

THE NORDIC

CHILDREN'S RESOLUTION



In celebration of the 30th Anniversary of the

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Copenhagen 16th January 2020



We, children and young people from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland would like to share with local, national and Nordic leaders our recommendations on how to ensure that the Nordic Region becomes the best place in the world to be a child.

It is of great importance that we can be ourselves and can be valued as the persons we are without experiencing discrimination, bullying, or other derisive treatment.

We are valuable. We are valuable for everything we are, for what we are to others, as well as for all we might become in the future. We will soon be in the position grownups occupy today and among those who will attend elections, or seek election to public office. We are the future, but we are also the children and youth of today with our own rights.

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland have all ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and thereby as a minimum agreed to comply with the provisions in the CRC.

Article 12 of the CRC states, that children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them.

Our recommendations below address the circles where we spend most of our time (our families, our schools, our leisure time and our communities). We encourage all decision-makers within these circles, but also on the national and Nordic level through the Nordic Council of Ministers, to support the realization of our recommendations.

With this resolution, we would like to make our voices heard

We want to ensure that all we children and young people of the Nordic region are aware of our rights.

AWARENESS ABOUT CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

We find this important, because only then we can understand and identify situations where our rights are violated and act to prevent this from happening. Children's rights are there to empower and safeguard children. Through awareness about our rights, we can secure our own well-being, quality of life, respect for others' rights and ability to take part in decisions that influence our lives.

We recommend that:

- We learn about children's rights through peer to peer education: children should have the opportunity to educate other children about their rights, and we need positive role models of young people to talk about children's rights. We children can write and record our own material and make our voice heard, by using apps, podcasts or social media.



Families

- Both we – and grownups – learn more about children's rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Everyone needs to know the difference between rights and privileges.

- Parents play a central role in teaching us about children's rights. Parents should take time to discuss important and difficult issues with us and to work together with us to review what is okay and is not. Parents should receive knowledge about children's rights through social media or lectures organized by local politicians and municipalities.



Schools

- The national curriculum includes children's rights, and specifically the Convention on the Rights of the Child, on all levels from the first grade in elementary school.
- In schools, education about children's rights should apply varied teaching methods and debates to secure full engagement of us children. Theme weeks, electives or monthly lessons with different angles could be applied to

teach intensively about children's rights. Schools could also have information about rights visible in the context they are applicable, for instance information about health in the cafeteria.

- In all daycare- and childcare arrangements, children's rights are included in a visible and active way.



Leisure time

- In the spare time, organized and unorganized recreational activities take place where we children are empowered and engaged. Through these platforms, we are given the chance to express our needs, learn about our rights and discuss among friends, how important children's rights are.
- In sports and other leisure clubs, boards, trainers and facilitators receive training about children's rights to become able to communicate this to us and create a framework that respects children's rights in the clubs.
- Child Rights should be more visible in both the media, the arts and theater. Child Rights information in the media should be less text heavy, but also less childish.
- Trainings, TV shows and youtube ads could involve celebrities or youth leaders, as this would engage us children more and secure our right to participation and co-determination.



Communities

- In the local community or municipality, a campaign, Children's Rights Fair or advertisement could be organized to raise awareness of and promote all children's rights. These should be organized together with us children. The campaign could be on YouTube, at a bus stand, other visible places or through public events and workshops.
- Children's rights should be included and prioritized in local and national politics. Municipalities could carry out a questionnaire for us children at polling stations during local elections to hear our voices and raise awareness about child rights. Similarly, this could take place during national elections.
- All grownups working with children in the municipality and within the national government, ministries and departments receive dedicated training about children's rights, so that they can apply this in their daily work.

We want to ensure that all the voices of the children and young people of the Nordic region are heard, and that they are meaningfully involved in all matters concerning them.

CHILD AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

We find this important because we children are the experts, while adults and decision makers don't know how it is to be a child today. When our voices are heard, we feel that we are able to influence our own affairs and it empowers us to make a difference in our own and other children's lives.

We recommend that:

- Grownups always ask us before you make a decision that involves us. If you ask us, we will give you the best base to make a well-informed decision. This could be done through surveys, through which you can get a lot of statistics and information. You should also follow up on the tips, recommendations, opinions and requests we have given you beforehand.
- We need to have more opportunities to speak our minds. We also need to know how we can do so and why it is important.



Families

- Families discuss children's wellbeing and rights, and that children have the ability to express their thoughts, especially in cases of big change in the family such as divorces, family moves etc. Families have dedicated "family time" a couple of times a week.



Schools

- Student councils are mandatory in all public schools and make sure that we children are included in decisions. Necessary time and financial resources are made available to enable teachers to support and advise us in organizing and conducting a student council. Before a student council meeting, procedures should be established so that class teachers and student representatives discuss the agenda of the forthcoming student council meeting with all children and ensure that all children's inputs are reflected.

- Work to include children with disabilities in the school. Work to include children with mental health issues in social and community life through effective systems and support by clinical psychologists.

- Politicians visit our schools and associations where children spend their time. When they visit, they can ask the children what they like and need. If politicians are unable to visit our schools, they could send us questionnaires and ask our inputs in that way instead.



Leisure time

- All we children have the ability to express our own wishes and thoughts and feel included, also in leisure activities. Regular meetings with us could be organized about our priorities – and summaries from the meetings should be made public and shared with the municipality for us to feel that our voices are heard.



Communities

- Youth councils are established in every municipality to secure that we are meaningfully involved in all matters concerning us and are included in decision-making processes. When something is to be changed, established, or reworked in the municipality, municipalities take necessary measures to obtain knowledge concerning our point of views. In addition to youth councils, secure that we children can participate in political organizations and pupil- and student councils at municipality level.

- Regular meetings between children and youth representatives and decision makers such as prime ministers, ministers, mayors, municipality boards, businesses and other stakeholders about children's rights should be facilitated.

We want to ensure, that all the children and young people of the Nordic region become a valuable part of a community, so we can jointly remedy or prevent unhappiness and loneliness.

INCLUSION AND BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY

We find this important, because being excluded from a community may have long-term negative consequences for us. Being included gives us, on the other hand, a feeling of closeness, friendship and that we are important and appreciated. Considering and treating children as a valuable part of a community will also strengthen our community engagement and motivate us to do good things for others and for the society.

We recommend that:

- Campaigns about article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child take place to help us understand that we are all equal and all should be part of the community



Families

- Adults and parents are engaged in their children's development. Families talk with us about issues such as successful friendships, what is happening online and school challenges, if a child feels discriminated, is bullied or feels lonely. They listen, make us feel safe and intervene, if action is needed. Parents can also share personal experiences from their own life to guide us.



Schools

- In the school, children and teachers need to step up on talking about bullying and finding ways to prevent it.
- There should also be more awareness about mental health issues to prevent stigma in the society. Awareness about mental health issues should be incorporated in the national curriculum and it should be made normal and easier for children to get help to deal with mental health issues.
- In the school, each child has a safe adult to talk to.
- Respecting our right to privacy, teachers should be supportive towards children who are returning back to school after absence due to personal issues and changes in our lives. Before

returning back, the schoolteacher should have a conversation with the child to include the child in the decision process about what to share with classmates and how the teacher can encourage classmates to be kind and inclusive after the child's return.

- It is essential for us that school nurses are available every day of the week at every school, and that we all have the possibility to visit a school psychologist or social counselor at the school, if we feel we want to. This should be made accessible, also in terms of costs, as many families do not have the financial means to help their children.



Leisure time

- Every child has equal opportunities for leisure time activities regardless of the residence municipality, family's finances or who they are. Recreational activities are free and expenses for equipment are covered through economic support or similar arrangements.
- We have time to play and enjoy ourselves. We learn skills to work with new people with open mind, and we also learn how to contribute to strengthening their community for example through common events.

- Leisure activities should keep open from early morning, so that children have a place to go to when they feel lonely. There should furthermore be public means of transportation in order to ensure that we all can reach leisure activities.



Communities

- Communities make sure that suggestions and ideas from all of us, also children in vulnerable situations, are heard. Politicians, decision makers and adults should make it easier for the new generation to engage in society.

- Events are held in the local community that speak about loneliness and discuss the situation of persons of special concern.

- All discussion about children's rights should be connected to climate change. If we don't combat climate change, we won't be alive and around to educate everyone about their rights.

- Authorities do everything within their power to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

**We, the children participating in the
Nordic Children's Forum, on 16th of
January 2020 in Copenhagen
sign this resolution:**





