

LET'S CELEBRATE NATIONAL CHILD DAY!

TREE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

This booklet was created to celebrate National Child Day and support children in learning more about their rights and about the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

WHAT IS NATIONAL CHILD DAY?

National Child Day is celebrated in Canada on November 20th in order to recognize our commitment to protecting the rights of children. This day celebrates the adoption of the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1989.

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. It sets out the rights of children with 54 articles that provide us with a road map of what is needed to raise healthy and happy children.

Canada ratified the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1991 and thus committed itself under international law to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights of children in Canada. To learn more about the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, visit: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET?

This activity booklet outlines how to create a **Tree of Children's Rights**, with a group of children, to celebrate National Child Day. There is 3 activities in all.

- 1 Learn about Children's Rights** Children learn about their rights and responsibilities and reflect on why they are important.
- 2 Design Children's Rights Leaves** Children create artwork about children's rights and discuss what they can do to teach others about them.
- 3 Create and share your Tree of Children's Rights** Children create a *Tree of Children's Rights* to share their ideas about children's rights with the broader community.



1

LEARN ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

This activity is designed to help children learn about their rights and responsibilities and why they are important.

Time	30 minutes
Materials	Flipchart paper, markers or crayons
Children's rights and responsibilities	Right to give your opinion and be heard (Article 12); right to gain and share knowledge (Article 13); right to know your rights (Article 42). For all of us to enjoy our rights, we need to know about our rights and responsibilities.
Object of the activity	For each child to quickly draw a right and to correctly guess the rights drawn by their team members.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. To prepare for the activity, make a list of 10 children's rights, choosing from the list provided on the next page.
2. Begin by asking children if they know some of their rights. Ask them what these rights mean in practice in their daily lives.
3. Share the following definition of children's rights with the group:
Children's rights are rights that aim to ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential and lead healthy and happy lives.
4. Divide the group in two teams. Have children from each team sit next to a piece of paper. Stand at the other end of the room.
5. Explain to the group that this is a guessing game where players must identify the right that one of them will be drawing.
6. Have one player from each team run to you so you can whisper in their ear one of the rights from the list of children's rights provided on the next page.
7. They then go back to the group and draw this right. The others must try to guess which right it is. Once they have guessed correctly, another member of the team runs to you to hear the next right. The game ends when the group has identified all the rights.
8. Form a circle and lead a group discussion with the children, using the questions below.

Adaptation for online facilitation: To facilitate this activity virtually, tape a large piece of paper to a wall in your home and position your camera towards the paper. Alternatively, you can use a virtual whiteboard. Tell participants that you will explore children's rights by playing a drawing and guessing game. You will draw a right (using your paper or virtual whiteboard) and participants must guess which right you are drawing.

Participants can take turns drawing if you are facilitating online. After participants have guessed all of the rights, lead the following discussion.

Adaptation for younger children: After providing a definition of children's rights, introduce the list of rights you will include in the game. Invite the children to illustrate or act out what the right means to them before playing the game.

Another option is to do the game as a whole group rather than in two teams. Invite one or two children to go up to the front of the room and draw a right or act it out. All of the children are invited to guess that right. Repeat this process using different rights and allowing different children a turn to draw or act.

LIST OF SOME CHILDREN'S RIGHTS:

- The right to go to school
- The right to equality
- The right to a religion
- The right to a home
- The right to eat
- The right to medical care
- The right to play
- The right to express yourself
- The right to safety
- The right to rest
- The right to a clean environment
- The right to live with your parents
- The right to choose your friends
- The right to a culture

GROUP DISCUSSION

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



Feel

- What did you like best about this activity?
- Were you surprised by some of the rights?



Think

- Why do you think children's rights are important?
- Do you think that all children enjoy the same rights? Why?



Act

- What can we do to make sure all of our rights are respected?

(Explain that rights also include responsibilities. For example, to enjoy the right to express one's

opinion, you need to respect other people's ideas and listen to what they have to say.)

2

DESIGN CHILDREN'S RIGHTS LEAVES

In this activity, children create artwork about their rights and engage in a discussion about what they can do to teach others about children's rights. Each child receives a tree leaf template for their artwork. These will all be put together in the next activity to create a *Tree of Children's Rights*.

Time 30 minutes

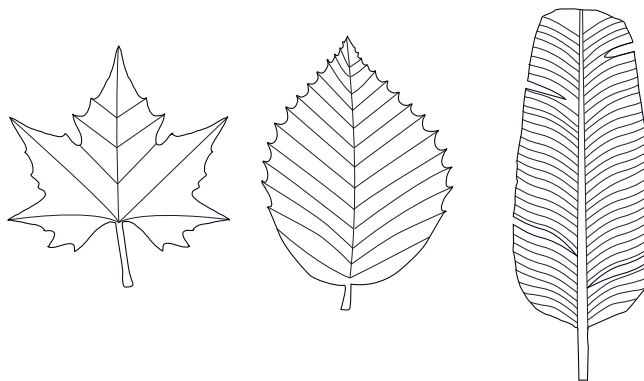
Materials Leaf template (included in the package), markers or crayons

Children's rights and responsibilities Right to give your opinion and be heard (Article 12); right to gain and share knowledge (Article 13); right to know your rights (Article 42). For all of us to enjoy our rights, we need to know about our rights and responsibilities.

Object of the activity For each child to draw or write why children's rights are important to them.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Explain to the children that it is important for all children to know about their rights and that they have the right to express themselves and be heard.
2. Hand out a tree leaf to each child. Explain to children that they will be expressing their ideas about children's rights through art and they will be sharing them with the rest of the community. *The leaf templates are included in this package.*



3. Provide children with markers or crayons and ask them to draw or write **why children's rights are important** in the leaf. Encourage the children to be creative with what they want to say.
4. When the children have finished, invite them to present their leaves to the rest of the group.

Adaptation for online facilitation: Make sure you distribute one leaf to each child. If it's not possible, you can ask children to draw their own leaf on a sheet of paper or to use a real tree leaf that they can choose outside. Share the instructions with the children on how they should decorate their leaves using the theme of Children's Rights. With this you can also encourage children to create more than one leaf of rights themselves.

GROUP DISCUSSION

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



Feel

- How did you like this activity?
- Was it easy or difficult to draw or write about children's rights?



Think

- Are all the rights we drew or wrote about respected in our community?
- Do you think some rights are more important than other rights? Why or why not?
(Note: Children's rights are all equally important. For example, children cannot full enjoy the right to a healthy life without the right to quality education.)



Act

- What can we do to teach other people about children's rights?
- What can we do to ensure other people in our community (parents, teachers, friends, etc) know about children's rights and learn more about why they are important?
(Note: In the next activity, we will create an art project to share our knowledge of children's rights with our community)

3

SHARE YOUR TREE OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

In this last activity, the group will create a *Tree of Children's Rights*, in order to share why children's rights are important with other children, adults and influencers in their community.

Note: A tree was used for this activity for its symbolic meanings. The roots of the tree symbolize the work we do with children as being grounded in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The branches symbolize our commitments to the protection of children's rights and finally the leaves are the expression of why children's rights are important, from children themselves.

Materials Materials to draw or paint a tree, glue or tape, pipe cleaners (for variation)

Children's rights and responsibilities Right to give your opinion and be heard (Article 12); right to gain and share knowledge (Article 13); right to know your rights (Article 42). For all of us to enjoy our rights, we need to know about our rights and responsibilities.

Object of the activity For the group to share why children's rights are important with other children, adults and influencers in their community.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Collect all of the leaves from the children.
2. Draw, paint or construct a giant tree trunk and branches with the children and stick each of the leaves on the branches.
3. Include the articles of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* along the roots of the tree.
4. Display the tree at the entrance of your community center or school in order to share what the children said about their rights with the community.
5. Host an event and invite the children to present the *Tree of Children's Rights* to influencers in the community (parents, teachers, principals, government representatives, etc.). As the children present their *Tree of Children's Rights*, invite them to share why their rights are important.
6. Invite other children and adults in your community to add actions they will take to promote children's rights on the branches or additional leaves.
7. Take pictures and share on social media using the hashtags [#BuildingInclusiveCommunities](#) [#NationalChildDay](#) [#Equitas](#). Email pictures to: ascote@equitas.org.

Adaptation: Making a Bouquet of Leaves: If you cannot create a *Tree of Children's Rights*, you can create a bouquet of leaves. To do this, have children to attach pipe cleaners to their leaves, making a stem. Next, collect all of the leaves and create a collective bouquet of leaves. Invite the children to distribute the leaves to influencers in your community (parents, teachers, principals, government representatives, etc.) and as they do so, ask the children to share why their rights are important. They may also remind influencers to keep Children's Rights and the best interest of children in mind when they are making decisions.

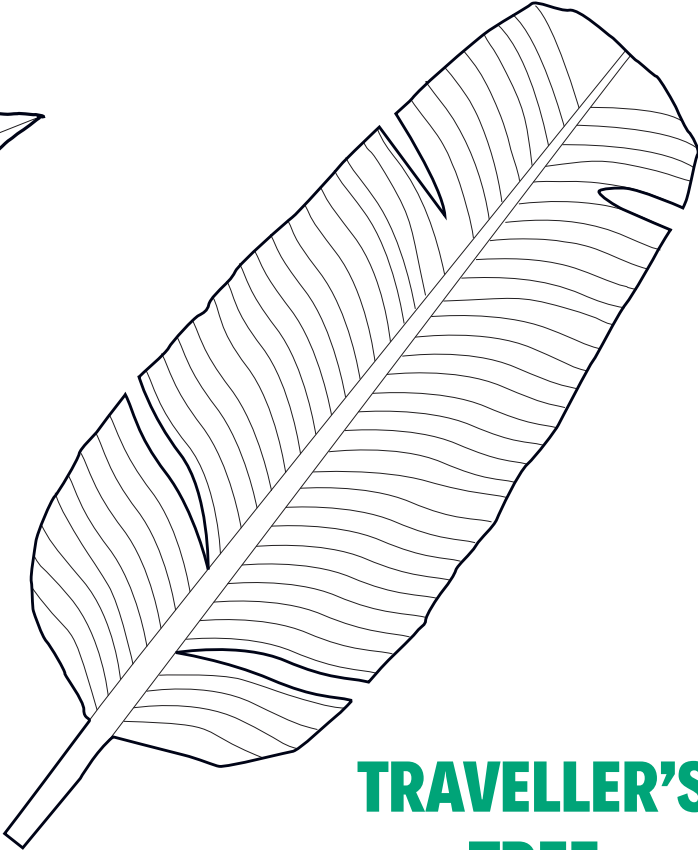
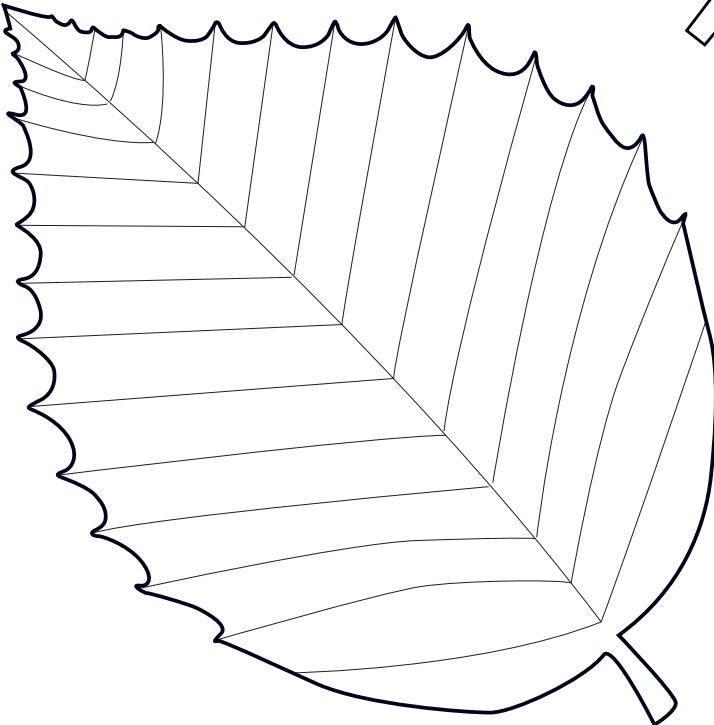
Adaptation for online facilitation: If you are facilitating the activity online, you could create a tree of rights in an online setting by combining all the individual leaves on a virtual tree that you could share on social medias. You could also organize an online meeting so that children can share their artwork with their peers. Children can also create a bouquet of rights on their own that they can give to a person they're in contact with: their parents, a community leader or their school!

LEAF TEMPLATES:

MAPLE



**YELLOW
BIRCH**



**TRAVELLER'S
TREE**



*More information on **Equitas** and our children programming :*

For more than 10 years, we have worked closely with partner organizations across Canada and together we are building the capacity of children and youth to lead projects in their local communities to address issues that matter to them, while reinforcing the importance of engaging in dialogue on issues of equality, inclusion and respect for diversity.

As part of our programs, children and youth engage local decision-makers on the importance of building more inclusive communities. Children and youth from diverse backgrounds learn to work together to make their community a more inclusive place that reflects who they are, while fully developing their potential.

