

Introduction

The UNCRC Act 2024 makes children's rights part of Scottish law and is a promise to respect and protect children's rights including:

- To be listened to and taken seriously
- Protection against discrimination
- To play and relax
- Protected from hurt and being badly treated
- Protected from exploitation
- Best interests of the child

Article 12 of the UNCRC states: "children have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them".

Every child should have their rights met.

But when something isn't working, what should they do?

When children feel their rights aren't respected, there are people who can help.

Trusted adults together with children, can create positive change and make things better for everyone.

Who are trusted adults?

Youth worker, health worker, parent/ carer/ family member, advocacy worker, school staff, social worker.

What are their qualities?

Non-judgemental, friendly, trustworthy, caring, kind, respectful, supportive, believes in children, child-centred, understands children's rights.

Trusted adults work with children and others to find solutions. They listen and help plan what's next.

Children are heard and their views are respected.

Health and Wellbeing Census 21/22 findings:

67% of children and young people said they always have an adult in their life they can trust and talk to and 24% said they sometimes do.

Trusted adults, at times, may seek out information to strengthen their support for children and young people:

- Parents and carers can find support at Parent Club.
- Professionals can explore the Skills and Knowledge Framework to learn about a rights-based approach.

If there are safety concerns, trusted adults may need to speak to other adults to keep children safe.

Sometimes, and in certain circumstances, children, young people and their representatives need to seek further support from other professionals:

- Advocacy plays a vital role in ensuring children's rights are realised, particularly Article 12.
- The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland listens to children and young people.
- Law centres offer specialist lawyers in Scotland trained to help children with their rights.
- In Scotland, the process of making a complaint has been made more child-friendly, to ensure children are able to use their voice.

Working together we can make sure children's rights are respected.

Web links

[Getting Your Rights Taken Seriously – Young Scot](#) (Activate Your Rights)

[Child Friendly Complaints | SPSO](#)

[Children's rights | Parent Club](#)

<https://www.togetherscotland.org.uk/media/4070/framework.pdf> (Skills and Knowledge Framework)

[Professional guidance - Decision-making: children and young people's participation - gov.scot](#)

The Scottish Government cannot guarantee the quality or accuracy of the materials contained in external linked resources. Nothing in this document, or in its linked resources, is intended to constitute legal advice.