



### Objectives:

1. To develop an understanding of Children's Rights
2. To refresh their knowledge of Referendums and the Irish Constitution
3. To experience issues affecting Children's Rights in Ireland.

### You will need:

1. Copies of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
2. Space for moving around
3. Fact Sheet.

**Length: 40 Minutes**

Content	Activity	Time
<b>Video Introducing Children's Rights</b>	Video presented at the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child - Dublin Castle. Featuring the members of The Base Youth Centre. Watch the 6 minute <a href="#">video</a> on The Convention on the Rights of the Child.	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The Irish Constitution is the basic law of the land which all other laws must adhere to. To change the constitution the people must vote in a referendum to accept or reject the proposed change.</li> <li>▶ The Convention on the Rights of the Child is a list of rights specifically for children adopted by every country in the world except for the United States, Somalia and South Sudan.</li> <li>▶ The reason children have been given their own set of rights is because they are especially vulnerable to not having their human rights respected.</li> <li>▶ The Children's Referendum proposes to strengthen the rights of Irish children in the Constitution by recognising them as independent rights holders, providing a mechanism for them to be heard in cases that affect them and to ensure that the best interest of the child is taken into account in relevant decision-making.</li> <li>▶ The workshops will also demonstrate the value of young people's participation in this debate.</li> </ul>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>Activity (Game)</b>	In this game participants will be given random facts about Ireland's record on children's rights. They will respond by stepping forwards or backwards depending on the number they call out and the corresponding fact.  <b>Directions:</b> Participants line up in the middle of the room. Choose a student to hold and read out from the numbered fact sheet. Ask participants to take turns picking a number from 1 to 4. Each number represents a fact, statistic or situation regarding the rights of children in Ireland. Depending on the positive or negative outcome to children, they either step forwards (sometimes as a group) or backwards.	<b>15 mins</b>



# Workshop # 1

## Young People's Toolkit

Written by Vivienne Parry

Content	Activity	Time
<b>Discussion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Ask participants to look around and see where they are placed in relation to others in the group? Ask them how that feels?</li> <li>▶ Do they think the upcoming referendum will change the outcome of the game? Do they think it will ensure children stay on the same line together?</li> </ul>	<b>10 mins</b>
<b>At Home</b>	Ask the participants to take one fact that shocked them or encouraged them and text, email, videoblog, facebook or tweet about it.	

	Example for calling out	Fact/Source	Convention on the Rights of the Child
1	The Government is holding a Children's Rights Referendum Everyone. Step forward 1.	The Government will be holding a Referendum on Children's Rights in 2012/13.	<b>Article 4: Implementation of rights.</b> The State must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.
1	The Government took nearly twenty years to hold this Referendum. Step back 1.	In 1993, Catherine McGuinness identified the need to strengthen children's constitutional rights to help ensure children are adequately protected from abuse in her report on the Kilkenny Incest case.	<b>Article 4: Implementation of rights.</b> The State must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.
1	Half of all young people in Ireland have suffered from bullying. You are being bullied. Step back 2.	More than half of young people in Ireland report that they have been bullied. (UNICEF Changing the Future Report)	<b>Article 19: Protection from abuse &amp; neglect.</b> The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.
1	You live in a loving home. Step forward 2.	The number of cases of confirmed child abuse has increased. (Child Care Interim Data Set, Health Service Executive, 2008).	<b>Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect.</b> The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.
1	You are among the estimated 800 children that are homeless. Step back 3.	Recent official figures showed that almost 800 children were homeless and in need of emergency accommodation in 2009. Up to one-quarter of these children were under 12. (HSE).	<b>Article 27: Standard of living.</b> Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility can be, and is, fulfilled. State responsibility can include material assistance to parents and their children.
1	Ireland spends very little on education when compared to other rich countries. Your school is run down. Step back 2.	Ireland is fourth from bottom on education spending, at 27th place amongst OECD countries. (Children's Rights Alliance).	<b>Article 28: Education.</b> The child has a right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child, to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity and to ensure that school discipline is consistent with children's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement the right to education.
1	You have your own computer. Step forward 1.	The Programme for Government commits to develop a National Literacy Strategy for children and young people as a matter of urgency, with school-level targets that are related to national targets.	<b>Article 17: Access to appropriate information.</b> The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information that is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.
1	One in six students have poor reading skills. You struggle to read and find school difficult. Step back 1.	One in six students in Ireland (17%) has poor reading skills. (Children's Rights Alliance).	<b>Article 28: Education.</b> The child has a right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child, to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity and to ensure that school discipline is consistent with children's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement the right to education.
1	You suffer from depression and have been placed in an adult mental health in-patient unit. Step back 1.	Just 39 of the promised 108 in-patient hospital beds for children and adolescents with mental health difficulties were available by the end of 2011. This inadequate provision meant that children were still placed in adult in-patient units in 2011.	<b>Article 24: Health and health services.</b> The child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. States shall place special emphasis on the reduction of infant and child mortality and on the provision of primary and preventive health care and of public health education. They shall encourage international cooperation in this regard and strive to see that no child is deprived of access to effective health services.
1	How do you grade your Government's ability to look after the nation's children. Step forward 1 or back 1. The Children's Rights Alliance Graded the Government with a C+.	The Children's Rights Alliance Report Card 2012 examines whether the Government has honoured the promises it has made to the one million children living in Ireland. The Government went from a D- to a C+ in 2012.	<b>Article 3: Best interests of the child.</b> All actions concerning the child shall take full account of his or her best interests. The State shall provide the child with adequate care when parents, or others charged with parental responsibility, fail to do so.

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2	You, like 2,000 other children in long-term foster care, are unable to be adopted. Step back 4.	There are over 6,000 children in care in Ireland and a third of these children have been in long-term care (for more than 5 years) and may have little or no contact with their birth parents. Currently the Constitution hinders the adoption of up to 2,000 children in long-term foster care because their birth parents are married.	<b>Article 3: Best interests of the child.</b> All actions concerning the child shall take full account of his or her best interests. The State shall provide the child with adequate care when parents, or others charged with parental responsibility, fail to do so.
2	You are participating in this UNICEF Workshop. Step forward 1.	UNICEF Believe children should be discussing the upcoming Children's Rights Referendum.	<b>Article 12: Respect of the child's views.</b> The child has the right to express his or her opinion freely and to have that opinion taken into account in any matter or procedure affecting the child.
2	You are among the 1 in 11 children who suffers from having a parent who abuses alcohol. Step back 1.	In 2010, between 61,000 and 104,000 children aged under 15 years in Ireland were estimated to be living with parents who misuse alcohol. (Children's Rights Alliance).	<b>Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect.</b> The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.
2	You, like 20% of your peers, smoke. Step back 2.	In total, 1 in 4 females smoke, while 1 in 5 males smoke. (UNICEF Changing the Future Report 2010 - Age Range, 16-20).	<b>Article 33: Drug abuse.</b> Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.
2	You, like many of your peers got drunk this weekend. Step back 2.	Teenagers in Ireland are ranked the third highest binge drinkers in the EU. (Children's Rights Alliance).	<b>Article 33: Drug abuse.</b> Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.
2	You are unaware of the risk factors of unprotected sex. Step back 2.	1 in 5 sexually active respondents reported that they did not use a condom the first time that they had sex. (UNICEF Survey 2010).	<b>Article 17: Access to appropriate information.</b> The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information that is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.
2	You are a regular user of alcohol. Step back 2.	One in four 16 – 17 year olds claim to drink alcohol at least once a week. Youth ID.	<b>Article 33: Drug abuse.</b> Children have the right to protection from the use of narcotic and psychotropic drugs, and from being involved in their production or distribution.
2	You/Your girlfriend were denied reentry to school because you /she were pregnant. Step back 2.	The Ombudsman for Children finds that a school discriminates against a child for not allowing her to enroll because she is pregnant and because she is a single mother. (Ombudsman for Children Office).	<b>Article 28: Education.</b> The child has a right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child, to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity and to ensure that school discipline is consistent with children's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement the right to education.

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3	You are NOT among the group of students surveyed who watched pornography on the internet and found it accurate and educational. Step forward 2.	The majority of respondents (54 per cent) said that they had watched pornography on the internet, and more than one third of those believed that it was accurate or educational. (UNICEF Survey 2010).	<b>Article 17: Access to appropriate information.</b> The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information that is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.
3	You live in Ireland and have access to more wealth, education, healthcare and rights than a majority of children on this planet. Everyone Step forward 4.	GDP in Ireland is ranked 15th among 183 countries. IMF ranking 2010/11.	<b>Article 26: Social security.</b> The child has the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance.
3	Your parent avails of the Centra "Children's Allowance Day Deal" and spends €25 on two packs of beer. Step back 1.	€25 - The price of two packs of beer as listed on a Centra 'Children's Allowance Day Deals' promotional deals.	<b>Article 27: Standard of living.</b> Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility can be, and is, fulfilled. State responsibility can include material assistance to parents and their children.
3	True or False: Ireland spends comparatively more on education than United States, Moldova. Step back 1.	A 2011 report indicates that Ireland invests 4.7% of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in education, well below the average of 6.2% across the 31 OECD countries, <sup>11</sup> ranking Ireland fourth from bottom on education spending, at 27th place. Over the last fifteen years spending on education fell from 19% to 16% Children's Rights Alliance.	<b>Article 28: Education.</b> The child has a right to education, and the State's duty is to ensure that primary education is free and compulsory, to encourage different forms of secondary education accessible to every child, to make higher education available to all on the basis of capacity and to ensure that school discipline is consistent with children's rights and dignity. The State shall engage in international cooperation to implement the right to education.
3	You saw something online last night that was dangerous and disturbing. Step back 1.	One in five children have been exposed to dangerous content on Internet. (EU Kids Online Study)	<b>Article 17: Access to appropriate information.</b> The State shall ensure the accessibility to children of information and material from a diversity of sources, and it shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information that is of social and cultural benefit to the child, and take steps to protect him or her from harmful materials.
3	You are a Traveller and suffer harassment and bullying everywhere you go. Step back 3.	Children from "visible minority" groups are bullied more than their peers, facing racist slurs as well as physical violence. The Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI).	<b>Article 27: Standard of living.</b> Every child has the right to a standard of living adequate for his or her physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. Parents have the primary responsibility to ensure that the child has an adequate standard of living. The State's duty is to ensure that this responsibility can be, and is, fulfilled. State responsibility can include material assistance to parents and their children.
3	You are from a war torn country and have lost your parents. You are in the care of the state, but you, like 114 others in the past 5 years have gone missing. Step back 6.	114 children who have been reported missing in the past five years are still missing. A staggering 106 of those 114 children were reported missing while in care of the State. (John O'Mahoney, Garda Assistant Commissioner).	<b>Article 35: Sale, trafficking and abduction.</b> It is the State's obligation to make every effort to prevent the sale, trafficking and abduction of children.
3	You were kidnapped and smuggled in to Ireland by a gang and are now forced into slavery. Step back 8.	In 2010, 19 kids were trafficked or forcibly brought to Ireland for sexual exploitation or slavery. (Anti Human Trafficking Unit,2010).	<b>Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect.</b> The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.

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4	You are in the care of the State and lived unlike the 200 others who died over the last 10 years. Step back 6.	196 children died while in care of the state over the last 10 years. Independent Child Death Review Group.	<b>Article 20: Protection of a child without family.</b> The State is obliged to provide special protection for a child deprived of the family environment and to ensure that appropriate alternative family care or institutional placement is available in.  <b>Article 25: Periodic review of placement.</b> A child who is placed by the State for reasons of care, protection or treatment is entitled to have that placement evaluated regularly.
4	You were a victim of a crime last night when you reported it to Gardaí they added it to the over 3500 other crimes perpetrated against children every year. Step back 1, You've a 1 in 10 chance of the person who did this to you being convicted, step back another 2.	Over 3,500 crimes against children on average are being reported to Gardaí every year, but less than a fifth of these are resulting in a court prosecution, and just one in ten of all cases have ended in a conviction to date.(Barnardos).	<b>Article 19: Protection from abuse and neglect.</b> The State shall protect the child from all forms of maltreatment by parents or others responsible for the child's care and shall establish appropriate social programmes for the prevention of abuse and the treatment of victims.
4	You have your Facebook profile set to private unlike 8% of your peers. Step forward 1.	8% of children have public social networking profiles The research found that children who have their profile set to public are also more likely to display their phone number or address online. (EU Kids Online Study).	<b>Article 16: Protection of privacy.</b> Children have the right to protection from interference with their privacy, family, home and correspondence, and to protection from libel or slander.
4	Your friend posted a compromising picture of you without your permission. Step back 2.	8% of children have public social networking profiles The research found that children who have their profile set to public are also more likely to display their phone number or address online. (EU Kids Online Study).	<b>Article 16: Protection of privacy.</b> Children have the right to protection from interference with their privacy, family, home and correspondence, and to protection from libel or slander.
4	As a child who has no religion you can legally be discriminated against by 96% of primary schools in Ireland. Step back 4.	Under section 15(2)(d) of the Education Act schools are entitled to discriminate against pupils who are not of their specific faith or ethos. Consequently, a non-denominational child can be refused entry to a religious school.(The Forum on Patronage and Pluralism in the Primary Sector).	<b>Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion.</b> The State shall respect the child's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance.  <b>Article 29: Aims of education.</b> Education shall aim at developing the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education shall prepare the child for an active adult life in a free society and shall foster in the child respect for his or her parents, for his or her own cultural identity, language and values, and for the cultural background and values of others.
4	You are not religious but your local school is a denominational school. You must sit at the back of the classroom during Faith Formation classes. Step back 1.	The lack of realistic alternatives available to minority belief children means that the integration of doctrinal faith into secular subjects and throughout the school day is contrary to international human rights law as it threatens the right to education and the right to freedom of religions of pupils and parents. (A Mawhinney Submission to the Irish Human Rights Commission).	<b>Article 14: Freedom of thought, conscience and religion.</b> The State shall respect the child's right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, subject to appropriate parental guidance.  <b>Article 29: Aims of education.</b> Education shall aim at developing the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to the fullest extent. Education shall prepare the child for an active adult life in a free society and shall foster in the child respect for his or her parents, for his or her own cultural identity, language and values, and for the cultural background and values of others.
4	You do not eat your five a day. Step back 1.	One in every five children in Ireland is considered obese. National Survey 'Growing Up in Ireland'.	<b>Article 24: Health and health services.</b> The child has a right to the highest standard of health and medical care attainable. States shall place special emphasis on the reduction of infant and child mortality and on the provision of primary and preventive health care and of public health education. They shall encourage international cooperation in this regard and strive to see that no child is deprived of access to effective health services.
4	Most young people in Ireland are happy. Are you happy? Step forward or back 1.	The majority of young people living in Ireland report that they are happy. (UNICEF Changing the Future Report)	<b>Article 4: Implementation of rights.</b> The State must do all it can to implement the rights contained in the Convention.