

What are children's rights?



I KNOW...



**This booklet has been produced to explain children's rights
and how they could apply to the Namibian situation.**

Project Coordinator and Editor: Mark Nonkes

Illustrations: Christine Shikuma

Designer: Johannes Berndalen

Special thanks: Juditha Matjila and Natasha Bissessur

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PO Box 604, Windhoek, Namibia

Tel: +264-61-22-3356

Fax: +264-61-23-4953

Web: www.lac.org.na

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“Rights” are things every child should have or be able to do. All children have the same rights. These rights are listed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Almost every country, including Namibia, has agreed to these rights. All the rights are connected to each other, and all are important.

The following is a simplified version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, with accompanying cartoons which may apply to the Namibian situation. Please take time to learn your rights, they are there to protect you and help you grow.



To the cartoons

Article 1: Everyone under 18 has these rights.

Article 2: All children have 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 organizations concerned with children should work towards what is best for a child.

Article 4: The government has a responsibility to make sure children's rights are protected.



Article 2: All children have 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 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 life. Governments should ensure that children survive and develop in a healthy way.

Article 7: All children have the right to a name and this should be officially recognized by governments. All children have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

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

Article 9: Children have the right to live with their parent(s) unless it is for their own good. Children have the right to live with a family who cares for them.



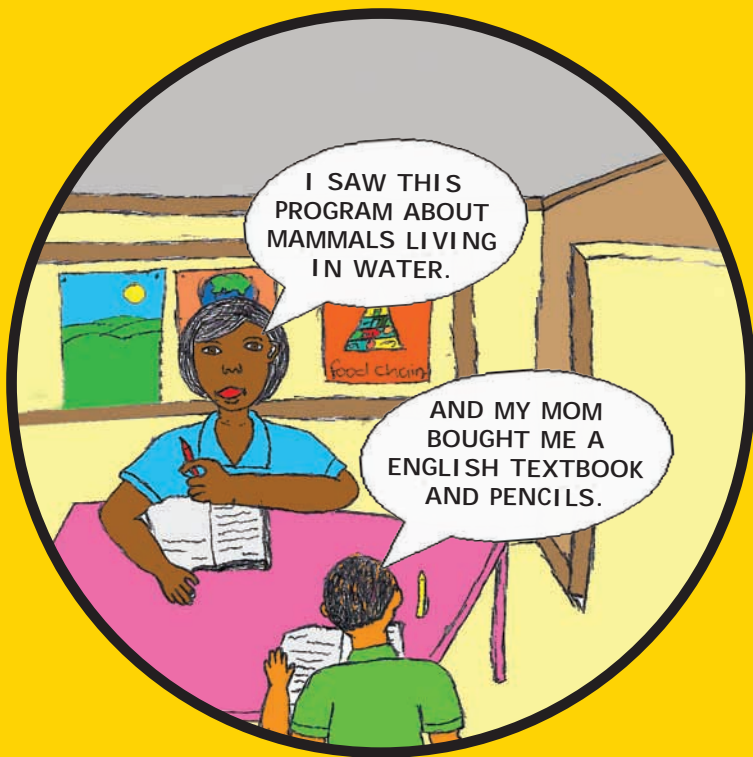
Article 12: Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them and to have their opinions taken into account.

Article 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 from 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 by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.



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

Article 14: Children have the right to choose their own religion and beliefs, 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 choose their friends and join or set up a group, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 16: Children have a right to privacy.

Article 17: Children have the right to reliable information from the media. 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 provide services to support them, especially if both parents do not work.

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Article 19: Governments should make sure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect.

Article 20: Children who cannot be looked after by their own families 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.



Article 19: Governments should make sure that children are properly cared for and protected from violence, abuse and neglect.

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 to the greatest extent possible.

Article 24: Children have the right to good quality health care, to clean water, to nutritious food and to a clean environment, so 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 by their parents, should have their situation reviewed regularly.



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

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 this.

Article 28: Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

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



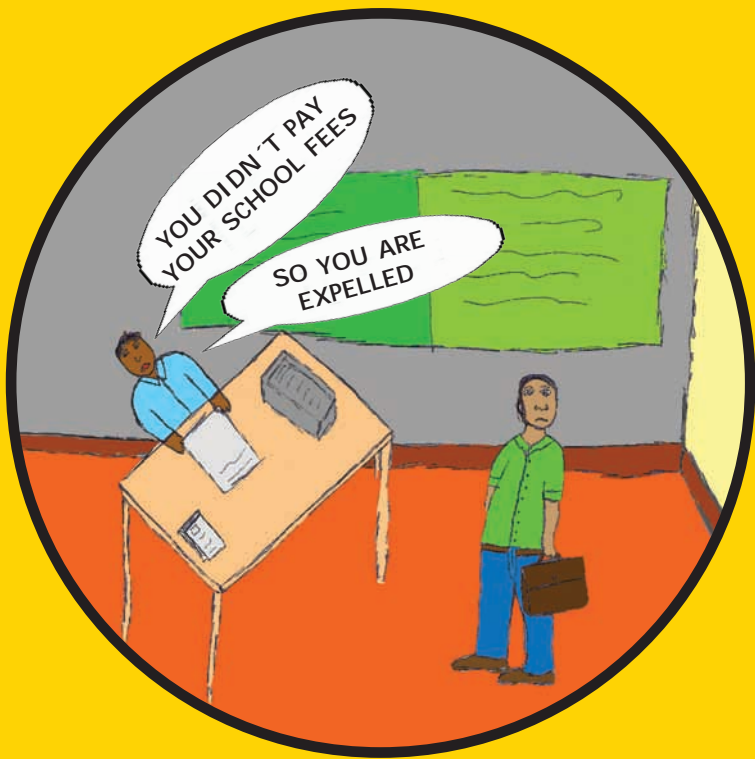
Article 24: Children have the right to good quality health care, to clean water, to nutritious food and to a clean environment, so they will stay healthy. Rich countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

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.

Article 32: The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or their education.

Article 33: The Government should provide ways of protecting children from dangerous drugs.



Article 28: Children have a right to an education. Discipline in schools should respect children's human dignity. Primary education should be free. Wealthy countries should help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 34: The Government should protect children from sexual abuse.

Article 35: The Government should make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold.

Article 36: Children should be protected from any activities that could harm their development.

Article 37: 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 38: Governments should not allow children under 15 to join the army. Children in war zones should receive special protection.



Article 31: All children have a right to relax and play, and to join in a wide range of activities.

Article 39: Children who have been neglected or abused should receive help to restore their self-respect.

Article 40: 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.

Article 41: If the laws of a particular country protect children better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws should stay.

Article 42: The Government should make the Convention known to all parents and children.

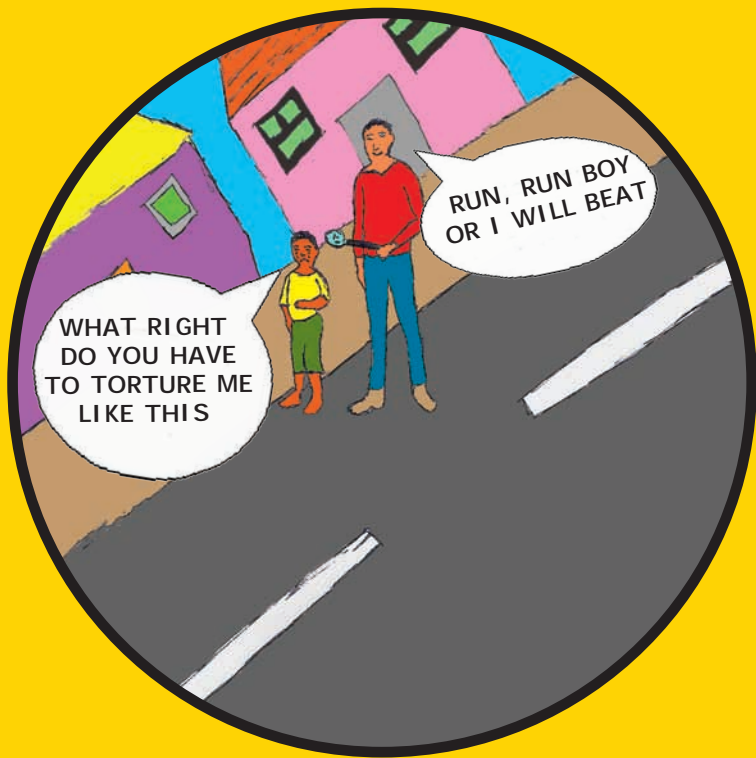


Article 32: The Government should protect children from work that is dangerous, or that might harm their health or their education.



A MAN TOLD MY
MOTHER THAT I WAS
COMING TO SCHOOL
IN THE CITY BUT IT
WAS NOT TRUE, HE
SOLD ME TO A LADY
AND NOW IM TAKING
CARE OF HER BABY.

Article 35: The Government should make sure that children are not kidnapped or sold.



Article 37: 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.



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The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

The CRC 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.

A Convention is an agreement between countries to obey the same law.

When the government of a country ratifies a convention, that means it agrees to obey the law written down in that convention.

Namibia ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 28th September 1990.

That means the Namibian government now has to make sure that every child has all the rights in the Convention.

About UNICEF:

UNICEF works with governments and partners throughout the world to improve children's lives and to strengthen communities.

UNICEF is on the ground in over 150 countries and territories to help children survive and thrive, from early childhood through adolescence.

As the world's largest provider of vaccines for developing countries, UNICEF supports child health and nutrition, good water and sanitation, quality basic education for all boys and girls, and the protection of children from violence, exploitation, and AIDS.

UNICEF is funded entirely by the voluntary contributions of individuals, businesses, foundations and governments.

About the Legal Assistance Centre

Since 1988, the Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) has been at the forefront of the fight for human rights in Namibia.

With human rights as a focus, the organization engages in litigation, education, law reform, research, advocacy, legal advice and representation in communities across the nation.

Ultimately, the aim of the LAC is to transform Namibia to a place where every individual, including children, knows their rights and where these rights are respected by every member of society.

Illustrator Christine Shikuma, who is 15 years old, was the winner of a contest among Namibian youth to illustrate this booklet.

Christine lives in Katutura, attends Augustineum Secondary School and is a member of Physically Active Youth (PAY), an after school sports and tutoring program.





Legal Assistance Centre
4 Korner Street, PO Box 604
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: +264-61-223356
Fax: +264-61-234953
Web: www.lac.org.na



UNICEF Namibia
UN Building, 1st Floor
38-44 Stein Street
Windhoek, Namibia
Tel: 061- 2046111
Fax: 061- 2046206
Web: www.unicef.org



