It can help you know if others have gone against your rights and know how to react.
- > It can help you respect the rights of other children because you know they all share the same rights.
- > It can help you feel important knowing you have rights!

To learn more about child rights check out [Canada.ca/national-child-day](https://Canada.ca/national-child-day)

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