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A Guide to

Child Rights Impact Assessments



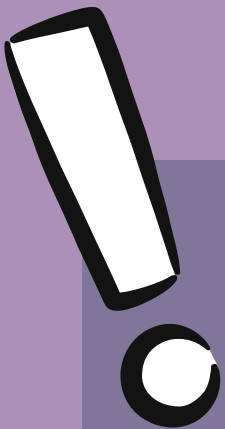
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Getting Started

A child rights impact assessment (CRIA) is a tool that helps people understand how a proposed law, policy or decision might affect children's human rights.

CRIAs can be conducted by national and local government, as well as organisations, charities, and specific services. In the Scottish context, you might also see these referred to as Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessments (CRWIA).



We have also made a video guide to help you create your CRIA, which you can watch here:

[A Step by Step Guide to Child Rights Impact Assessments](#)

Why are CRIAs important?

Using a CRIA helps people identify which rights could be impacted by a decision, whether the impact will be positive, negative or neutral. It requires decision makers to look at that evidence or data that is available, and to identify any changes that mitigate the negative impacts and maximise the positive impacts.

CRIAs offer a proactive approach to upholding children's rights, through consideration of children's rights as part of decision-making processes. This supports early identification of issues and allows for preventative changes to uphold children's rights. It also strengthens decision making, reducing the risk of breaching children's rights and in turn needing to make further changes.

It is also important that children and young people are involved in decision making, not just within CRIAs, but also within the governance mechanisms that review, support and scrutinise these, and other processes, policies and legislation.

“ CRIAs offer a proactive approach to upholding children's rights ”

Top Tips

CRIAs can seem like a daunting process, and we know that people sometimes feel overwhelmed or unsure of where to start. As part of our State of Children's Rights Report, Together explored the implementation of children's rights through the use of CRIAs. We worked with our members to learn about what the key barriers are and how these have been overcome ([See chapter 8, State of Children's Rights Report 2021](#)), and produced a set of top tips on using CRIAs.

One of the key takeaways was that there is no 'one size fits all' CRIA that works for every organisation, and as such, organisations should adopt a CRIA model that enables effective scrutiny, whilst also working for the needs of your organisation and the children involved. Models could be an adaptation of existing templates or simplified approaches, and should avoid unnecessary repetition or being overly prescriptive in terms of their structure.



Every year, Together publishes the State of Children's Rights in Scotland report which aims to monitor implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) in Scotland. Each report takes a different approach to looking at whether enough is being done to fulfill the human rights of children living in Scotland. [You can read the 2022 report here.](#)



Alongside adopting a CRIA model, organisations should seek to:



Ensure staff understand what CRIA are and why they are important. This requires complementary capacity-building around children's human rights;



Recognise the direct and indirect impact that decisions can have on children's rights. Decisions which are not immediately focused on children can still have a significant impact on their daily lives;



Ensure CRIA are started as early as possible in the decision making process;



Ensure children are involved in the CRIA design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This must involve providing children with accessible information and participation opportunities;



Gather relevant data, including disaggregated data and children's own views and experiences, to enable identification of differing impacts on certain groups;





Rights and wellbeing – effective CRIA models should focus on realising children’s rights as the means to maximise their wellbeing;



Draw out actionable recommendations to help decision makers understand what they should do;



Publish your CRIAs, including a child-friendly version;



Monitor and evaluate CRIA.

CRIA should be a continuing point of reference – they should not be treated as one-off exercises;



Capture your own learning to improve your practice and approach in carrying out future CRIAs. Share this learning with others to help them improve;

Adopting a CRIA Model: A step-by-step guide

Step 1:

Read through the tops tips and the resources below, and think about what this means for you in your organisation. E.g. how do you work with children and young people? What evidence and data will you gather? How will you involve children and young people, and when?


Step 2:

Create a template that meets the needs of the children and young people you work with. To see how others have done this, have a look at the case studies in [our report](#) (Pages 173 – 175)

Step 3:


Look at which rights are at risk, and what steps you can take to mitigate these risks. It is important to think about children's rights not just under the UNCRC, but also their wider human rights such as those protected by the Human Rights Act.

Unsure about rights? Look at our [mapping of the UNCRC Articles and the Human Rights Act](#) here.



Step 4:
Draft your CRIA and test it, seeking feedback on where it is working well, where it could be changed and what impact it is having. Use this learning to tweak your template and process.

Step 5:
Share it. Publishing your CRIA allows children and young people and others to see what decisions have been made, and why. It also encourages others to undertake CRIAs of their own.



Step 6:
Continuously re-evaluate. CRIAs are not a one-off exercise to be completed, but a supportive tool to examine the impact of decisions, which could change over time. As such, it is important that these are continuously monitored, and that any learning on how to improve your approach is gathered and implemented.



Useful Resources

Children's Commissioner Wales (no date)

[Simplified CRIA Tool](#)

European Network of Ombudspersons for Children
(2020)

[Child Rights Impact Assessments \(CRIA\)](#)

European Network of Ombudspersons for Children
(2020)

[Guide on How to Carry Out a CRIA](#)

Observatory of Children's Human Rights Scotland
(2020)

[Conducting Children's Rights Impact Assessments:
Learning in Action](#)

Together (2021)

[Webinar slides and recording](#)

UNICEF UK (2017)

[Child Rights Impact Assessments](#)



Scottish Government's CRWIA model:

Scottish Government (2021)

[CRWIA template](#)

Scottish Government (2021)

[CRWIA guidance](#)

To find CRWIAs that have been published search for '[CRWIA](#)' or '[child rights and wellbeing impact assessment](#)' on Scottish Government's website.



This resource is for information purposes only. It is not intended, and should not be used as legal advice or guidance. The law referred to in this resource may have changed since it was published.

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