Article 1  Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Convention.

Article 2  The Convention applies to everyone, whatever their race, religion, abilities; whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3  All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.

Article 4  Governments should make these rights available to children.

Article 5  Governments should respect the rights and responsibilities of families to direct and guide their children so that, as they grow, they learn to use their rights properly.

Article 6  All children have the right to a legally registered name, and nationality. Also the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.

Article 7  All children have the right to life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop healthily.

Article 8  Governments should respect children's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

Article 9  Children should not be separated from their parents unless it is for their own good. For example, if a parent is mistreating or neglecting a child. Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child.

Article 10  Families who live in different countries should be allowed to move between those countries so that parents and children can stay in contact, or get back together as a family.

Article 11  Governments should take steps to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally.

Article 12  Children have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.

Article 13  Children have the right to get and to share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or to others.

Article 14  Children have the right to think and believe what they want, and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide their children on these matters.

Article 15  Children have the right to meet together and to join groups and organisations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights. Parents should guide their children on these matters.

Article 16  Children have a right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their families and their homes.

Article 17  Children have the right to reliable information from the media mass. Television, radio, and newspapers should provide information that children can understand, and should not promote materials that could harm children.

Article 18  Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing services to support them, especially if both parents work.

Article 19  Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 20  Children who cannot be looked after by their own family must be looked after properly, by people who respect their religion, culture and language.

Article 21  When children are adopted the first concern must be what is best for them. The same rules should apply whether the children are adopted in the country where they were born, or if they are taken to live in another country.

Article 22  Children who come into a country as refugees should have the same rights as children born in that country.

Article 23  Children who have any kind of disability should have special care and support, so that they can lead full and independent lives.

Article 24  Children have the right to good quality health care, to clean water, nutritious food, and a clean environment, so that they will stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 25  Children who are looked after by their local authority, rather than their parents, should have their situation reviewed regularly.

Article 26  The Government should provide extra money for the children of families in need.

Article 27  Children have a right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and mental needs. The Government should help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 28  All children and young people have a right to a primary education, which should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Young people should be encouraged to reach the highest level of education they are capable of.

Article 29  Education should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures.

Article 30  Children have a right to learn and use the language and customs of their families, whether these are shared by the majority of people in the country or not.

Article 31  All children have a right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities.
The Government should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.

Article 33

The Government should protect children from sexual abuse.

Article 34

The Government should make sure that children are not abducted or sold.

Article 35

Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

Article 36

Children who break the law should not be treated cruelly.

They should not be put in prison with adults and should be able to keep in contact with their families.

Article 37

If children have a right to be educated, then they have the obligation to learn as much as their capabilities allow and, where possible, share their knowledge and experience with others.

If all children have a right to a full life, then they should also lend help to the needy, the disadvantaged, and the victims of discrimination and also enjoy this right.

If children have a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, then they also have the obligation to respect others’ thoughts or religious principles.

You can probably think of many more.

Derived from a Universal Declaration of Human Responsibilities, by an organisation called World Goodwill, composed of ex-heads of state.

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 articles in all. Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights.

Article 42

Children who have been neglected or abused should receive special help to restore their self-respect.

Article 39

Children who are accused of breaking the law should receive legal help. Prison sentences for children should only be used for the most serious offences.

Children have a right to be protected from conflict, cruelty, exploitation and neglect, then they also have a responsibility to respect each other in a humane way.

If children have a right to a clean environment, then they also have a responsibility to do what they can to look after their environment.

If the laws of a particular country protect children better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should stay.

Article 41

The Government should make the Convention known to parents and children.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child has 54 articles in all. Articles 43-54 are about how adults and governments should work together to make sure all children get all their rights.

Whose responsibility?

Children’s rights are a special case because many of the rights laid down in the Convention on the Rights of the Child have to be provided by adults or the state.

However, the Convention also refers to the responsibilities of children, in particular to respect the rights of others, especially their parents (Article 29).

Here are some suggestions of the responsibilities that could accompany rights...

If every child, regardless of their sex, ethnic origin, social status, language, age, nationality or religion has these rights, then they also have a responsibility to respect each other in a humane way.

If children have a right not to bully or harm each other.

If children have a right to a clean environment, then they also have a responsibility to do what they can to look after their environment.

If children have a right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, then they also have the obligation to respect others’ thoughts or religious principles.

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