A Measure of Respect

How society should respect children and young people

Children’s Rights Alliance
for England
The Children’s Rights Alliance for England (CRAE) protects the human rights of children by lobbying government and others who hold power, by bringing or supporting test cases and by using national and international human rights mechanisms. We provide free legal information and advice, raise awareness of children’s human rights, and undertake research about children’s access to their rights. We mobilise others, including children and young people, to take action to promote and protect children’s human rights. Each year we publish a review of the state of children’s rights in England.

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This programme is managed by the Directorate-General for Employment, social affairs and equal opportunities of the European Commission. It was established to financially support the implementation of the objectives of the European Union in the employment and social affairs area, as set out in the Social Agenda, and thereby contribute to the achievement of the Lisbon Strategy goals in these fields.

The seven-year Programme targets all stakeholders who can help shape the development of appropriate and effective employment and social legislation and policies, across the EU-27, EFTA-EEA and EU candidate and pre-candidate countries.

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- Monitoring and reporting on the implementation of EU legislation and policies in PROGRESS policy areas;
- Promoting policy transfer, learning and support among Member States on EU objectives and priorities; and
- Relaying the views of the stakeholders and society at large.

For more information see: http://ec.europa.eu/progress

The information contained in this publication does not necessarily reflect the position or opinion of the European Commission.

A Measure of Respect was written by CRAE’s Children and Young People’s Advisory Committee with assistance from Krishna Maroo, Carolyne Willow and Dominic King.


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[We are] also concerned at the general climate of intolerance and negative public attitudes towards children, especially adolescents, which appears to exist in the State party, including in the media, and may be often the underlying cause of further infringements of their rights.

CRAE’s Children and Young People’s Advisory Committee thought about and developed *A Measure of Respect* throughout 2011. Our aim was to try and improve how children and young people are treated.

Over 100 children and young people took part in our national consultation and gave their views on our draft Measure. We used their views and ideas, along with our own, to develop this national measurement. We also looked at other equality measures, including the children’s measurement framework being developed by the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

We hope that people working with children and young people will recognise, adopt and demonstrate respectful behaviour towards children and young people to respect their right to fair treatment and equality.

### What is *A Measure of Respect*?

This is a measurement of how well society respects children and young people.

We hope it can be used to map progress and difficulties in stopping discrimination.

This Measure is unique because children and young people created it.

We decided to develop this Measure after the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child said the UK is intolerant of children and young people. The work was funded by the European Commission’s PROGRESS programme.

There are over 30 children and young people on CRAE’s Children and Young People’s Advisory Committee. We are aged between 7 and 17 years and live in different parts of England.
It is the sense of self-worth and value we have. This is threatened when we are not respected.

Respect is an attitude based on valuing people, their opinions and what they stand for. It’s about being involved, listened to, and seeing that each one of us is valuable.

Respect has an impact on everything.

Equality works across all ages and is key to a better society, where everyone is valued, respected and acknowledged.

Respect is about considering people equal to you, and you equal to them, regardless of their background.

1. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is the UK’s national human rights institution, promoting and protecting equality and the human rights of children, young people and adults. Its report on the children’s measurement framework was published in Summer 2011 and can be downloaded here: http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/publications/our-research/research-reports/research-reports-71-80/#76

2. The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child monitors how well countries are upholding children’s human rights. The UN Committee last reviewed children’s rights in the UK in 2008. The UN Committee’s report (called concluding observations) included an observation about the general climate of intolerance and negative public attitudes towards children, especially adolescents and recommended the UK Government take ‘urgent measures to address the intolerance and inappropriate characterization of children, especially adolescents, within the society, including the media’. The UN Committee’s concluding observations can be downloaded from CRAE’s website: http://www.crae.org.uk/protecting/socr.html
Every child and young person should be treated with the same respect and worth, regardless of his or her age, background, situation or any other difference.

Some children and young people may need extra help to make sure they are respected and treated equally. In some situations, children and young people might need to be treated differently to make sure they are treated the same as everyone else. For example, children and young people who are disabled may need extra help and support in order to get the same respect and chances as everyone else. All children and young people should be bought up and nurtured in a respectful environment to enable their development.

Dignity is a person’s right to be treated like a human being. It is the sense of self-worth and value we have. This is threatened when we are not respected. No one should be allowed to take your dignity away from you.

Discrimination
Discrimination is unfair treatment of a person or group of people because of something about them, like their race, gender, age, sexuality or disability.

Equality
Making sure everyone has the same chances, and is treated fairly by society, no matter what their age, race, wealth, gender, beliefs, religion, sexuality, disability or anything else. Some people might need extra help and support to get the same chances.

Equality works across all ages and is key to a better society, where everyone is valued, respected and acknowledged.

Although the Equality Act 2010 does protect children and young people in some areas it does not legislate against the discrimination of children and young people when that discrimination is simply on the basis of us being young. We think this is really unfair.

Children’s human rights
The basis of our Measure is children’s human rights.

The UK Government signed up to the Convention on the Rights of the Child 20 years ago. It’s an international human rights agreement which states that children and young people should receive extra care and protection, and should be treated with fairness, respect, equality and dignity. It protects everyone under the age of 18.

CRAE’s summary of the Convention is at the back of this document.

What do we mean by respect?
Respect is an attitude based on valuing people, their opinions and what they stand for. It’s about being involved, listened to, and seeing that each one of us is valuable.

Respect can be shown in different ways, from being included in decision-making to body language and facial expressions.

We couldn’t come up with one definition of respect because respect is a combination of lots of different things, including what it means to us all.
What does it feel like when you are treated with respect?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feeling better about yourself</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relieved</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening to people</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Equal and to have equality around people of my own age etc</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Happy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You get to be involved with activities, games and stuff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relaxed and calm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not made to feel bad</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You're accepted by others</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Listening to people's views and not making them feel left out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way people treat you regardless of age, gender, height or ability, race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has to work both ways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The way you should be treated</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being listened to</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You treat the other person/people in the same way</td>
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<tr>
<td>People are nice to you</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Everyone treats you fairly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being cared for</td>
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<tr>
<td>All treated fairly</td>
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</table>

3. CRAE's guide for children and young people on the Equality Act 2010 can be found here: http://equalitymattersforchildren.crae.org.uk/
What does it feel like when you are not treated with respect?

- Down and blue
- Angry
- Horrible

- Upset
- Left out
- Lonely
- Unimportant

- Insulted
- Mad
- A victim

- Cross
- Not headed
- Makes me want to cry
When we started writing and researching *A Measure of Respect*, we decided to look at specific areas of children and young people’s lives. We also wanted to have something more general that would apply to lots of different settings and situations, and would demonstrate respectful behaviour.

We drafted these principles to provide some overall guidance on how children and young people can be respected, with just a little bit of effort.

**The foundation:**
- Knowledge
- Advice
- Justification

**Knowledge** – Knowledge is power, and this should not be any different for children and young people. We should have access to as much information as possible. Knowledge should be used to help us develop ourselves. We should have, or be given, as much relevant information as possible so we can make informed decisions.

**Advice** – Just like everyone else, we need guidance. Sometimes we need extra help in making decisions or in everyday life. Enforcing other people’s views on someone should be a last resort.

**Justification** – Actions need to be justified and to have a reason behind them. Sometimes it is necessary for the majority’s view to be enforced so that society can carry on with minimal suffering.
Each section outlines different ways we can check if children and young people are being respected. We don’t expect things to change overnight; that children are suddenly respected. But we hope this Measure empowers anyone working with children and young people to develop a better, more respectful way of working.

1. In the home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children and young people are being respected</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people are respected by the people looking after them</td>
<td>• Children and young people are involved in decision-making in the home – big and small</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Children and young people feel confident about having their say, and aren’t scared about the reaction they might get</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Parents and carers show they care and give children and young people attention and spend time with them</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Parents and carers know when children and young people are really hurt or upset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children and young people feel safe and protected</td>
<td>• Children and young people live in a violence free home</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Children and young people are able to speak to someone outside of their home if they have a problem and need some extra help. This help is easy to access</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Advice and information is available for parents to help them with parenting challenges or questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children and young people have their right to privacy respected</td>
<td>• Children and young people have their own space and ownership of their belongings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If a decision is taken which goes against the child or young person’s privacy, there is evidence of knowledge, advice and justification (see page 9).</td>
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</table>
## 2. School and education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children and young people are being respected</th>
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</table>
| The school has a culture of mutual respect, dignity and equality for everyone | • Everyone feels valued and treated with respect – from the children and non-teaching staff, to the Governors  
• This is monitored, checked and acted upon following an annual anonymous Respect Survey for all children and young people, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff in the school community  
• This will help to build and shape a more respectful environment. It will also monitor the positive impact of a different way of working. |
| Staff interact with students of all ages in a positive way and do not patronise them | • Staff offer knowledge, advice and justification to young people for their decisions  
• Teachers refrain from shouting and using sarcasm to make children and young people feel small, stupid or embarrassed (or all of these things)  
• Children and young people are able to interact with teachers in a positive and respectful way  
• Children and young people can have private discussions with their teachers and other school / college staff. |
| Children and young people’s views are valued, respected and acted on in the school community | • There is a democratic school council that regularly interacts with senior decision-makers in the school. The school council is connected to everyone else in the school. The views of school council members are listened to and acted on  
• There are other ways besides the school council for students to make and influence decisions about their own education and the running of their school  
• Children and young people are involved in new staff interviews. They are trained and supported to carry out this role  
• Children and young people can express concerns about staff respect towards young people through anonymous commentering or a student-mentoring framework ensuring that there is representation of all the students, working in their best interests. |
| Children and young people’s right to privacy and fair treatment is respected | • Children and young people’s privacy is respected on school / college grounds and is always taken into consideration  
• Children and young people are not searched in school unless it directly affects the well-being of others. Their personal belongings must not be searched unless absolutely justified. Content or belongings are not deleted or destroyed without children and young people’s permission. Only staff who have had training do searches  
• Staff are willing to engage in conversation outside classroom time, in school, to engage in discussion with children and young people as human beings with opinions and views in their own right. |
### 3. Neighbourhood and community

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<tr>
<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children and young people are being respected</th>
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</table>
| The police interact with children and young people in an open and positive way | • The first encounter young people have with the police is a positive one – this could be part of a school liaison officer’s visit, or in a community setting  
• The police offer knowledge, advice and justification to children and young people for their decisions and their actions  
• The police interact with children and young people by speaking with them in schools and the local community – e.g. police liaison officer  
• Residents of all ages are treated with respect by police. Children and young people’s voices are listened to just as much as adults’. |
| Children and young people are not treated differently by shop owners because of their age | • Mosquito devices⁴ are banned  
• There is a move away from ‘Only two school children allowed in at one time’ signs in local shops  
• Security staff do not follow children and young people unless they have real justification. |
| Youth services and community centres have a variety of activities for children and young people to participate in and develop their skills | • A range of accessible facilities and activities are available for all children and young people  
• Children and young people make decisions about their youth services  
• The local authority provides specific funding for children and young people to get involved in the local community. They are encouraged to get involved  
• Children and young people have a safe space where they can associate in numbers, not just in a community centre, but also outside, without being judged  
• Opportunities for children and young people are promoted though newsletters, schools and local newspapers. |
| Public services for people of all ages – like public transport, libraries and leisure centres – treat children and young people with equal respect | • Children and young people are spoken to with respect and are not shouted at, looked down on or treated unequally just because of their age (e.g. stopped from entering or using a service or made to go to the back of a queue)  
• Children and young people are asked their views and ideas for improving the service and they are involved in making things better  
• People who work in public services for people of all ages are trained to respect children and young people (as well as other age groups). |
## 4. Health and well-being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children and young people are being respected</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Children and young people are respected by health and social care staff. They are not discriminated against because of their problems | • Staff are trained and supported to engage and support children and young people effectively  
• Staff are trained and supported to communicate respectfully with children and young people  
• Staff justify and explain their actions and decisions in an understandable way. |
| Children and young people’s views are listened to | • Mechanisms and structures are set up to ensure children and young people are able to participate effectively, such as involvement boards and youth councils  
• Children and young people are listened to and are treated the same as other patients or people using services: they are not discriminated against because of their age  
• Children and young people are involved in presenting ideas and feedback during their treatment / care and are asked to evaluate the process afterwards. They can complain if they are not happy with their treatment or care and they know their complaints will be dealt with fairly and quickly  
• Young people are involved in patient / care feedback forms and structures. This information must be accessible. |
| Children and young people spend as little time as possible in hospital | • Children and young people are treated on the basis of knowledge, advice and justification, just as adults are. The length of their hospital stay is made clear when possible  
• Special services are available for children so they can stay in touch with their friends, family and school when they are in hospital. |
| Children and young people are able to understand what’s going on. People communicate in a language children and young people understand | • People providing services assess whether or not children and young people feel they are provided with enough accessible information and understand what is happening to them, or to relatives, and how to deal with it and the help that is available etc  
• Everything is explained in detail in accessible, jargon-free materials (which disabled children and young people can also use)  
• Children and young people are kept informed about their situation and needs  
• Children and young people have access to emotional support. |

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4 These are electronic devices that emit a high-pitched noise that only younger people can hear. The discomfort (pain in the ears) caused by the devices is used to stop younger people from entering certain buildings or using public spaces.
## 5. Work

<table>
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<tr>
<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children are being respected</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age is not a cause of disrespect or discrimination</td>
<td>• Children and young people are treated equally in the workplace and not put down because of their age</td>
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<td>• Fairer and more competitive pay scales for children and young people doing the same or similar jobs to adults</td>
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<td>• Children and young people should have the chance to get involved in decision-making processes within the workplace.</td>
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6. Governing and decision-making

As there are no children in Government, it is really important that children and young people’s views are listened to and taken seriously.

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<th>The Measure</th>
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| The Government listens to, monitors and acts on children and young people’s views around respect | • The Government commissions an independent research body and young people to create an annual national survey of children and young people in England. This survey will monitor ways in which children and young people feel they are being respected, collect good examples of respectful behaviour, and monitor the impact of respect on young people and local communities  
  • This research is made public and must be acted on. |
| Children and young people feel respected and are listened to by local government and they know how to get involved in decision-making | • Participation structures are funded, supported and available for children and young people to get involved in decision-making  
  • These structures have a clear link to and from decision-makers  
  • Local decision-makers hold special events for children and young people to engage them in decision-making and show how they can make change happen. This will empower young people to become active citizens, now and when they get older. |
| Children and young people feel respected and are listened to by national government and they know how to get involved in decision-making | • Equality law fully protects children and young people from discrimination  
  • Parliament bans age discrimination against under-18s  
  • Government works with schools and community groups across England on young people’s views. It provides accessible and interesting materials and activities to involve children and young people in consultations and decision-making. |
| Opportunities are available to become involved in authentic decision-making and children and young people see how they have influenced decisions | • Local councils for children  
  • Youth police boards set up to create a stronger link and better understanding between the police and young people  
  • All consultation processes include young people  
  • Government keeps track and publicises the changes that have resulted from children and young people’s views and ideas. |
7. The media

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<th>The Measure</th>
<th>Proof that children and young people are being respected</th>
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| There is proportionate representation of children and young people in the media | • Media organisations and journalists create better links between children’s organisations and youth media  
• Children and young people’s quotes and opinions feature in articles about young people  
• When children and young people engage in media activity (e.g. a newspaper interview or a reality television show) they are supported properly, and take part based on informed consent  
• Young people are able to complain to an independent body if they are unhappy with, or feel disrespected by, the media. These complaints are taken seriously. |
| Children and young people are empowered to create their own media to combat negative images of young people in the media | • Funding is available for young people to create their own content, such as news stories, videos and other creative media  
• Young people’s media outlets become a valuable and reliable new source of information. |
| More positive images around equality and children and young people feature in mainstream media | • Specialist youth organisations - such as groups for black and minority ethnic children or disabled children - and the media have better links with each other  
• More images of children and young people facing inequality feature on TV. This is monitored by an independent youth organisation  
• A young people’s organisation or sub-group is set up to monitor the representation of young people in the media. |
Please let us know how you have used *A Measure of Respect*, and what has changed as a result.

You can contact us at:

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or equality@crae.org.uk

Annex 1
CRAE summary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 1
This Convention applies to everyone aged 17 or under.

Article 2
All the rights in this Convention apply to all children and young people without any discrimination.

Article 3
Adults should always try to do what is best for children and young people. Governments must do everything to make sure children and young people are safe and well looked after.

Article 4
Governments must do all they can to make sure children and young people’s human rights are upheld.

Article 5
Parents can give children and young people advice and help about children’s rights. The more a young person knows and understands, the less advice and help a parent needs to give.

Article 6
Every child and young person has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure every child and young person has the best possible life.

Article 7
Children and young people have the right to a name and a nationality. Children and young people have the right to be cared for by both parents.

Article 8
Governments should do everything possible to protect the right of every child and young person to a name and nationality and to family life.

Article 9
If a court is thinking about who a child or young person should live with, everyone affected by the decision should get the chance to be heard – including the child. Every child and young person has the right to keep in regular contact with both parents, so long as this is the best thing for the child or young person.

Article 10
If a child or a parent wants to live in another country, the decision about this should be made quickly and positively.

A child or young person whose parents live in another country has the right to keep in touch with them.

Article 11
Governments must work together to stop children and young people being taken illegally to another country.

Article 12

• Every child and young person has the right to express his or her views freely – about everything that affects him or her
• The child’s or young person’s views must be given due weight in line with his or her age and maturity
• The child or young person has the right to be heard in all decision-making processes, including in court hearings
• The child or young person can speak for him or herself, or someone else can speak for him or her.

Article 13
Every child and young person has the right to freedom of expression, including the right to all kinds of information and ideas (unless there are legal restrictions).

Article 14
Every child and young person has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion (unless there are legal restrictions). Governments must respect the right of parents and guardians to give advice to the child and young person about this right. The more a child or young person knows and understands, the less advice parents need to give.
Article 15
Every child and young person has the right to meet people and to gather in public (unless there are legal restrictions).

Article 16
The law must protect every child and young person’s right to privacy.

Article 17
Governments must make sure children and young people have access to lots of different information. Governments must encourage the media to give information to children and young people and protect them from harmful information and materials.

Article 18
Governments must do all they can to help parents look after children well. Parents are the most important people in children and young people’s lives. Parents must always do what is best for children and young people.

Article 19
Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment. Help must be available for children and young people who are hurt by violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment.

Article 20
Children who are separated from their parents have the right to special protection and help.

Article 21
The child’s best interests must be the top priority in adoption. Governments can support adoption between countries. Children and young people who are adopted by people in another country must have the same protection as children adopted by people in their own country.

Article 22
Governments must give protection and humanitarian help to children and young people who are refugees, or who are trying to be accepted as refugees.

Article 23
Every disabled child and young person has the right to a full life and to active participation in the community.*

Article 24
Every child and young person has the right to the best possible health and health services.

Article 25
Children and young people who have been placed away from home by the authorities have the right to have their care reviewed regularly.

Article 26
Governments must support every child and young person’s right to benefit from social security, including social insurance. Child benefit is for every child, comes from taxes, and is part of social security. Family benefits, including allowances for children, come from weekly social insurance contributions made by employers and employees.

Article 27
Children and young people have the right to a standard of living that is adequate for them to develop fully (this includes physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development).

Parents have the main responsibility for making sure children and young people get this right. Governments must support parents. The amount of help the Government gives depends on how rich the country is.

Article 28
- Every child has the right to free primary education
- Governments must encourage secondary education, making it available and accessible to every child and young person
- Access to higher education must be based on the ability to benefit from it
- Governments must make sure children and young people get information about education
- Governments must encourage regular school attendance
- Governments must make sure that school discipline protects the dignity of children and young people, and is in line with their rights in this Convention – so no hitting or humiliation.

Article 29
Governments agree that the aim of education is to help the fullest possible growth of the child or young person’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities.

Education must help children and young people:
- Respect human rights
- Respect their parents
- Respect their and others’ culture, language and values
- Have self-respect
- Respect the environment.

Article 30
Children and young people from minority communities must not be stopped from enjoying their own culture, religion and language.

Article 31
Every child and young person has the right to rest, play and leisure. Governments must promote children and young people’s involvement in the arts.

Article 32
- Every young person has the right to be protected from harmful work and economic exploitation
- Governments must do everything to protect this right
- Governments must set a minimum age at which young people can work, and they must introduce rules to protect young people in work.

Article 33
Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from illegal drugs.

Article 34
Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from sexual exploitation (including prostitution) and sexual abuse.*

Article 35
Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from being taken away, sold or trafficked.*
Article 36
Governments must protect children and young people from all other exploitation.

Article 37
• Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This is an absolute right, with no excuses for any breach of it
• Children and young people must not be given a death sentence or life imprisonment without the possibility of release
• Children and young people who are locked up should be able to challenge this quickly in court
• Children and young people must only be arrested or locked up as a last resort and for the shortest possible time
• Every child or young person who is locked up must be treated with respect
• Every child or young person who is locked up must be separated from adults, unless it is better for him or her to be with adults
• Every child or young person who is locked up has the right to keep in contact with his or her family, through letters and visits.

Article 38
• Governments agree to abide by international human rights law in relation to wars
• Governments must do everything to stop children under 15 from being involved directly in a war
• Governments must do everything to protect and care for children who are affected by war.

Article 39
Governments must give good support to children and young people who have been hurt, abused or exploited.
This support must promote children and young people’s health, self-respect and dignity.

Article 40
• Every child or young person accused, or convicted, of committing a crime must be treated with respect and in a way that helps him or her to respect the human rights of others
• The child’s age and the importance of helping him or her have a positive role in society must always be taken into account
• Every child or young person must be treated as innocent until found guilty
• Every child or young person should be told as soon as possible why they have been arrested and charged with a crime
• Every child or young person accused of a crime must be given immediate access to a lawyer
• No child or young person can be forced to give evidence in a court
• Every child and young person has the right to an interpreter if they do not understand the country’s main language
• The child and young person’s right to privacy must be fully respected at all times
• Governments must set up a separate criminal justice system for children and young people
• Governments should promote a minimum age of criminal responsibility
• Wherever possible, children and young people who infringe the law should not have to go to court
• Courts should always try to avoid sending children and young people to institutions
• There must be many ways to assist children and young people who infringe the law, including care, guidance and counselling.

Article 42
Governments must make sure everyone gets information about this Convention.

Articles 41 and 43 to 54 say how adults and governments must work together to promote and protect all the rights in this Convention.

*A Measure of Respect was developed and written by CRAE’s Children and Young People’s Advisory Committee, whose members include:

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A Measure of Respect - www.crae.org.uk
‘...the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world’

FROM PREAMBLE TO THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS