

Improving children's rights

Children's Rights: Consultation on Incorporating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into our domestic law in Scotland

What are ministers consulting on?

This consultation seeks views on the best way of incorporating the UNCRC within the context of Scots law, public services and the powers of the Scottish Parliament. The consultation paper is available on the Scottish Government [website](#).

Why?

Delivering the rights of children and young people as enshrined in the UNCRC is fundamental to making children's rights real and making Scotland the best place in the world to grow up.

We want a Scotland where policy, law and decision making takes account of children's rights - where all children have a voice and are empowered not just to know and understand their rights, but also to assert and defend those rights and the rights of others.

What will incorporation of UNCRC into Scots law achieve?

We believe the value of incorporation to children, young people and families in Scotland is that children's rights will be built into policy, law and practice so all children can benefit from and exercise these rights in their daily lives.

Incorporating the UNCRC in Scotland will also enable people to defend their rights in the Scottish courts.

Who will this apply to?

The consultation seeks views on the best way of incorporating the UNCRC within the context of Scots law, public services and the powers of the Scottish Parliament. The detail of who this will apply to will be set out within future legislation to be introduced to the Scottish Parliament.

How will ministers consult?

Full details of the consultation and supporting events will be available on the Scottish Government's [consultation hub](#).

What are the timescales?

The consultation runs from 22 May to 28 August 2019. Ministers will legislate in this parliamentary session to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law.

...how you can help, please see next page...

How can you help?

We welcome your help with letting people know about this consultation, and encouraging responses to it. We have set out below some ways in which you could assist with this.

Digital: we have [explainer](#) and [launch](#) videos which you can share by embedding the tweets on your website, blogs and channels. Our news release contains background and ministerial quotes. <https://www.gov.scot/news/improving-childrens-rights/>

Please use #UNCRC, re-tweet @GIRFEC's consultation posts and post your own. Suggestions below.

Events: we are happy to discuss how the consultation could be included within any events you have planned before 28 August 2019.

Public relations: stories about real people can help explain why incorporating the UNCRC matters. If you have examples of how realising children's rights has helped improve lives we'd be happy to explore how this could be developed into a case study.

Example tweets.

<p>These can be used any time before 28 August:</p>	<p>1. The Scottish Government is committed to making Scotland the best place to grow up and learn. It wants to hear views on incorporating the #UNCRC into Scots law. Have your say before 28 August http://bit.ly/UNCRCconsult</p> <p>2. Child rights apply to everyone under the age of 18, no matter who you are. Have your say on how #UNCRC incorporation can strengthen children's rights. Have your say before 28 August http://bit.ly/UNCRCconsult</p> <p>3. Children have the right to be healthy as possible and protected from being hurt or badly treated. Have your say on how #UNCRC incorporation can strengthen children's rights http://bit.ly/UNCRCconsult</p>
<p>21 August</p>	<p>One week left to have your say on how Scotland's policy, law and decision making can take account of children's rights - #UNCRC incorporation. Have your say before 28 August http://bit.ly/UNCRCconsult</p>

For more details please contact: Louise McCue
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What are children's rights?

Children's rights are human rights. They apply to everyone under the age of 18. Children's rights are set out within the UNCRC. These include the right to:

- life, survival and development
- protection from violence, abuse or neglect
- an education that enables children to fulfil their potential
- be raised by, or have a relationship with, their parents
- express their opinions and be listened to.

What is UNCRC?

The UNCRC is one of the core United Nations (UN) human rights treaties. It is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history and the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced. It sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities.

Covering all aspects of a child's life, it makes clear that every child has rights, irrespective of their status and that we as the government must work together with adults to make sure all children can enjoy them.

UNCRC is underpinned by four general principles:

- children should not be discriminated against
- the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration;
- children have the right to life, survival and development;
- children's views should be given due weight.

2019 marks the 30th Anniversary of the UNCRC.

What other action is the Scottish Government taking?

The Scottish Government's vision is a Scotland where children are recognised as citizens in their own right and where their human rights are embedded in all aspects of society; a Scotland where policy, law and decision making takes account of children's rights and where all children have a voice and are empowered to be human rights defenders.

We were the first country to dedicate an entire year to young people (2018 Year of Young People).

There is a duty on Scottish Ministers to consider what steps could be taken to further the UNCRC in Scotland, and to promote public awareness and understanding of children's rights.

Progress is detailed within [Progressing the human rights of children in Scotland: 2018 report](#).

Minister's next steps are set out within [Progressing the Human Rights of Children in Scotland: an Action Plan 2018-2021](#).

A [booklet](#) for children and young people, a [quick reference guide](#) to children's rights legislation and [further details](#) are available on the Scottish Government website.