

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child



Every child is equal and has the same rights. "Rights" are things that every child should have or be able to do. They help guide what is best for children in certain situations and tell us what is important to protect us from harm. Almost every country on earth has agreed to the rights that are listed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As you grow, you will be able to make more choices on your own and to exercise your rights.

Articles

- 1** Your neighbors must recognize the laws and freedoms that you have. Your neighbors will also follow these laws and will avoid doing anything that goes against your rights and freedoms!
- 2** A child means any person under the age of 18.
- 3** Every child will be allowed to enjoy these rights! Your age, race, religion, or gender or opinion does not affect your freedom.
- 4** If you have an opinion and want to voice it you can! Adults must listen to what you have to say.
- 5** You have the right to be alive.
- 6** You have the right to have a name and to be recognized by the government.
- 7** You should always state your opinion if you are able to do so.
- 8** You have the right to make or join a group or club as long as it is not harmful to others.
- 9** You have the right to think, believe, and practice whatever you want.
- 10** You have the right to privacy.
- 11** You have the right to learn, explore your talents and find out what it is that makes you happiest. Your government must provide fair and equal education opportunities for girls, talented students, and less fortunate students. Your education system will also help you learn about good African morals, values, and culture.
- 12** You have the right to play freely.
- 13** If you are mentally or physically disabled, you have the right to special protection to help you be an active member of your community and be independent.
- 14** You have every right to be healthy physically, mentally, and emotionally. You also have the right to have health care, good food, and safe drinking water.
- 15** You are protected from doing work that is dangerous or affects your development in any way!
- 16** You are protected from all forms of abuse and torture.

17 If you are a child and you break the law, you are still protected from torture or abuse.

18 You have the right to special protection when living with your family.

19 You have the right to live with your parents, and you will only be separated if the Government needs to protect you.

20 Your parents or guardians should always protect you and treat you in the best way possible.

21 Governments must stop practices that are harmful to you such as child marriage.

22 No one has the right to make you fight in a war as a soldier.

23 If you are refugee then you have the right to protection and humanitarian help.

24 If you are separated from your parents then you can receive special protection and be placed in temporary care. You will also get help to find your parents.

25 Governments have to help you if you live in an area where you are not treated equally.

26 No one is allowed to take advantage of you in any way.

27 You are protected from being forced to use drugs.

28 You have the right to be free from any kind of human trade. Your Government will protect you from being kidnapped or sold to anyone else.

29 If a woman is accused of breaking the law and she is pregnant or has young children, she will be given special treatment.

30 You have a responsibility to respect your family, elders, and protect your African values and culture.