

EVERY PERSON HAS HUMAN RIGHTS. WE HAVE THESE RIGHTS BECAUSE WE ARE HUMAN, AND WE BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE HAS DIGNITY, IS EQUAL AND SHOULD BE FREE. THIS MEANS THAT NO ONE SHOULD TAKE OUR RIGHTS AWAY FROM US. EVERYONE SHOULD RESPECT OUR RIGHTS, JUST LIKE WE SHOULD RESPECT THE RIGHTS OF OTHERS.

Know Your Rights!

HERE ARE THE KEY RIGHTS THAT YOU HOLD, AS A CHILD, AND THAT EVERY OTHER CHILD ALSO HOLDS:

ONE THING I HAVE NOW LEARNT, IS THAT EVERY PERSON IN THE WORLD HAS RIGHTS, FROM THE YOUNGEST NEW BORN BABY TO THE OLDEST GREAT-GREAT-GRANDMOTHER. AFTER THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD CAME TOGETHER TO SET UP THE UNITED NATIONS (UN). THROUGH THE UN, THEY TRY TO ENSURE THAT WE LIVE IN PEACE AND DIGNITY, AND THAT NO ONE FACES THE MISERY OF WAR AGAIN.

ON THE 10TH OF DECEMBER 1948, THE UN AGREED ON A VERY IMPORTANT DOCUMENT CALLED THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS. THIS DOCUMENT SETS OUT THE RIGHTS THAT ALL PEOPLE HAVE, REGARDLESS OF WHO THEY ARE OR WHERE THEY LIVE. SINCE THEN, OTHER AGREEMENTS HAVE ALSO BEEN MADE TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT EVERYONE'S HUMAN RIGHTS. BUT EVEN TODAY, THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION IS RECOGNISED AS THE CORNERSTONE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. EVERY 10TH OF DECEMBER IS CELEBRATED AROUND THE WORLD AS INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY.

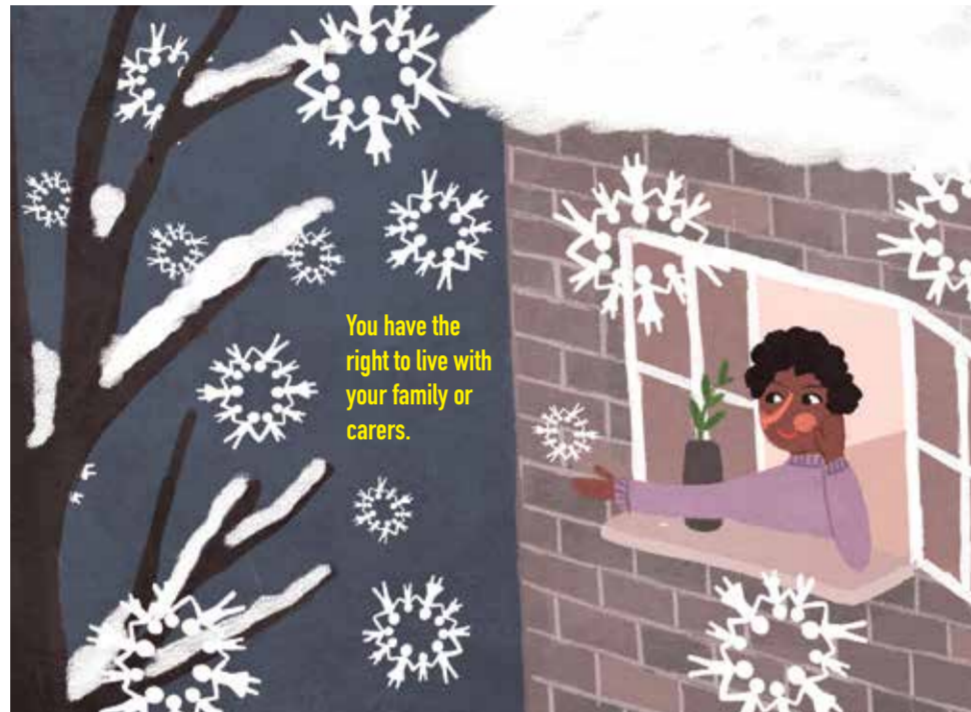
I'M SURE YOU WILL AGREE THAT CHILDREN ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE WORLD. THEY NEED EXTRA PROTECTION AND CARE. THAT IS WHY, IN 1989, THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD WAS AGREED. THIS RECOGNISES THAT "EVERY CHILD IS BORN FREE AND EQUAL" AND SETS OUT THE SPECIAL RIGHTS THAT ALL CHILDREN HAVE. ALL BUT ONE COUNTRY IN THE WORLD HAVE SIGNED UP TO THIS DOCUMENT. THEY ALL PROMISE TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS THAT IT CONTAINS.



All children are equal and have these rights. You should not be treated badly or unfairly because of how you look, what you believe, where you live, what language you speak, whether you are rich or poor, whether you have a disability, whether you are a girl or boy, or who your parents or guardians are.



All adults and countries must do what is best for you and all other children.



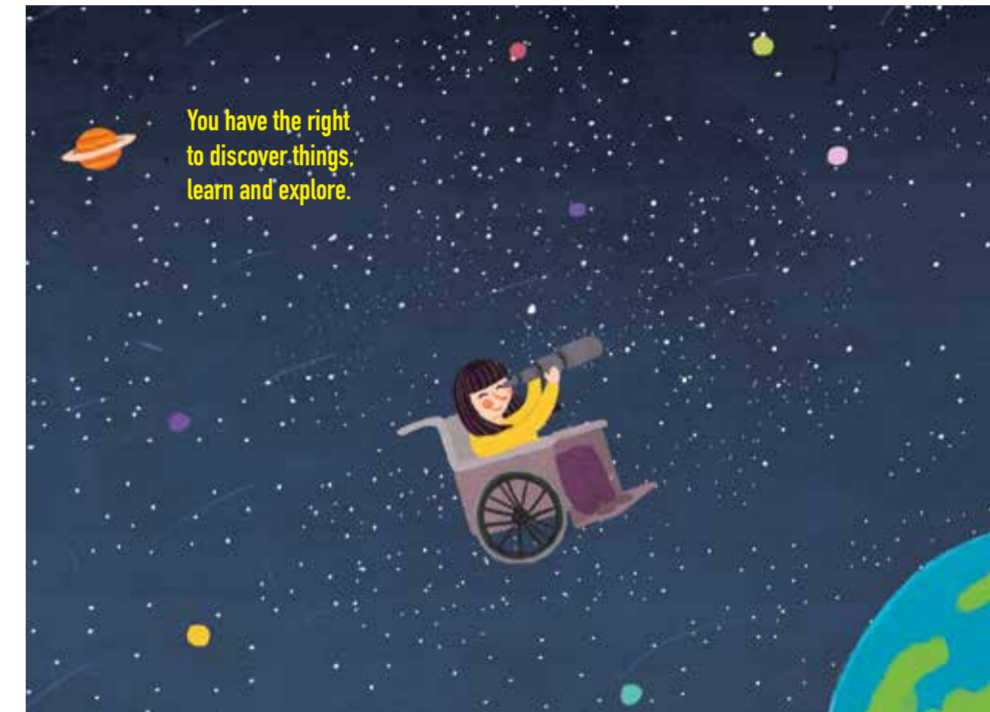
You have the right to live with your family or carers.



You have the right to speak and say what you believe. Adults and other children should listen when children speak.



You have the right to your own identity, a name, a nationality and to know your parents and family. No one should take this away from you. No child should be stateless.



You have the right to discover things, learn and explore.



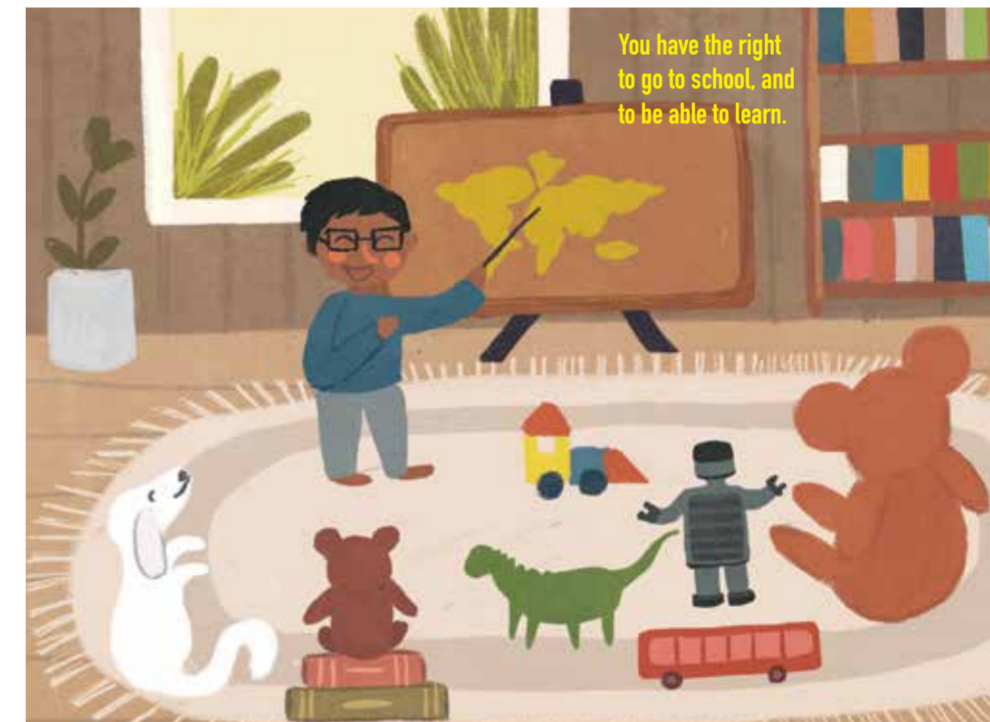
You have the right to be safe, to be protected from harm.



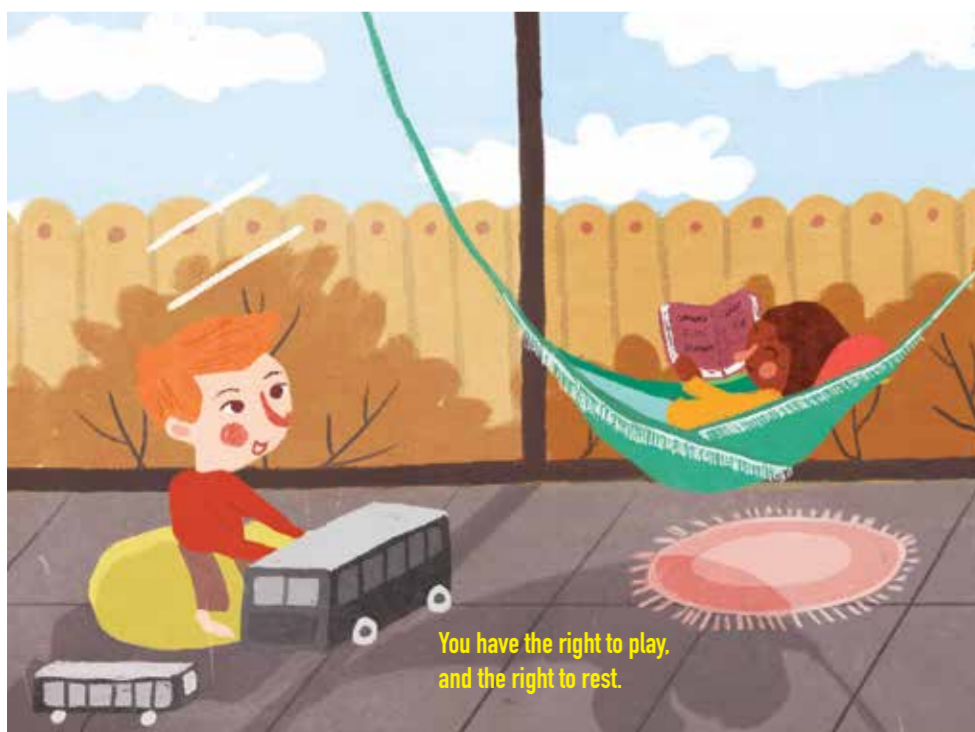
You have the right to the best healthcare possible.



You have the right to have food to eat, clothes to wear and a safe place to live!



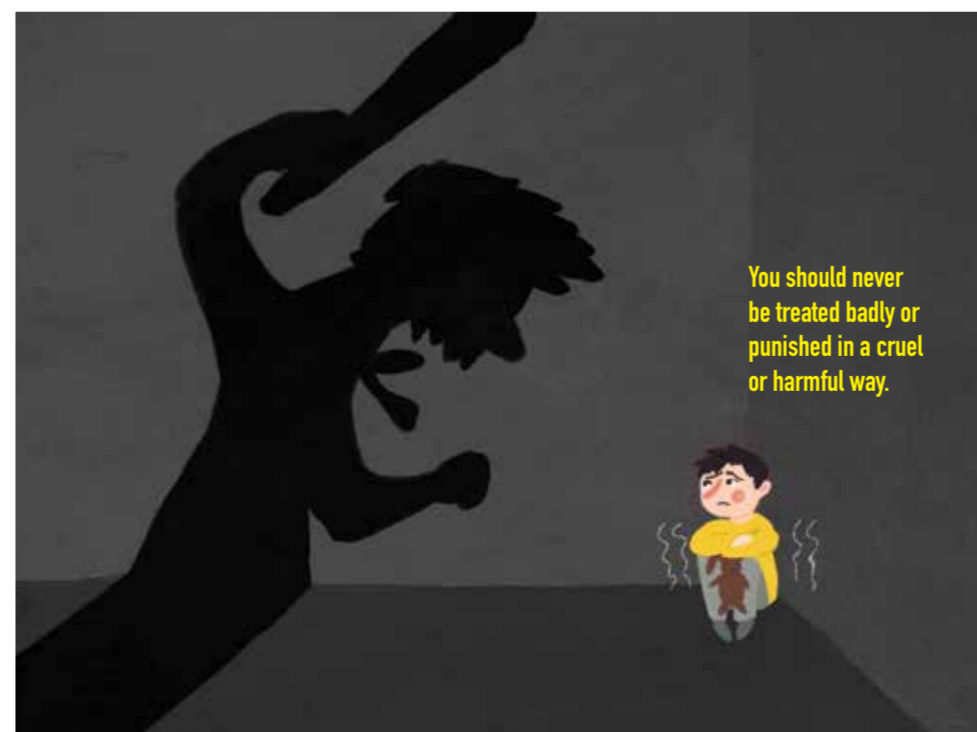
You have the right to go to school, and to be able to learn.



You have the right to play, and the right to rest.



You should not have to do work that is harmful, dangerous, bad for your health or which prevents you from going to school.



You should never be treated badly or punished in a cruel or harmful way.



If you were to become a refugee, you have a right to special protection.

AS YOU CAN SEE, THE RIGHT TO A NATIONALITY IS ONE OF THE RIGHTS THAT EVERY CHILD HAS. CHILDREN WHO DO NOT HAVE A NATIONALITY, ARE OFTEN TREATED BADLY WHEN IT COMES TO OTHER RIGHTS AS WELL. THIS MEANS, THEY ARE BEING PUNISHED TWICE - FIRST BY DENYING THEM THE RIGHT TO A NATIONALITY, AND THEN BY DENYING THEM OTHER RIGHTS.

IF THINGS GO WRONG, AND YOUR RIGHTS ARE NOT RESPECTED, THERE ARE THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TO CLAIM YOUR RIGHTS. YOU CAN SPEAK ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM TO PEOPLE YOU TRUST, LIKE YOUR PARENTS OR TEACHERS OR FRIENDS. WITH THEIR HELP IF IT IS A VERY SERIOUS PROBLEM, YOU MAY BE ABLE TO GO TO A HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATION OR LAWYER. MANY HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANISATIONS WORK TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN. THEY HELP CHILDREN OUT, RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT PROBLEMS, CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE AND EVEN CHALLENGE BAD PRACTICES, DECISIONS AND RULES. YOU MAY EVEN MAKE A COMPLAINT TO A COURT, TO ASK A JUDGE TO MAKE AN ORDER THAT YOU ARE TREATED PROPERLY.

THERE IS ALSO A SPECIAL UN COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS WHOSE ROLE IS TO KEEP AN EYE ON WHAT COUNTRIES ARE DOING TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN. THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD. THIS COMMITTEE TALKS WITH GOVERNMENTS TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE TO IMPROVE HOW CHILDREN ARE TREATED. THE COMMITTEE ALSO LISTENS TO COMPLAINTS FROM CHILDREN IF THE SITUATION IS VERY BAD, TO SEE IF IT CAN OFFER A SOLUTION. ANYONE - ESPECIALLY CHILDREN - WHO FEEL THEIR COUNTRY IS TREATING CHILDREN POORLY, CAN SPEAK DIRECTLY TO THE COMMITTEE AND TELL THEM WHAT THEY THINK.

IF WE ALL KNOW OUR RIGHTS, WE CAN ALL PROTECT EACH OTHER'S RIGHTS BETTER!



