

TEACHING FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

# RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS



CARD AND ACTIVITY KIT



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Produced by the UNICEF Canada  
Global Classroom team for use in  
your school

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For: Classrooms and Youth Groups

# Rights, Wants & Needs



This resource kit consists of a set of 20 **cards** and associated **educational activities** to teach and learn about children's rights.

### Why should children learn about their rights?

Every society expects that its children will grow up to be capable and responsible citizens who contribute to the well-being of their communities. In fact, the goal of public education in Canada reflects this basic aspiration.

Yet in Canada and around the world, many children are denied the rights that would enable them to survive and develop to their potential. Children cope daily with violence and abuse. Some work long hours at jobs that are damaging to their health and education. Too many are denied access to school, and suffer preventable diseases and malnutrition. Environmental damage takes the largest toll on children; discrimination denies many their basic rights. The denial of basic rights is not only the cause of personal suffering; it also sows the seeds of political and social unrest. Rights issues touch everyone, everywhere.

All human beings, no matter their age, where they live, their culture or socioeconomic status, have similar basic needs: nutritious food, health care, shelter, education, protection from harm,...every person has the *right* to have these needs fulfilled. The 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child affirms these rights for children. The Convention has been ratified by almost every country, including Canada and its provinces.

Children's rights education is an important part of global education and citizenship education, entrenched in curricula for civics, citizenship, life skill development and social studies across Canada.

As global citizens with universal rights, children and young people must learn to exercise their rights responsibly as part of the duties of citizenship. States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child have the responsibility to ensure that children's rights are fulfilled.

### In the curriculum

Children's rights education is articulated in specific curriculum units in all Canadian provinces including:

- Heritage and Citizenship (relationships, rules and responsibilities)
- Canada and World Connections (features of communities around the world)
- Healthy Living (nutrition, personal safety and injury prevention)

In these activities students explore the idea that people's basic needs are considered rights, and see the link between rights and responsibilities:

- demonstrate an understanding of basic personal and family needs and learn how basic needs are met (Canada and World Connections)
- demonstrate an understanding of the need for rights and responsibilities, e.g., need for protection and respect (Heritage and Citizenship)
- identify the physical, interpersonal and emotional needs of healthy human beings (Healthy Living)

### How to use this kit

Use the **cards** and **activities** to introduce students to human rights and citizenship concepts.

- Begin by explaining to students that "rights" are things every child should be able to have or to do, in order to survive and grow to reach their full potential.
- Engage students in the activities appropriate to them as part of a lesson or curriculum unit. For older students, consider using the articles in the Convention summary in this kit, instead of the rights cards.
- Extension activities and curriculum links for children's rights can be accessed in the UNICEF Canada Global Classroom at [globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/resources/](http://globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/resources/).

# Teaching-learning activities

## Activity 1 THE RIGHT TO WHAT?

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1. The teacher introduces the concept of children's rights, and the class brainstorms a list of rights they think children should have.
2. The class compares their list with the cards, and adds any new ideas to their list.
3. The class compares their list with the summary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, found on page 12 in this kit.

## Activity 2 RIGHTS, WANTS OR NEEDS?

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1. In pairs, students sort a set of 20 cards into the following categories:
  - MOST IMPORTANT
  - IMPORTANT
  - LEAST IMPORTANT
2. Each pair joins another, and the group decides which are the 6 most important cards.
3. Groups share their list of most important cards with the class.
4. The class discusses:
  - Was it difficult to select some items over others?
  - How did you decide which items were most important?
  - What is the difference between "wants" and "needs"?
  - Why would some "needs" be protected as rights?
  - Do all children have these rights met?
  - What other rights do you think children should have?
  - What can be done to ensure children everywhere have all their rights met?

## Activity 3 JOURNEY TO A NEW PLANET

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1. The teacher explains that the class has been chosen to live on a new planet. Since they will set up a new society there, Mission Control wants them to have all the things they need in order to live and grow. Mission Control has given them 20 things to take with them, one per card. Each pair of students receives a set of cards and the class reviews the cards together.

2. The teacher explains that each pair can bring 4 additional items of their choice. Each pair draws and labels these items onto 4 blank cards.
3. The teacher announces that Mission Control has just sent a message: because space is limited on the spaceship to the new planet, each pair can now take only 15 of the 24 items. Each pair decides on the 9 items to eliminate and sets these cards aside.
4. Mission Control announces that there is still less space available, and each pair may take only 10 items. Each pair eliminates 5 more items, leaving the 10 they think are most essential.
5. Each pair joins another and they compare the cards they've chosen. Each group negotiates a set of 10 they all agree on.
6. The class discusses:
  - Which items were most commonly eliminated? Why?
  - Why was the second round of eliminations more difficult?
  - What is the difference between "wants" and "needs"?
  - Are wants and needs different for different people?
  - Why don't all children in the world have what they need?

## Activity 4 RIGHTS TO CHANCE

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With multiple sets of cards, students can play a variety of games:

*A Roll of the Dice:* Each pair or small group of students receives a set of cards and a die. They roll the die and eliminate the corresponding number of cards from the set – keeping those cards they decide are the most important to their well-being. The class discusses:

- Which cards they decided to keep.
- How they made their decisions.
- What, if anything, was difficult about the decision-making process.
- Do all children in their community have their needs, wants and rights met equally? Do all children globally?
- What accounts for the differences? Is it fair?
- What can be done about this? What can the students do?

*Pelmanism:* Each small group of students has two sets of cards, spread out face down. Each student in the

group takes a turn to select two cards; if the cards are the same, they keep them. If the cards do not match, they are laid down again. Students try to remember where the cards are so they can eventually make a match. As a student makes a matched pair, s/he says whether the pair is a WANT or a NEED. The group can debate each declaration.

*Rummy:* Two sets of cards are shuffled, and a group of 2 to 4 students are dealt 4 or 5 cards each. In turns, they take a card from the pile or remaining cards and keep it (and discard another in their hand) or discard it. Students try to collect pairs of cards which they lay down in front of them, saying whether the pair of cards depicts a WANT or a NEED. The first student to get rid of all of their cards wins.

### Activity 5 RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Complete Activity 1 or 2. Keep the cards that have been designated as “rights” rather than as “wants” for use in this activity.
2. Explain that with rights come certain responsibilities.
 

*Example: The right to “opportunities to share opinions” corresponds to a responsibility to “express opinions in ways that do not harm another’s rights.”*
3. In pairs or small groups, students write and illustrate on a blank card a responsibility they think goes with each right card.
4. Pairs or groups exchange rights and responsibilities cards. Each group tries to find a match between each

### Activity 7 RIGHTS AND NEEDS IN SNAPSHOTS

1. Each pair or small group of students receives a copy of the set of 4 photos in this kit (**Rights and Needs in Snapshots**) and a set of cards. Alternatively, each group can work with one of the photos. For each photo, the students list the rights, wants or needs from the cards that appear to be denied the child/ren in the photo, and those that appear to be protected: Photo: \_\_\_\_\_

DENIED	PROTECTED

2. The class compares their charts.
3. For each right/need that appears to be denied in a selected photo, the class brainstorms a response that could protect that right by the government, other groups, and the students themselves:

RIGHT/NEED	GOVERNMENT	OTHER GROUPS	US

right card and a responsibility card. Alternatively, the teacher collects rights cards and responsibilities cards, and gives one right or responsibility card to each student. Students move around the room, forming pairs to match a right to a corresponding responsibility.

5. The class discusses the responsibilities of both rights-bearers (children) and duty-bearers (the government, which has ratified and agreed to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; others?).

### Activity 6 LINKING RIGHTS

1. Students collect and share stories about children from magazines, videos, comic strips, books, oral tales and songs. Alternatively, the teacher or students may write 3 to 5 short fictional or actual scenarios, or use the **Children From Around the World Cards** provided in this kit.
2. As each story is told, read or viewed, students individually, in groups or as a class select the card(s) they think is being denied in the story.
3. Students sort the card(s) they selected into two categories: WANTS and NEEDS.
4. Students discuss:
  - What is the difference between “wants” and “needs”?
  - Why would some “needs” be protected as rights?
  - Why was this right(s) denied the child/children in the story?
  - What can be done to better protect this right(s)?

# Rights, Wants & Needs cards

Each of the 20 cards can be classified in one of two categories:

**NEEDS** (protected as RIGHTS in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, indicated by the corresponding article number in the chart below)

**WANTS** (not protected as rights since they *generally* are not necessary for a child's survival, growth and development)\*

## NEEDS/RIGHTS

## WANTS

Decent shelter (article 27)  
Nutritious food (article 24)  
Protection from abuse and neglect (article 19)  
Education (articles 28, 29)  
Health care (article 24)  
Fair treatment and non-discrimination (article 2)  
Clean air (article 24)  
Opportunities to share opinions (article 12)  
Playgrounds and recreation (article 30)  
Clean water (article 24)  
Opportunities to practise your own culture, language and religion (article 31)

Clothes in the latest style  
A bicycle  
Holiday trips  
Your own bedroom  
A personal computer  
A television set  
A personal stereo  
Money to spend as you like  
Fast food

\* Some items classified as "wants" may be needs in certain circumstances. For example, access to television or a computer may be an important source of information gathering or sharing conducive to the protection of rights to healthy development and protection from violence and abuse.



Health care



A bicycle



**RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS**



Decent shelter



Clothes in the latest style



Holiday trips



Nutritious food



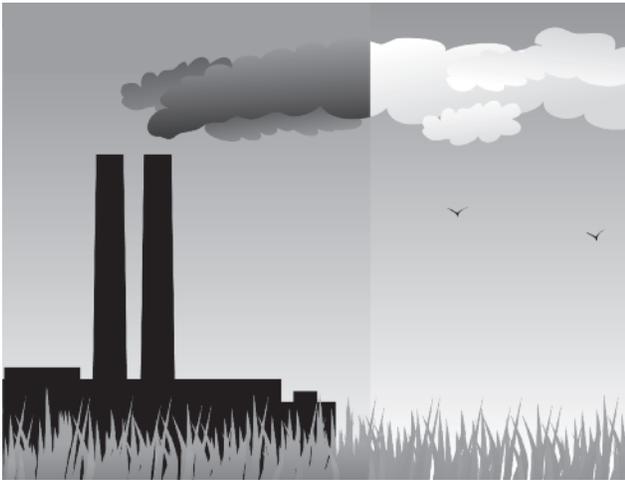
Protection from abuse and neglect



Education



**RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS**



Clean air



A personal stereo



Fast food



Playgrounds and recreation



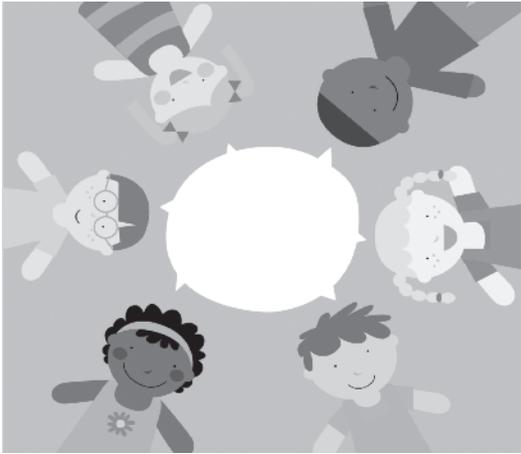
A television set



Opportunities to practise your own culture, language and religion



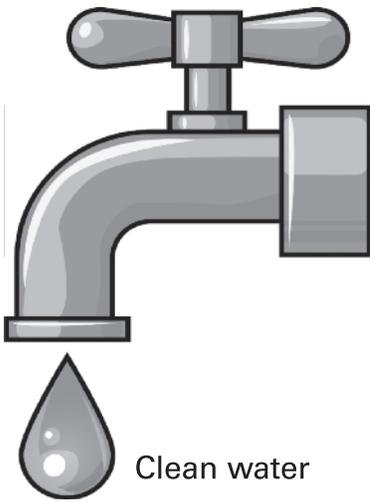
**RIGHTS, WANTS & NEEDS CARDS**



Opportunities to share opinions



Money to spend as you like



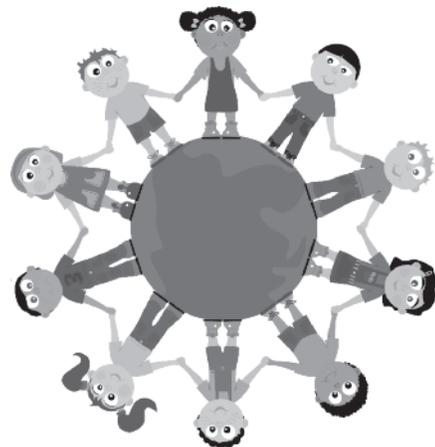
Clean water



Your own bedroom



A personal computer



Fair treatment and non-discrimination



**A**

Because my family lived so far from the health centre when I was a young child, I was never vaccinated. Now I am 8 years old and I have polio.

**B**

My brothers go to the local school, but I am the only daughter. My family needs me to help out with work in our home, so I cannot go to school. I am 7 years old.

**C**

I am 16 years old and I go to school every day. When I get home, I help in my parents' shop until the evening. Then I eat dinner, wash the dishes, and look after my younger brother and sister while my parents finish their work in the shop. After the younger children go to sleep, I try to do my homework, but usually I am too tired and I just fall asleep.

**D**

I am 9 years old, and my family doesn't have much money. We live in two small rooms; we have to carry our water from a well a kilometre away. The houses in our village don't have indoor toilets, so we use a pit in the ground at the end of our street.



**E**

I am 13 years old, and my country has been fighting over a boundary with another country for three years. A captain from the army came to my home to tell me that because I am big and strong, I should join the army and fight for my country.

**F**

I am 10 years old, and I speak the language that my parents and grandparents and all my family have always spoken. In the local school, none of the teachers speak my language, and they don't allow me to speak it either – they say we must all learn how to speak **their** language.

**G**

I started to work at a carpet factory for 12 hours a day when I was 9 years old. Now I am 12 years old, and the factory wants me to work even more hours every day.

**H**

I am 15 years old, and I live in a big city. A lot of my friends sniff glue. I tried it, and now I do it almost every day. Sometimes the police chase us away from the places where we meet.



## Activity 7 RIGHTS AND NEEDS IN SNAPSHOTS



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A. This 11-year-old girl works with other girls and women in a charcoal production yard in Côte d'Ivoire. These young workers are exposed to dangerous smoke and charcoal fumes throughout the day. She says she does not go to school, but UNICEF, the Government and other partners are working together to get her back in school.



© UNICEF/NYHQ2010-0211/SHEHZAD NOORANI

B. A boy washes his face at a UNICEF-supported water source, in a camp for people displaced by the floods in Pakistan in 2010. Millions of people were affected by the floods, and when they returned to their homes they had to deal with high water levels and washed-out roads and bridges.



© UNICEF/NYHQ2010-2736/MARTA RAMONEDA

C. Five-year-old Wonsen Johnson receives a measles vaccination at his school in Liberia. The emergency campaign is led by Liberia's Ministry of Health and supported by UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO), and targets children aged 6 months to 15 years – some 230,000 children.



© UNICEF/NYHQ2011-0180/ADOLPHUS SCOTT

D. This young girl has just received crayons, exercise books, pencils and other school supplies at her first day of classes at a UNICEF tent school in Haiti. These are part of a UNICEF school-in-a box kit, containing teaching and learning materials for 80 students, and were delivered after her original school was destroyed during the 2010 earthquake.



## UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The Child Friendly version of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.  
For the full, official text, see [www.globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/convention](http://www.globalclassroom.unicef.ca/en/convention)

### Article 1

Everyone under 18 has these rights.

### Article 2

All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.

### Article 3

All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

### Article 4

The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.

### Article 5

Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

### Article 6

You have the right to be alive.

### Article 7

You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

### Article 8

You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.

### Article 9

You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

### Article 10

If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.

### Article 11

You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

### Article 12

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

### Article 13

You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

### Article 14

You have the right to choose your own

religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

### Article 15

You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.

### Article 16

You have the right to privacy.

### Article 17

You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

### Article 18

You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

### Article 19

You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

### Article 20

You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.

### Article 21

You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

### Article 22

You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

### Article 23

You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

### Article 24

You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

### Article 25

If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

### Article 26

You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

### Article 27

You have the right to food, clothing,

a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

### Article 28

You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.

### Article 29

Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

### Article 30

You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

### Article 31

You have the right to play and rest.

### Article 32

You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.

### Article 33

You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

### Article 34\*

You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

### Article 35

No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

### Article 36

You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

### Article 37

No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

### Article 38\*

You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

### Article 39

You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

### Article 40

You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.

### Article 41

If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than

*\*There is an Optional Protocol on this article.*