

# LOOKING AT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN WALES

## Are you under 18?

If **YES**, then there is a law in Wales which says that children's rights should be very important. This law is called the

The law says that when the Government in Wales makes decisions and plans or spends money on something which affects you, then your rights and what's best for you needs to be carefully thought about. **You have the right to be involved and listened to.**

Your rights are set out in a list called the

It's called the **UNCRC** for short.



## Why does this matter to me?

The law in Wales says that children's rights should be very important. **But are they really?**

We are the Children, Young People and Education Committee. A group of politicians who have been chosen to try and make sure the best things are done for children in Wales. We wanted to know if this law is working properly. Are children's rights more important since this law was made?

To do this we asked people what they thought:

**children   young people   adults**



## Things children & young people told us

Children and young people told us:

- ⇒ I have the right to be listened to (Article 12)
- ⇒ Rights have helped me a lot
- ⇒ Improve the right to be safe because feeling safe is important
- ⇒ We've got the right to a clean environment
- ⇒ I want my right to use my own language and celebrate my own culture and religion
- ⇒ Rights should be a set subject in school
- ⇒ Transport is a big issue
- ⇒ We'd like to have the right to see our family if we do not live with them



## Things that should be changed

Now we have listened to what everyone has to say, we have decided that things could be better. **We say...**

- \* There should be a new top job created in the Welsh Government and this person should make sure children's rights are always thought about when making decisions.
- \* All the people in top jobs in the Welsh Government should have to learn about children's rights.
- \* The Welsh Government should make a clear plan to show it is thinking about children's rights when it chooses how to spend its money.
- \* The Welsh Government needs to make sure children know about their rights.
- \* Adults also need to be told about the rights that children have.
- \* There should be an easy way for children to complain if they are not happy they have had their rights listened to.
- \* Children and young people should have a say in the plans and laws in Wales. The Welsh Government should make sure it has a clear plan to make this happen.



# Here are the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

**Article 1** Everyone under 18 has these rights.

**Article 2** All children have these rights no matter what.

**Article 3** Everyone who works with children should always do what is best for each child.

**Article 4** The government should make sure that all these rights are available to all children.

**Article 5** Governments should help parents to help you to know about and use children's rights as you grow up.

**Article 6** You have the right to life and to grow up to be healthy.

**Article 7** Your right to a name and nationality.

**Article 8** The government should respect your right to a name, nationality and family.

**Article 9** Your right to be with your parents if this is what's best for you.

**Article 10** Your right to see your family if they live in another country

**Article 11** Your right not to be taken out of the country illegally.

**Article 12** Your right to say what you think should happen and be listened to.

**Article 13** Your right to have information.

**Article 14** Your right to follow your own religion.

**Article 15** Your right to meet with friends and join groups and clubs.

**Article 16** Your right to have privacy.

**Article 17** Your right to honest information from newspapers and television that you can understand.

**Article 18** Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their children, and they should always think about what is best for each child.

**Article 19** You should not be harmed and should be looked after and kept safe.

**Article 20** You should be looked after properly if you can't live with your own family.

**Article 21** Your right to live in the best place for you if you can't live with your parents.

**Article 22** Refugee children have the same rights as children born in Wales.

**Article 23** Your right to special care and support if you have a disability so that you can lead a full and independent life.

**Article 24** Your right to good food and water and to see a doctor if you are ill.

**Article 25** Children who are not living with their families should be checked on regularly to make sure they are okay.

**Article 26** The right to extra money if your family hasn't got enough to live on.

**Article 27** Your right to a good standard of living.

**Article 28** Your right to learn and go to school.

**Article 29** Your right to become the best that you can be.

**Article 30** Your right to use your own language.

**Article 31** Your right to relax and play.

**Article 32** You should be protected from work that is dangerous.

**Article 33** You should be protected from dangerous drugs.

**Article 34** The government should protect children from sexual abuse.

**Article 35** You have a right not to be sold.

**Article 36** You should be protected from doing things that could harm you.

**Article 37** Your right to be treated fairly if you break the law.

**Article 38** Children should be protected during a war and not allowed to fight in the army if they are under 15.

**Article 39** Children should get special help if they have been abused.

**Article 40** Your right to legal help if you have been accused of breaking the law.

**Article 41** If the laws in your country protect you better than the rights in this list, those laws should stay.

**Article 42** The government must let children and families know about children's rights

**Articles 43-54** These articles discuss how governments, and organisations like ours should work to ensure children are protected in their rights.

Source: Children's Commissioner for Wales' office