

What are Children's Rights?

Have you heard of the **United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**?

It is a list of rights that all children aged 0-18 years have.

Rights make sure we're all treated fairly; can reach our full potential and can communicate our voice. Babies and young children have additional rights to adults, because they need extra protection and are highly dependent on the adults around them. To ensure children's rights, these adults should think about what's best for babies and young children in their day to day lives, to make sure they can enjoy their rights and be healthy, happy and safe.

Ultimately it is about what all babies and young children need to grow up **Happy, Healthy and Safe**.

The UNCRC isn't an additional ask or something to give you more to do. Nor does it mean babies and young children can do whatever they want, whenever they want! It provides you with the understanding and support to ensure babies and young children have the best start in life.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

How to support babies and young children's rights

Here I am! (0-12 months)

I'm finding out about my rights through how others treat and care for me. Everything is new for me; the important adults around me need to keep me close and take time to show me new things, as I make sense of the world in a calm and safe way. Talk to me, give me things to feel, touch, taste, look and listen to, I want to find out how things work. I need everyone to think about what things are like for me and how I would feel before making any big decisions.

I might not be able to talk but I am already communicating with you, watch my expressions, movements and the sounds I make; this is my language, you just need time to learn what it all means. As you listen to me you will understand me more. Yes, I do cry, but I am only trying to tell you something.

I'm exploring! (1-2 years)

I'm finding out about my rights as you guide and support me and provide opportunities for me to try new things and make choices. I still like to know where you are and see you close by. I feel safe when things are familiar, and everyone knows what I like and don't like. I have my own individual and unique personality; I just need help to work this out. Watch me to see what I do; and get to know my family and who I am.

You may be able to understand me better now; as I can start to point; lead you places; talk about what I want and need. Give me time and space as not everyone understands or knows my special ways, as I begin to explore the world around me, I need you to speak to the others that care for me and talk about me so that everyone really gets to know me.



Look at me now! (2-3 years)

I'm finding out about my rights by learning and exploring how my body, things and people work. Play is my world and I'm watching and learning from all that is around me. I am starting to think about my own likes and dislikes and enjoy time and space to make my own choices and decisions. My body is full of big feelings, I can sometimes tell you what they are and other times I really don't know and need your help. Change can be scary for me, and I need you to help me understand and get familiar with new things.

Give plenty of time to listen to me and take a real interest in what I have to say or share. I can help you understand what things are like for me, you can enter 'my world'. I find it easier to talk and play with an adult I know and trust. I communicate in lots of ways through play, body language, facial expression, drawing and painting. Sometimes you just need to watch me to work out what I am saying or feeling. Sometimes I might not want to share my thoughts and opinions, it is okay for me to be silent, maybe you could try another time or way.

Watch me go, here I come! (3-5 years)

I'm finding out about my rights as I am supported to express, make, and share my own ideas, I need you to hear, recognise and act on these. I am learning more about who I am and following my own interests. Playing is my learning space, I am really trying to learn to share and follow simple rules, this isn't always easy, and I need you to help me when I find things hard and teach me what to do next time. I can do a lot more things now but can do even more, so give me lots of opportunities to learn and try new things.

I am using my words much more now, but still remember to look at the other ways I communicate with you, I am telling you so much. I need you to ask me but also try to think about what it is like for me and how I would feel, this will help when you make any big decisions. I'm learning more about who I am and how valued I am, I know you can't always do what I want but remember to tell me why so I can understand. You can start to use some of the bigger words now and talk about my rights with me.

