

# 18. My Universe of Rights

Be a human rights astronaut!



Themes	General human rights
Level of complexity	Level 3
Age	8 – 13 years
Duration	2 x 60-minute sessions
Group size	Up to 24 children
Overview	Children make 'outerspace' shapes labelled with the things they need to be healthy and happy and grow up well. These are then clustered into 'galaxies' representing different children's rights, thereby linking needs to rights.
Type of activity	Artistic activity
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to become acquainted with the CRC</li> <li>• to relate human needs to human rights</li> <li>• to reflect on individual needs and compare them with other's</li> </ul>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Copy and cut out 'outer space' shapes, approximately 6 shapes per child</li> <li>• Cut out approximately 30 large circles of light blue paper, which will become the 'galaxies' of rights, and about 10 large comet shapes, which will be used for general rights that cover the whole CRC.</li> <li>• Copy the child-friendly CRC; cut out each article as a strip.</li> <li>• Stick or hang the circles, 'the galaxies', on the walls around the room.</li> <li>• Optional: make copies of work sheet for each pair of children.</li> </ul>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheets of light blue paper</li> <li>• Construction paper in many colours</li> <li>• Colouring materials</li> <li>• Scissors, sticky tape, glue and other handicraft materials</li> <li>• Optional: work sheet</li> </ul>

## Instructions

### Session 1:

1. Divide the children into pairs and ask them to make a list together of conditions they need a) to be healthy b) to be happy and c) to grow up to be capable adults. Encourage them to have at least four items in each category.
  - a. Optional: Give children a work sheet such as the one below.
2. Ask each pair to join up with another pair, and compare their lists, eliminating duplications and adding any new conditions they may think of.
3. Distribute different shapes and colouring materials to each child. Ask the children to write their names and one condition from their list on each shape, and then to colour or decorate the shapes. The partners should each write different conditions from their combined lists.
4. Collect the shapes by topic, i.e. all the conditions for health, for happiness, and for development. Then, divide the children into three groups and give each a category to separate into clusters of similar or identical conditions (e.g. shapes related to leisure, to health care, to education). Younger children may need help to identify the categories.
5. Explain that these clusters represent different categories of human rights and that in the next session they will transform them into galaxies in the universe of rights.



## Session 2:

1. Remind the children of the clusters of rights they created in Session 1. Divide the children into small groups and give each group some blue circles and rights clusters. Ask the children to glue each cluster to a blue circle, leaving an open place in the centre of each. Mount the circles on the wall or spread them on the floor so that all the children can see them.
2. Introduce the CRC, explaining that it makes up the universe of rights. Their job is to identify the different galaxies that make up this universe. As you read out a right, ask the children to find the galaxy it belongs to and to glue the strip containing the article on it so that that right becomes the centre of each galaxy. Sometimes a galaxy may relate to more than one human right.
3. Point out that some rights (e.g. Article 1, Definition of a child; Article 3, The child's best interest; Article 4, Enjoying the rights in the Convention) run through the whole universe of rights. Ask children to write these articles on comet shapes and to hang them among the galaxies.
4. Make a wall display of these rights galaxies or hang them together from the ceiling.

## Debriefing and evaluation

1. Debrief the activity by asking questions such as these:
  - a. What did you like about this activity?
  - b. What do you think about the final result?
  - c. Is there something you would like to change?
  - d. What was the hardest part in this activity?
  - e. Did the conditions that you thought were important differ from those of others?
2. Relate the activity to human rights by asking questions such as these:
  - a. Which one is the biggest galaxy? Does this mean that this is the most important condition for most of us?
  - b. Do you think that these universes are the same for all the children in the world? Why or why not?
  - c. What do your rights have to do with your needs? Do you have a right to the things you need to be healthy and happy and develop well?
  - d. Do you have a right to everything you think you need to be happy?
  - e. What can you do to ensure that the rights of every child are respected in your environment (e.g. group of friends, class, school, organisation, club)?

## Suggestions for follow-up

The activities 'RABBIT'S RIGHTS', p. 141 and 'SAILING TO A NEW LAND', p. 152, also make a link between human needs and human rights, and would combine very well with this activity.

## Ideas for action

- Dress everyone up as astronauts and visit different institutions in your community that symbolize the rights identified by the children. You could do this for each galaxy the children have created.
- Invite another class or group of children to view the wall exhibition; ask the children to explain what it means.

## Tips for the facilitator

- Children like to create a new 'world'. Stimulate their imaginations by showing them images of a galaxy. Use this starting point to make links to existing rights.



- Use 'outer space' shapes (e.g. sun, moon, planets, satellites, spaceships, stars, asteroids) to create the 'galaxy'. Prepare shapes beforehand or make patterns for the children to trace and cut out. The children can also invent these shapes.
- Some of the general articles likely to be identified as 'comets' are these: Articles 1-3, 6-8, 12.
- Children are unlikely to think of some rights (e.g. Article 22, Refugees; Article 35 on Trafficking; Article 39, Rehabilitation of child victims). With younger children you might leave these, as well as Articles 41-54. With older children you might ask them if they are general to the whole treaty and thus 'comets', or if they are just less familiar rights, in which case they should have their own 'galaxy'.
- The children may include some conditions that are not immediately linked to rights. If some represent things they think would make them happy (e.g. toys, vacation trips, special foods), discuss whether these things are necessary to their health and happiness, helping them to distinguish wants from needs.

### Variation

- Extend the activity by inviting the children to make spaceships and planets using recycled materials. Hang these three-dimensional objects from the ceiling as part of the galaxy exhibition.

### Adaptations

- For a large group: more facilitators are needed for involving all the children and clustering all the children's shapes. Alternatively, you could use fewer shapes.
- For younger children; to facilitate clustering the different papers, copy a simplified version of the child-friendly CRC, cut out the separate articles and attach them to a wall. The children can then place their shapes on the appropriate 'rights galaxy'.
- For older children: Ask them to do the clustering, grouping rights that seem similar. Then give them copies of the child-friendly CRC and ask them to match their clusters to specific articles. When they have completed this process, they can then paste their galaxies and the CRC article together on the blue circles.

## HANDOUT: OPTIONAL WORKSHEET

THINGS I NEED ...		
TO BE HEALTHY	TO BE HAPPY	TO BECOME A CAPABLE ADULT

