

ACTIVITY PLAN

Children's rights

**PARTICIPANTS' AGE/LEVEL**

15 to 19 years

**GROUP SIZE**

30 maximum

**TIME**

about 2.5 hours

**KEYWORDS**

children's rights, crimes against humanity, childhood

**OVERVIEW**

To start with, the participants deal with the concept of childhood and their own understanding and experiences of it. Next, they learn about the origins and content of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Then, the participants work in small groups and consider current violations of children's rights. They discuss how children's rights might be protected.

**TIPS**

- This activity can be done separately or following the activity "Dealing with the life stories of stolen children"
[<https://uprootedchildren.eu/en/materials/activity-plans/>]
- Since the subject of the violation of children's rights is not always easy to process, it is important to give participants the freedom to express their opinions and feelings at any stage of the workshop, whenever they feel a need to do this. The facilitator is responsible for creating a safe space and providing emotional support (as well as responding sensitively if the topic becomes too overwhelming for some of the participants).
- The times allotted for different stages of the workshop are only intended as suggestions. The facilitator can decide to devote more time to certain aspects of the subject when they feel this is necessary.
- It is advisable to let the participants work actively as much as possible and to keep inputs from the facilitator as short as possible. However, since inputs are also an important way of providing information that is relevant to understanding the context, they should be delivered in an interactive way.



PREPARING

The facilitators shall inform themselves about children's rights, their emergence and what they are concerned with. The "Children Rights. JustNow Timeline Cards Set" [<https://teachjustnow.eu/wp-content/uploads/Children-Rights-JustNow-timeline.pdf>] and Compasito, a manual on human rights education for children [<http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/>] might be good sources here. The facilitators also need to prepare the listed materials.



MATERIALS

- printed Convention on the Rights of the Child in a child-friendly version, e.g. from this website: http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/chapter_6/4.html
- access to the internet
- paper
- different coloured pens and markers
- tape
- flipchart
- handout with information about institutions that stand up for children's rights in the participants' home countries



THE ACTIVITY STEP BY STEP

Phase 1:

Introduction (5 minutes)

Tell the participants what this workshop is going to be about and what they will learn.

Phase 2:

The concept of childhood (25 minutes)

Ask your participants to do some brainstorming on the term "childhood". Participants shall write down three key aspects that come to their minds (without thinking about it too much beforehand). Each aspect shall be written on a different piece of paper and listed on a flipchart where everybody can read it. Read out loud what participants have written and ask questions if something is not clear. Participants can also ask each other questions. If the activity "Dealing with the life stories of stolen children" has already been completed, give them an input on what childhood was like during the time of National Socialism. Here it is important to differentiate between so-called "Aryan" and "Non-Aryan" children. Ask participants what similarities and differences they see compared to their personal image of childhood.

Phase 3:

Familiarization with children's rights (30 minutes)

Hang the printed Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on the wall so that all participants are able to read it. Present the different articles. Then give an input on the origins and context of the CRC. As a short introduction, we recommend the text "What are children's rights?" from Compasito, a manual on human rights education for children [http://www.eycb.coe.int/compasito/chapter_1/2_wha.html]. If more time is available, it is also a good idea to work with the "Children Rights. JustNow Timeline Cards Set" [<https://teachjustnow.eu/wp-content/uploads/Children-Rights-JustNow-timeline.pdf>].

Participants are each given three stickers with which they are asked to mark the rights they consider most important (they can choose three rights or mark just one right with three stickers). When they are finished, ask about their choices and whether they see links between their image of childhood and actual children's rights. Ask the participants to write the number of each relevant article from the Convention next to the statements collected during the brainstorming session on the term "childhood".

Phase 4:

Group work on the violation of children's rights (45 minutes)

The group is divided into smaller groups of about 3-6 participants. Each group receives the following tasks:

- If the activity "Dealing with the life stories of stolen children" has been carried out before: Go through the articles of the CRC again and mark those that were violated by the Third Reich when children from Central and Eastern Europe were abducted.
- Talk about current violations of children's rights. Examples can be found in the UPROOTED Learning Card Set [<https://uprootedchildren.eu/en/materials/cards-set/>]. You are also welcome to research other examples online.
- Choose one of these examples and prepare a short presentation that considers the following aspects:
 - Short description of the topic you have chosen.
 - Which articles of the CRC have been violated and why?

Phase 5:

Presentations of group work (45 minutes)

Each group presents the results of their work (5 minutes each). The chosen examples of current violations of children's rights are collected on a wall. Participants are asked to find differences and similarities between the different cases. Write down the statements of the participants on a flipchart. Afterwards, discuss with them the question "What can be done to prevent these violations in the future?".



DEBRIEFING (15-20 MINUTES)

The young participants have now heard about some very challenging and brutal acts that have been committed against children. Help the participants to reflect on this new information and on their own feelings towards it. The following questions might help to lead such a discussion:

- How did you like the activity? How do you feel now?
- Do you see any violations of children's rights in your life or environment?
- Do you know what to do if your rights are being violated? (Here you should give the names of institutions that participants can turn to in such a case. These might differ in different countries, so it is advisable to get informed beforehand and, for example, to prepare a handout for the participants.)
- Is there any action you can take to protect children's rights?

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