

# THE UNCRC AND ME!

## What is the *UNCRC*?

The *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC]* is a list of 54 Articles that cover all aspects of life for young people under the age of eighteen. 40 of the Articles describe the rights that the government must make sure they have. The United Kingdom signed up to the *UNCRC* in 1991.

When Governments agree to put the *UNCRC* into practice, they must prepare a report for the *Committee on the Rights of the Child* after two years, and then every five years. This is known as the Reporting Process. The *Committee* is a group of adults from different countries who are experts on children and young people's rights. The *Committee* regularly examine the *UK Government's* record on implementing children and young people's rights before publishing its *Concluding Observations*.

## What are the *Concluding Observations*?

The Committee makes recommendations on how Governments can better incorporate children and young people's rights and improve upon current policy and practice to ensure that all children and young people are enjoying their full range of rights entitlements. These recommendations are called '*Concluding Observations*'.

The following recommendations have been put together by the children and young people involved with *Glasgow Association for Mental Health* during a process of consultation with *Article 12 in Scotland*.

## Our Recommendations:

### **Participation: the rights that allow young people to take part in wider society and have a say in the matters that affect both themselves, and their community:**

#### Our recommendations:

- We must be listened to and involved in decision making processes at all levels, in order to ensure the support that is so crucial to our lives and development, is relevant to our needs and the needs of our families;
- Information regarding services and support must be straightforward and accessible; we want to take control of finding the best fit for ourselves and our families;
- An increase in projects such as *GAMH*, the support offered by such organisations is invaluable;
- Increased help and support with work placements;
- We want to be treated as individuals;
- More support with home life and child-care responsibilities;
- An increase in the places and activities available in which we can safely socialise;
- The *UNCRC* to be taught in schools to all students and staff.

### **Protection: the right to have a safe environment free from all sorts of abuse:**

#### Our recommendations:

- We want to see more national campaigns to tackle negative stereotypes and raise awareness of who we are and how we are affected by parental mental ill-health;
- Increased peer education in school: we want to inform others of our realities;
- Better respite care provisions in order to have the time to do all the things 'regular' young people do in order to develop and have fun;
- The government should be more transparent and use less jargon to make policy more accessible;
- The government should provide increased additional support and information to young people and families experiencing mental ill-health.

### **Survival: having your basic needs met:**

#### Our recommendations:

- Mental health provisions must be at the forefront of reform and service reviews;
- Accessible support for those who need it;
- Appropriate and flexible education;
- Increased, rather than decreased, benefits.

### **Development: what you need to grow and develop as a human being:**

#### Our recommendations:

- We want a say in how our education is delivered, and to see an increase in school support;
- More awareness-raising concerning the issues faced by us would increase understanding about the roles and responsibilities that come with parental mental ill-health; this would help stop bullying and lessen discrimination;
- Peer-led training for teachers would help to identify any young people that may be 'hidden' [or unwilling to come forward], ensuring that all young people get the support to which they are entitled;
- An increase in support and better respite care provisions.

*Do you want to have your say,  
get involved or find out more?*



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