

National Child Day

Play it

equitas
Centre international d'éducation aux droits humains
International Centre for Human Rights Education

Fair!

Suggested Date:	Around November 20 or on a special day in your organization
Age:	6-12 years old
Time:	Variable
Group Size:	Variable (you can combine several groups or classes)
Location:	At your organization, community centre, school or park
Values:	Cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, acceptance



What is National Child Day?

National Child Day is a chance for children and staff to join in activities that highlight positive values, children's rights and participation through games and group discussions. It is also a good opportunity to promote your program by inviting parents, members of the community or local press to see what you are doing. It can be as simple or as elaborate as you like and can last anywhere from a couple of hours to a full day.

What is Equitas' *Play it Fair!* Program?

Play it Fair! is a program that increases children's understanding of human rights, respect for diversity, and peaceful conflict resolution. *Play it Fair!* activities focus on positive values and can help you celebrate National Child Day in a meaningful way.

What are the Goals for National Child Day?

- To promote children's active participation and human rights values while having fun
- To participate in a national event in support of children's rights

How Can You Get Involved?

Getting involved in National Child Day is as simple as 1-2-3!

1. Read this planning guide.
2. Decide which elements of the day your afterschool program or school will take part in and start planning.
3. Host your own National Child Day and have fun!

What is in This Booklet?

This booklet features 5 easy and fun ways to celebrate National Child Day, as well as Helpful resources to help you to organize this event.



Index of National Child Day Ideas

Rights Olympics

In teams, children participate in *Play it Fair!* activities (games and group discussions) and collect stickers or stamps on their individual medal for each human rights value.

Let's Celebrate Diversity

Children, families and other members of the community participate in 2 or 3 *Play it Fair!* activities. *Let's Celebrate Diversity* helps strengthen bonds between children, families and members of the wider community while celebrating diversity among families and cultures.

Children's Rights Graffiti

Children participate in a *Play it Fair!* activity then create a collective work of art illustrating children's rights.

Play it Fair! Heroes

In groups, children create a *Play it Fair!* Hero and matching slogan (memorable motto or phrase) which exemplifies 1 of the 7 human rights values included in the *Play it Fair!* Toolkit.

Where I Live

In groups, children create a map of their neighbourhoods and plan an action related to a need that they recognize in their community.

Other Fun & Easy Ideas

5 fun and easy ways to celebrate National Child Day!

Helpful Resources

Tips for Organizers

Tips for organizing a day of National Child Day activities from *Play it Fair!* partners across Canada.

Photo Consent Form

Be sure to photograph the day and share the pictures with us. We would love to share your ideas and success on National Child Day coast to coast! Make sure to distribute the photo consent form before the activity to get permission to take and distribute photographs of the children.

Play it Fair values

A description of the 7 human rights values at the heart of *Play it Fair!* activities and of the activities in this booklet.

Child Rights

Reference sheets on children's rights and The Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language.

Play it Fair toolkit

You can download Play it Fair Toolkit from the following website (Resources section): www.equitas.org



How can we help?

Do you have questions or comments regarding National Child Day? Please contact us at pif@equitas.org or 514-954-0382 ext. 242. We look forward to hearing from you!

Rights Olympics¹

Age:	6-12 years old
Time:	2 hours
Group Size:	Variable (you can combine several groups or classes)
Location:	At your community centre, school, or park
Values:	Cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, acceptance



Description

In teams, children participate in *Play it Fair!* activities (games and group discussions) and collect stickers or stamps on their individual medal for each human rights value.

Preparation

1. Choose several *Play it Fair!* activities to include in your *Rights Olympics* event, each of which will be an activity station (see suggestions on following page). For each of the activities, select a leader who will be in charge of preparing the materials and leading the game and group discussion with different teams.

Tip! Ask the older children to help choose and lead the activities.

2. Choose a suitable spot for each game. Keep in mind that the activities will take place in the same spot and be led by the same person; the teams of children will rotate between activity stations.

Tip! Choose a suitable date and place. Make sure you have access to the necessary services: bathrooms, lunch or picnic area, water, shade, etc.

3. Prepare enough medals for each child (see template on following page). Prepare 7 stickers per child, each one representing a different human rights value. You can use a different shape or colour for each sticker so that each value will be easily distinguishable. Alternatively, you can prepare 1 stamp per activity station, each one representing a different human rights value.

4. Prepare participation prizes to be distributed to the children at the end of the *Rights Olympics* (optional).

How to Play

1. Greet the children in a special way, for example, by wearing costumes, playing music, decorating the site, etc.
2. Explain how the *Rights Olympics* will work.
3. Form teams. Give 1 medal to each child.

Tip! Form 'country' teams a few days before the event. Ask children to prepare flags and dress up in the colours of their country.

Tip! Ask team leaders to hold on to the medals for each child while participating in the activities. Make sure each child writes their name on their medal.

¹ This is an adaptation of an activity suggested by the summer camp run by the Borough of LaSalle in Montreal. Thank you for the suggestion.

4. Ask the leaders to get ready to lead their activity.
5. Send each team to a different station.
6. Allow 15 to 20 minutes for each activity. Leaders facilitate the *Play it Fair!* game and the group discussion that follows, then place one sticker or stamp in each child's medal.
7. After 15 to 20 minutes, ring a bell or play some music to let the teams know that it is time to switch stations.
8. Allow about 5 minutes between activities and plan for breaks, if necessary.
9. At the final station, leaders help their teams discuss the values inscribed on the medals they collected and why these values are important to them.
10. Gather all the teams and thank and congratulate everyone. Give out participation prizes (optional).

Suggested Activities

For the *Rights Olympics*, select:

- **At least 4 activities.** If, however, you are planning to form more than 4 teams, you will need to select more *Play it Fair!* activities (or, alternatively, plan to have 2 stations of the same activity).
- **Activities that address different values.** After having participated in a *Play it Fair!* activity, each team receives a sticker or stamp for the value that was highlighted to the game and group discussion, therefore each activity should address a separate value so that each team can "collect" 4 (or more) different values.
- **Activities that are suitable to the ages of the children.** If you are thinking of forming teams with children of varying ages, it might be easier to choose activities that are appropriate for children of any age, such as the ones suggested below.

<p>Cooperation</p> <p>01 Cooperative Musical Chairs</p> <p>02 Crocodile</p> <p>04 Tropical Storm</p> <p>05 Around the World with a Hula Hoop</p>	<p>Respect</p> <p>54 The Curtain Comes Down</p> <p>25 The Noisiest Game in the World</p> <p>26 Rock- Paper-Conflict</p>
<p>Respect for diversity</p> <p>06 Kulit K'rang</p> <p>56 Talyat-Malyat</p> <p>62 What Are You Doing?</p> <p>14 From Saturn to Jupiter</p>	<p>Responsibility</p> <p>53 Your Smile is Contagious</p> <p>28 I Have the Right to...</p> <p>45 Draw it Right</p>
<p>Inclusion</p> <p>07 Exclusion by Numbers</p> <p>23 Tra-la-la...Silence</p> <p>24 Inclusion... Exclusion...</p>	<p>Acceptance</p> <p>30 I Have a Disability</p> <p>58 Random Words</p> <p>48 Colour Portraits</p>



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Play It Fair!

Name:



All children have the right to be respected

All children have the right to play

All children have the right to express their opinions

1. Fold along the dotted line and cut around the medal.
2. Punch a hole through the top of the medal to attach a ribbon.

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Play It Fair!

Name:



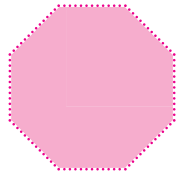
All children have the right to be respected

All children have the right to play

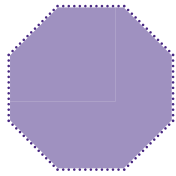
All children have the right to express their opinions

Draw or describe what children's rights mean to you and give this medal to someone you care about.

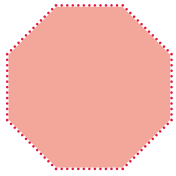
Draw or describe what children's rights mean to you and give this medal to someone you care about.



Fairness



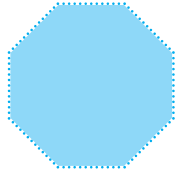
Inclusion



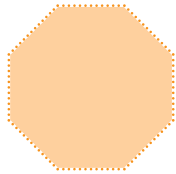
Acceptance



Cooperation



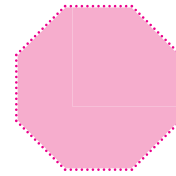
**Respect
for Diversity**



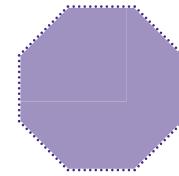
Responsibility



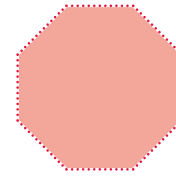
Respect



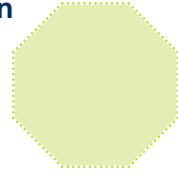
Fairness



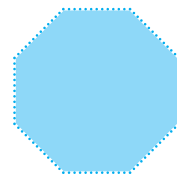
Inclusion



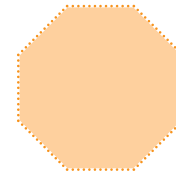
Acceptance



Cooperation



**Respect
for Diversity**



Responsibility



Respect

Let's Celebrate Diversity

Age:	6-12 years old, family and community members
Time:	2 hours
Group Size:	Variable (you can combine several groups or classes)
Location:	At your community centre, school, or park
Values:	Fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, acceptance



Description

Children, families and other members of the community participate in 2 or 3 *Play it Fair!* activities (games and group discussions). This activity helps strengthen bonds between children, families and members of the wider community while celebrating diversity among families and cultures.

4. If you expect a large number of people, plan to divide the group into teams of 10 to 20. Make sure each team includes children, family members and other members of the community.
5. Prepare participation prizes to be distributed to the children, families and members of the community at the end of the day (optional).

Preparation

1. Choose 2 or 3 *Play it Fair!* activities to include in the event (see suggestions on following page). For each of the activities, select a leader who will be in charge of preparing the materials and leading the activity. If you plan to have several teams, make sure to have at least one leader per team.
2. Choose a suitable date and place. Make sure you have access to the necessary services: bathrooms, lunch or picnic area, shade, etc.
3. Promote the event to families and throughout the community. For example, you can put up posters, write a letter inviting families to participate, place an advertisement in a local newspaper, or send an email.

How to Play

1. Greet the participants in a special way. You can, for example, prepare a welcome snack, wear costumes, play music or put up decorations that reflect your community's diversity. You can also display a map of the world on which participants can place stickers on their countries of origin.
2. Welcome participants. Present the leaders and briefly explain how this event will work.
3. Briefly talk about National Child Day and explain how it helps promote diversity within your organization and community.
4. If necessary, form teams of 10 to 20 people. Send each team with their leader to a different area.

5. Each team leader leads a getting to know each other activity with their team from *Play It Fair!*
6. The leader then facilitates 2 or 3 activities that promote respect for diversity, inclusion, fairness, responsibility or acceptance. During the activities, make certain to share and highlight differences in a positive way
7. After the activities, the leaders facilitate a group discussion based on the following questions:
 - Which countries do the members of our community come from?
 - What are some different languages spoken in our community?
 - Can you name different holidays celebrated or traditions followed in our community?
 - What are the advantages of each of us being different?
8. Gather all the teams into a large group. Invite the children, families, and other members of the community to share some of the highlights from the activities.
9. Thank and congratulate everyone. Give out participation prizes (optional).

Suggested Activities

Remember to choose activities in the Play It Fair! Toolkit that both children and adults will enjoy. To help you, here are some suggestions for activities that are fun for everyone.

Getting to know each other activities:

- 05 Around the World with a Hula Hoop (First variation)
- 54 The Curtain Comes Down

Activities promoting fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility or acceptance:

- 01 Cooperative Musical Chairs
- 02 Crocodile
- 04 Tropical Storm
- 05 Around the World with a Hula Hoop
- 07 Exclusion by Numbers
- 17 Hello from Around the World
- 24 Inclusion... Exclusion...
- 45 Draw It Right
- 49 Inuit Hand Game
- 51 What Time Is It?
- 56 Talyat-Malyat
- 59 Electric Shock
- 62 What Are You Doing?



Children's Rights Graffiti

Age:	6-12 years old
Time:	2 hours
Group Size:	Variable (you can combine several groups or classes)
Location:	At your community centre, school, or park
Values:	Cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, acceptance



Description

Children participate in a *Play it Fair!* activity (game and discussion) then create a collective work of art illustrating children's rights. Be sure to photograph the work of art and share it with us.

Preparation

1. Make sure you have the necessary materials on hand so that each team can create a work of art. (Depending on the type of artwork to be created, you will need markers, paint, paint brushes, cardboard, fabric, etc.)
2. Make arrangements to display the artwork created in a prominent place (such as at the entrance of your camp, the community centre, school, city hall, etc.)
3. Prepare participation prizes to be distributed to the children at the end of the activity (optional).

How to Play

1. Greet the children in some special way, for example, by wearing costumes, playing music, decorating the site, etc.
2. Explain how the *Children's Rights Graffiti* will work.
3. If you have a large group of children, divide them into smaller teams of 15-20 with a separate leader for each group. Ask each leader to lead a *Play it Fair!* activity about children's rights such as:
 - 28 I have a Right to...
 - 45 Draw It Right
4. After the activity, each leader should read the following statements and ask the children to discuss what they mean to them:
 - All children have the right to play
 - All children have the right to be respected
 - All children have the rights to express their opinions
5. Each team then creates a work of art on the theme of children's rights using the materials provided.
6. Gather all the teams and ask each team to present their works of art.

7. Thank and congratulate the participants. Give out participation prizes to the children (optional).

Tip! Take photos of the final works of art and share them with your community, such as with the local newspaper or community website. Don't forget to send them to us. Don't forget to get permission from parents or guardians to take pictures of the children. An example of a photo consent form is included in this National Child Day booklet.

Examples from *Play it Fair!* Partners



Children's Rights Graffiti in Montreal

(Thanks to Wallaby et Cie)



Children's Rights Graffiti in Vancouver

(Thanks to Mount Pleasant Community Centre)



Play it Fair! Heroes

Age:	6-12 years old
Time:	2 hours
Group Size:	Variable (you can combine several groups or classes)
Location:	At your community centre, school, or park
Values:	Cooperation, respect, fairness, inclusion, respect for diversity, responsibility, acceptance



Description of the Activity

In groups, children create a *Play it Fair!* Hero and matching slogan (memorable motto or phrase) that exemplifies 1 of the 7 human rights values included in this booklet and present their Heroes to the other children.

Preparation

1. Make sure you have the necessary materials on hand so that each group can create a *Play it Fair!* Hero and slogan (see example on the following page). The Hero will be created by identifying the key features of his or her character and then dressing up a child or group leader in the appropriate costume. Depending on the type of costume and slogan to be created, you will need spare clothing for costumes, various items for props, markers, paint, paint brushes, cardboard, fabric, etc.
2. Make arrangements to display photographs of the Heroes and slogans in a prominent place (such as at the entrance of your camp, the community centre, school, city hall, etc.)
3. Prepare participation prizes to be distributed to the children at the end of the day (optional).

How to Play

1. A few days prior to National Child Day, ask each group to choose a value that is most important to them.
2. For each day leading up to National Child Day, group leaders lead activities that reflect the value their group has identified.
3. On National Child Day, greet the children in some special way, for example, by wearing costumes, playing music, decorating the site, etc.
4. Explain how the *Play it Fair!* Heroes will work. Each group will create a *Play it Fair!* Hero and slogan based on 1 of 7 human rights values and present their Hero to the other children. Encourage each group to be creative in how they present their Hero. For example, they can create a short skit or a song, make a giant poster of the Hero and slogan, etc...
5. Send each group to their designated area to create their *Play it Fair!* Hero.
6. Each leader leads a *Play it Fair!* activity based on the chosen value. As a final question to the group discussion, the leader asks the group what a *Play it Fair!* Hero would have done in the activity.

7. Each group then creates a *Play it Fair!* Hero based on the value they have selected. They will present their Hero to other children at the end of the activity. Children prepare a costume as well as a slogan that exemplifies their Hero. To do so, they should identify key characteristics of their *Play it Fair!* Hero. Leaders can use the following questions as a guide:

- Why is the value you have chosen important to you?
- What would our *Play it Fair!* Hero do if he or she saw:
 - someone being excluded from the group?
 - someone who did not feel safe at camp?
 - someone being bullied at school or at camp?
 - a group of kids fighting over a toy?
- What are some key features of our *Play it Fair!* Hero?

8. Convene all the teams and ask each team to present their Hero and slogan.

9. Thank and congratulate the participants. Give out participation prizes to the children (optional).

Tip! Take photos of the activity and share them with your community, such as with the local newspaper or community website. Don't forget to send them to us. Don't forget to get permission from parents or guardians to take pictures of the children. An example of a photo consent form is included in this National Child Day booklet.

This activity was inspired by our partners at Britannia Community Centre in Vancouver. Thanks!

Examples of *Play it Fair!* Heroes

The Cooperator

"Work together and everyone wins!"

Respectoraurus

"Roar for Respect!"

The Fairness Fairy

"For one, for all, for Fair!"

Inspector Inlusio

"Scope out exclusion and make it right!"

Acceptora

"Accept you, accept me, embrace di-vers-it-y!"



Play it Fair! Heroes in Vancouver

(Thanks to Britannia Community Centre)



Where I Live

Age:	6-12 years old
Time:	30 minutes
Location:	Indoors
Group Size:	5 - 25
Activity Level:	Calm - moderate
Materials:	3 - 4 pieces of paper, markers or colouring pencils for each team, list of rights
Principal Value:	Responsibility
Other Values:	Respect for diversity, cooperation



References

For help animating this activity, please consult the following reference sheets:

- Helpful Resources: Children's Rights
- Helpful Resources: Values

Purpose of the Activity

To think about respecting rights and responsibilities in our neighbourhood as well as actions we can take to improve our communities.

Rights and Responsibilities

Right to know your rights (Article 42), right to your own language and culture (Article 30)

For all of us to enjoy this right, we need to learn about our rights and responsibilities.

Object of the Game

For the children to draw a map of their neighbourhood and plan an action related to a need that they recognize in their community.

How to Play

1. Before you begin, ask the children if they know any of their rights. To remind children of some of their rights, you can do Toolkit Activity 45, Draw it Right.
2. Divide the children into groups of 3 to 4. Ask each group to sit around a sheet of paper and other drawing materials that you have placed on the floor in different parts of the room.
3. Ask each group to draw a map of their neighbourhood. They should include the places that are important to them, such as their home, school, shopping mall, metro/subway station, bus stop, community centre, sports arena, swimming pool, park, library, church/temple, etc.
4. Prepare a list of 10 or more children's rights (see reverse) and give out a copy to each group.

5. Ask the children what things they would like or want to have in their neighbourhood, and what they need. Are there any needs in their community that are not being met? Are any of these needs on the list of rights?
6. Ask the children to mark on the map the places that they feel that something is missing. They should add drawings that represent these needs in the places that they have identified.
7. Invite each group in turn to hold up their neighbourhood map and present it to the larger group. Ask the group to sit together and think of actions that they can take in the community to help meet these needs.

Group Discussion

After the game, have the children reflect on the experience. You can use these questions as a guide.

Feel



- How did you like the game?
- Was was the most difficult [part of the game? What was the easiest?

Think



- Was it hard to decide what you want and what you need in your neighbourhood?
- Do you think that every neighbourhood has the same needs?

Act

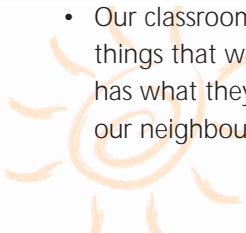


- What can we do to make sure that everyone has what they need and that our rights are respected in our neighbourhood?
- Our classroom is like a neighbourhood, are their things that we can do to make sure that everyone has what they need in the classroom? What about in our neighbourhood or community?

In this activity, each place in the neighbourhood might reflect certain needs or rights. For example, the school could be associated with the right to education, while the park or recreation centre could be associated with the right to play and rest.

Children's Rights

- The right to life
- The right to express oneself
- The right to go to school
- The right to practice a religion
- The right to medical care
- The right to food
- The right to play
- The right to rest
- The right to security
- The right to privacy
- The right to equality
- The right to information
- The right to choose my friends
- The right to a name
- The right to live with your parents
- The right to a clean environment
- The rights of children with a disability to participate





Fun & Easy Ways to Celebrate National Child Day

- Dress up! Ask children to choose a value and dress up in the corresponding colour. Have each group leader lead at least 1 *Play it Fair!* activity (game and group discussion) on National Child Day.
- Encourage participation and ask the children for their ideas! For example, have the older children organize games and lead *Play it Fair!* activities for the younger children.
- Organize an all-school or community centre-wide activity:
 - Choreograph a dance or a flash-mob around the theme of children's participation.
 - Play an all-school or community centre-wide version of a popular *Play it Fair!* activity.
- In cooperation with your arts and crafts program, make National Child Day flags that represent the values promoted in the *Play it Fair!* Toolkit or children's rights. Decorate your school or center or display them at another community organization such as the local library.
- Organize a National Child Day pic-nic and invite parents and other community members to join the children for lunch and participate in some *Play it Fair!* activities.

Tips for organizers

Since 2009, hundreds of organizations have celebrated special days like National Child Day by using *Play it Fair!* across the country. Here are some important tips we have received from our partners over the years.

- Form an organizing committee. Ask one or more people to coordinate the activities included in this event, involve parents, children and the community in all the steps of this event.
- Choose a suitable date, time and place. Have a back-up plan in case of bad weather. Make sure you have access to the necessary services: bathrooms, a place to rest, sufficient space for the games, snack area, greeting guests, etc.
- Ask a local business to sponsor the event. For example: A grocery store could provide juice boxes or snacks for all the children.
- Promote the event to families and friends throughout the community. For example, you can put up posters, write a letter inviting families to participate, place an advertisement in a local newspaper (ask us for a sample press release), send an email, etc.
- **Be sure to photograph the day and send the pictures to us.** We would love to share your ideas and success with the broader *Play it Fair!* community! Make sure to distribute the photo consent form before the activity to get permission to take and distribute photographs of the children.

How can we help?

Do you have questions or comments regarding National Child Day? Please contact us at pif@equitas.org or 514-954-0382 ext. 242. We look forward to hearing from you!

Photo Consent Form

Congratulations! You will soon take part in National Child Day and join many others in celebrating children's rights and participation across the country. This event, organized by your school, organization or community centre, is part of a larger human rights education program for children. *Play it Fair!* is a program that promotes positive values and behaviours such as cooperation and respect with children through games and discussions. It was developed by Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education, a Canadian organization founded in 1967. Each year, 70,000 children across Canada participate in *Play it Fair!*

We would like to be able to film and take photographs of the children who will participate in National Child Day; we are asking for your authorization below. These images may be used by Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education, and its partners for promotional, training or any other purposes.

This is a consent form granting permission to take and use pictures taken during National Child Day.

Do you give permission for Equitas, the International Centre for Human Rights Education to use your picture? **If you are 18 and under, your parent or guardian must also sign this consent form.**

You may withdraw your permission any time, by informing Equitas of your wishes. Every effort will be made to immediately stop the dissemination and sharing of your picture.

Signature of individual X	Signature of parent or guardian authorized to give consent X
Name of individual	Name of parent or guardian authorized to give consent
Date of signature (month/day/year)	Date of signature (month/day/year)

For more information about *Play it Fair!* and Equitas – International Centre for Human Rights Education, please consult our website: www.equitas.org



The Toolkit Values

Values

Examples

Cooperation	Cooperation is working together to achieve a common goal. This value encompasses all the other values of the Toolkit.	Exchanging ideas and pooling our talents to accomplish a group task that is meaningful to all the members of the group.
Respect	Respect is recognizing that every person is important and must be treated with dignity. In the context of human rights, respect does not need to be earned; it is the right of every person in all circumstances.	Treating each person with dignity by calling them by their correct names and avoiding mean-spirited nicknames.
Fairness	Fairness is affording to every person the same importance, the same rights, and the same opportunities.	Choosing together a series of activities that will satisfy the interests of both girls and boys, or both younger and older children.
Inclusion	Inclusion is recognizing that every person is a full member of society and of the group.	Exploring together ways to modify an activity so that everyone can participate (for example, children who are learning the language, who are shy or who are living with a disability).
Respect for diversity	Respect for diversity is recognizing and appreciating individual differences.	Valuing the many differences in the group so that each child can feel proud of who they are, their physical appearance, their individual tastes, their lifestyle, their beliefs, the way they dress, speak or think.
Responsibility	Responsibility is thinking before we act and being ready to accept the consequences of our actions (or inaction).	Behaving in ways that contribute to the positive functioning of the group, for example, listening to and following instructions, picking up our things, and participating to the best of our abilities.
Acceptance	Acceptance ¹ is acting to ensure the full participation of everyone without exception.	Encouraging each child to express his/her ideas without fear of being judged or rejected because of their age, sex, culture, religion, sexual orientation, ability or any other characteristic.

¹ The value of acceptance used in this Toolkit integrates the notion of tolerance as defined by UNESCO in its *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance*, November 16, 1995.

Where do these values come from?

These values **stem from the human rights** as defined in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (UDHR). By promoting these values and incorporating them into our everyday behaviour, we can demonstrate respect for human rights. When these values are not well-understood or respected, incidents of discrimination and racism become more commonplace. The values are fundamental to uphold the key principles of human dignity and equality, underpinning the UDHR.

How to promote these values?

There are several ways to incorporate these values into your programs. In fact, these values are probably already an important part of what you do. Here are some ways to increase the focus on values in your programming.

Add the values to your objectives

It is important to educate employees, parents, and children about the values that your organization promotes through its work. If you are not already doing this, try getting into the habit of referring to your core values when you present your organization or when you talk about what drives your work with children. Values can be mentioned in official documents describing your program and its objectives. They can also be mentioned when recruiting staff, at staff meetings, and during activities with the children.

Increase the visibility of values

When your values are displayed on the wall, it is easier for everyone – children, staff, visitors – to become familiar with the values, to integrate them and to refer to them as needed. Bring the values to life by taking them out into the open where they can be a part of group life. Have the children create a mural that expresses the values and invite them to sign it with a handprint to show that they agree to respect these values.

Establish a values-based Code of Behaviour together

Rules and guidelines established with the participation of the group are more likely to be understood, acted upon and respected over time. Why not involve the children in developing a Code of Behaviour based on these values? The values can form the backbone of many aspects of your work, from establishing new directions and projects to managing employee relationships. For more information refer to *Establishing a Code of Behaviour for the Group*, Reference Sheet 9.

Choose activities that match the values

These values can enrich your programs and enable you to better meet the needs of the children. Your staff may be familiar with activities – beyond those of the Toolkit – that reflect these values and can help children integrate them into their lives.

Staff can consider the following questions as they choose activities that reflect human rights values:

- Are the activities inclusive? Is there a way to include children with special needs?
- Can all the children participate? Is there a way to modify the activities to encourage the participation of children who have difficulty speaking the language or who are living with disabilities?
- Are the activities mostly competitive or can they also promote cooperation?
- Do the activities build an appreciation of diversity? Do the activities encourage the full participation of girls and boys, of younger and older children, or of children from different cultural backgrounds?
- Do the activities encourage children to take responsibility for their actions and attitudes?



Children's Rights

What are the rights of the child?

The rights of the child are **specific rights** that aim to protect all human beings **younger than 18 years old**.¹

The human rights proclaimed in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* apply to all human beings regardless of their age, and as such children benefit from the same rights as adults. However, because of their vulnerable position in society, children also have specific rights that afford them special protection.

What is the purpose of having children's rights?

Children's rights aim to ensure that each child has the opportunity to **reach their full potential**. Children's rights stipulate that all children – without discrimination (Article 2) – should be able to develop fully, have access to education and health care, grow up in an appropriate environment, be informed about their rights, and participate actively in society.

Children's rights are a tool to **protect children** from violence and abuse.

Children's rights foster **mutual respect** among people. Respect for the rights of the child can only be fully achieved when everyone, including children themselves, recognizes that every person has the same rights, and then adopts attitudes and behaviours of respect, inclusion and acceptance.

What is the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*?

The *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is an **international treaty** that recognizes the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. This treaty was adopted by the United Nations on November 20, 1989.

In December 1991, Canada ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and thus committed itself under international law to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights of children in Canada.

The Convention requires governments from around the world to respect and uphold children's rights, particularly through the laws they develop at a national level. However, in order for children to fully enjoy their rights, the fundamental principles of the Convention must be respected and promoted by all members of society from parents, to educators, to the children themselves.

To consult the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* or for more information about children's rights, visit UNICEF's website: <http://www.unicef.org/crc>.

¹ In the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as a person younger than 18 years old unless the laws of a particular country set the age of majority at a younger age.

What are the guiding principles of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*?

The four guiding principles outlined here represent the underlying requirements for any and all rights of the Convention to be realized. These principles must be respected in order for children to enjoy their rights.

1. **Non-discrimination and equal opportunity** (Article 2)

All children have the same rights. The Convention applies to all children, whatever their ethnic origin, religion, language, culture, or sex. It does not matter where they come from or where they live, what their parents do, whether they have a disability, or whether they are rich or poor. All children must have the same opportunity to reach their full potential.

2. **Best interests of the child** (Article 3)

The best interests of the child must be the primary consideration when making decisions that may affect children. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect the children.

3. **Right to life, survival and development** (Article 6)

Children have the right to life. Children must receive the care necessary to ensure their physical, mental, and emotional health as well as their intellectual, social and cultural development.

4. **Participation** (Article 12)

Children have the right to express themselves and to be heard. They must have the opportunity to express their opinions regarding decisions that affect them and their opinions must be taken into account. This being said, the child's age, level of maturity, and best interests should always be kept in mind when considering the ideas and opinions of children.

Adapted from Information on Guiding Principles:
http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30177.html



The Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language

1. Everyone under 18 has these rights.
2. All children have these 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.
3. All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.
4. The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family to protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.
5. Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.
6. You have the right to be alive.
7. You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).
8. You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.
9. You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.
10. If you live in a different country than your parents do, you have the right to be together in the same place.
11. You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.
12. You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.
13. You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.
14. You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.
15. You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.
16. You have the right to privacy.
17. You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspapers, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.
18. You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.
19. You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.
20. You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.
21. You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.
22. You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.
23. You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child in Child Friendly Language (continued)

24. You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.
25. If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.
26. You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.
27. You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.
28. You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.
29. Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.
30. You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion – or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.
31. You have the right to play and rest.
32. You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.
33. You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.
34. You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.
35. No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.
36. You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).
37. No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.
38. You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.
39. You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.
40. You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.
41. If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.
42. You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.

Articles 43 to 54.

These articles explain how governments and international organizations like UNICEF will work to ensure children are protected with their rights.

This child-friendly version of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* was produced by UNICEF. For more information on the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, consult the UNICEF website: <http://www.unicef.org/crc>.