

## 3. A Human Rights Calendar

Every day of the year is a human rights day!



Themes	General human rights
Level of complexity	Level 2
Age	8-13 years
Duration	120 minutes to create the calendar; additional sessions each month
Group size	2-24 children
Type of activity	Drawing, painting, cutting, presenting information graphically
Overview	Making a group calendar to mark important human right dates
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To raise general awareness of the many facets of human rights</li> <li>• To raise awareness of divisions of time (e.g. months, weeks, days of the week) and the time of special occasions</li> <li>• To enhance planning skills</li> <li>• To develop imagination about creating celebrations</li> </ul>
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare one calendar page for each month with days of the week written in columns.</li> <li>• Prepare and copy a list of Special Days to Remember for each group.</li> <li>• A paper square marked 'BIRTHDAY!' for each child and adult member of the group.</li> </ul>
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 sheets of A4 paper, if possible laminated in plastic or mounted on cardboard</li> <li>• Copies of a handout of special days to remember</li> <li>• Pens, markers or coloured pencils for each group</li> <li>• Sticky tape, glue or Velcro</li> <li>• A paper square marked 'BIRTHDAY!' for each child and facilitator</li> <li>• Optional: additional art supplies, a small calendar, a child-friendly copy of CRC (see Handout)</li> </ul>

### Instructions

1. Explain to the children that they are going to make a calendar that will help them know when special days are coming up, especially those that relate to human rights.
2. Discuss with the children what human rights are and explain (if they don't know already) that there are also children's rights. Ask the children for examples of children's rights and give examples of your own if necessary.
3. Ask the children if they know of any special days that can be linked to children's or human rights. Ask for other holidays and ask them to relate them to children's or human rights (e.g. religious holidays can be linked to Freedom of Thought, Conscience and Belief; national holidays to right to nationality; cultural holidays to right to culture). List all these. Motivate the children to be creative and think of some days that can be linked to human rights. Encourage them to guess. Then distribute the list of 'special days to remember'. Add other holidays mentioned in the discussion. Discuss how these holidays could be celebrated to show their importance to human rights.

Divide the children into four groups and assign each group three months to work on. Give each group three calendar sheets, colouring materials, coloured paper and other supplies needed to complete their calendars.

4. Explain the instructions:
  - a. First put in the dates of each month.
  - b. Then write in the names of important holidays that come in that month and decorate the

**Source:** Adapted from *COMPASS: A Manual on Human rights education with Young People* (Council of Europe, 2002), p. 263.



square(s) to make the holiday stand out. The decoration should be linked to the theme of the holiday and/or the human right(s) concerned. When a holiday lasts for more than one day, mark every day of that holiday. Include school holidays.

- c. Then make a cover that reads 'HOLIDAY' for these special days so that uncovering them can be a surprise; attach this cover with Velcro or sticky tape.
5. When the pages are complete, put them on the wall or on the floor so everyone can see them. Explain that some very important holidays have been left out.
6. Give every child one square that says 'BIRTHDAY!' Ask each child to go to the calendar page for his or her birthday, write '\_\_\_\_\_'s Birthday' on the correct day of the calendar and cover it with the square marked 'BIRTHDAY!' (hinged with sticky tape so it can be lifted and removed). When this task is completed, ask why birthdays are related to human rights and explain that everyone has a human right to life and to a name.

### Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
  - a. Did you enjoy this activity?
  - b. What did you learn about the calendar? About human rights?
  - c. Which of these special days do you look forward to? Why?
2. Point out that although we celebrate these special days, we enjoy human rights every day. Ask questions such as these:
  - a. What are some human rights you enjoy every day? What human right(s) are you enjoying this minute?
  - b. Does every child have these rights? Does every child have the opportunity to enjoy them?
  - c. What can we do to make sure that every child's rights are protected? Whose job is this?
3. At the beginning of every month, turn to the new calendar page.
  - a. Remove the covers to reveal the events coming up.
  - b. Explain the meaning of the holiday, drawing a connection to human rights.
  - c. Plan together how to celebrate each one.

### Suggestions for follow-up

During the week of a special human rights day, choose an activity from COMPASITO that addresses issues related to a particular holiday. Use the thematic chart on p. 58 to help with this selection.

### Ideas for action

- Ask the children to plan how to celebrate special days, including birthdays.
- The children may want to make a celebration of some holidays, such as Human Rights Day or Children's Rights Day in the whole community.

### Tips for the facilitator

- Do not reproduce the whole list of special days but select days of relevance to your group, even if the children are not yet familiar with that holiday. The days marked with a star have particular importance to children and/or human rights.
- Move around among the groups while they work on the calendar to make sure the children understand the meaning of each holiday they are working on.



- If you include national or local cultural and religious holidays, be sure to include all those celebrated by the families and communities of children in the group. When in doubt, ask the children to bring a list from home.
- To be sure that each child's birthday is celebrated equally, develop a group ritual with the same privileges, recognition or treats for every birthday child. Depending on the local culture, you may want to use a child's name day rather than their birthday.
- Look for ways to make the calendar lively and decorative. Encourage use of appropriate symbols for each holiday and names in other languages where appropriate.
- Adaptations:
  - For younger children:
    - Let them copy days of the month from a calendar. Call attention to the fact that different months have 28/29, 30 or 31 days and for that reason months don't always start on the same weekday.
    - Give them a calendar with the days added and ask them to add only the special days.
  - For older children: give them copies of the child-friendly version of the CRC and/or UDHR and let them try to connect the holidays on their pages with specific articles of the document..

## HANDOUT: SUGGESTED DAYS TO REMEMBER

January 1	World Peace Day
March 8	International Women's Day
March 21	World Forest Day
March 22	World Water Day
April 7	World Health Day
April 22	Earth Day
May 1	International Workers Day
May 8	World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day
May 9	Europe Day
May 15	International Day of Families
June 1	World Children's Day*
June 5	World Environment Day
June 21	World Peace and Prayer Day
August 7	Education Day
September 8	International Literacy Day
October 1	International Music Day
October 5	World Teachers' Day
October 16	World Food Day
October 25	United Nations Day
November 9	Day against Racism
November 16	International Day for Tolerance
November 20	Universal Children's Day
December 3	International Day of Disabled Persons
December 10	Human Rights Day*

\*Children are celebrated on both June 1, International Children's Day, and November 20, Universal Children's Day, the day observed by the UN and UNESCO. In addition many countries observe their own Children's Day.



HANDOUT: CALENDAR SHEET

Sunday					
Saturday					
Friday					
Thursday					
Wednesday					
Tuesday					
Monday					

