

24. Rabbit's Rights

We have a right to be happy, safe and healthy!

Themes	General human rights
Level of complexity	Level 1
Age	8 – 10 years
Duration	30 minutes
Group size	5 – 20 children
Type of activity	Imagining, brainstorming, discussion
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To introduce the CRC • To show children that they are instinctively aware of children's rights • To connect human needs with human rights
Overview	Children imagine the care a pet rabbit needs and extend that to the needs of children and their right to survive and develop
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a chart, or copies of the CRC.
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chart paper and markers • Chart, or a copy of the CRC



Instructions

1. Ask the children to imagine that they have a pet rabbit to care for, and to give a name to it. They need to think about all the things it needs to be happy, safe and healthy. Ask, "What are all the things the rabbit will need?" They may suggest things such as a hutch, straw, food, water, exercise, attention, love or perhaps another rabbit for company. Write 'RABBIT' (or the given name) at the top of the left-hand column on a chart such as the one below, and record the children's responses.
2. Then ask, "Who is responsible for ensuring that the rabbit gets all the things that it needs?" Note down the children's responses, which may be that they or whoever owns the rabbit is responsible.
3. Confirm the things the rabbit needs to survive and develop, such as food, water, and a hutch. Then ask questions such as these:
 - a. If the rabbit really needs these things to survive, then should the rabbit have a right to them?
 - b. Who is responsible for ensuring that the rabbit's rights to these things are met?
4. Then write 'CHILDREN' at the top of the right-hand column and ask the group to brainstorm: "What are the things that children need to develop and have for a happy, safe and healthy life?" List the children's responses, helping to elicit such things as home, food, water, family, friends, toys, education, love and attention.
5. Ask, "Who is responsible for ensuring that children get all the things they need to be happy, safe and healthy?" Encourage answers such as adults, parents, family, and caregivers.
6. Ask questions such as these to expand the focus of children's rights, adding additional needs to the chart:
 - a. What do children need to be protected, to survive, to develop and to participate?
 - b. If children need these things, then should children have a right to them?
 - c. Who is responsible for ensuring that children have these rights?
7. Ask the group if they have ever heard of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Give them copies of the child-friendly version or use a poster version. Explain that this document states the things to which every child in the world has a right.

Source: *DIY guide to improving your community – getting children and young people involved*, Save the Children across Scotland, 2005



Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Invite the children to compare their list on the chart with those in the CRC. Point out that they have created a list of children’s rights. Ask questions such as these:
 - a. What needs did you name that are also in the CRC? Mark these on the chart with a star.
 - b. Why do you think you were able to think of so many of the rights by yourself?
2. Point out that the group knew from the beginning what children needed to develop and grow, without adults having to tell them. They are experts on their own lives! Explain that the CRC is there to support children’s rights, to protect them, to provide for them and to ensure that they can participate in the world around them.

Suggestions for follow-up

- This is an excellent introduction to children’s rights, and it makes a strong connection between needs and rights. It leads directly to other activities that explore children’s rights further, such as ‘MY UNIVERSE OF RIGHTS’, p. 122 and ‘RIGHTS MOBILE’, p. 148.

Tips for the facilitator

- Because this activity requires no reading skills, it can be run with very young children. However, they only need to have the idea of ‘rights’ defined, in simple terms. The CRC can be introduced later.
- You could choose to replace ‘rabbit’ with any other household pet.
- Variations: If appropriate to the group, you might conclude by reading the child-friendly CRC aloud, with each child reading a different article.
- Adaptation for Older Children: When comparing the children’s list and the CRC, invite discussion of what they omitted, asking questions such as these:
 - Are there other needs and rights in the CRC that were not on your list?
 - Why do you think they are in the CRC?
 - Why do you think you might have thought of these needs and rights?

Sample Chart

RABBIT	CHILDREN

