

MÁRIA HERCZOG*

Training of Professionals on Child Rights

ABSTRACT: It is universally recognized that children have rights that are inalienable and indivisible. All children are entitled to be aware of and exercise their rights. The exposure, experience and education that children receive in their formative years determines their development and well-being. The United Nations Convention on Rights of the Child (UNCRC) set the guiding principles and its implementation, including awareness raising, education about child rights for all, including children themselves, parents, professionals and the public. The ultimate aim of the education, training on child rights for professionals is to sensitize, inform them and ensure that they are working with children in line with the principles and requirements of the UNCRC and other relevant child rights related treaties and documents. There has been so far limited efforts made to train all professionals in contact with children to learn about child rights and skills on how to implement them, involving children, raising awareness of their rights and support the use of them in their everyday life. Children play a central role in shaping the present and future, with adults offering the support required, for children's well-being and to reach their full potential, so that in collaboration, children and adults can strengthen and transform our world. To achieve this vision, children, parents, professional and the public needs to be aware of child rights and implement them properly. The article provides an overview of the current situation worldwide and describes a number of programs, trainings provided as promising practices.

KEYWORDS: awareness child rights education, professionals, training.

* Chair and program director of Család, gyermek, ifjúság Egyesület (Family, Child, Youth Association), visiting senior lecturer at ELTE Law Faculty, Vocational Training Center and ELTE Faculty of Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary PhD course, President of the Executive Committee of Child rights Connect.

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1. Introduction

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is the most widely ratified human rights instrument in the world, and its adoption since 1989 has influenced and shaped, in many ways, the approaches to children, policies, and conversations concerning their participation in decision-making on issues that affect them, and their education as active citizens.

Recognition of the importance of childhood, ensuring safe, caring, and joyful early years of life, and partnership between children and adults require knowledge and appropriate application of children's rights by all those who come into contact with children, including parents, professionals, and the media. Knowing child rights and understanding their relevance are also essential for the wider public.

In its reporting and consultations with States parties, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child focuses on whether States are fulfilling their obligations to 'undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, through appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.'¹ In the questionnaire provided to the state parties for preparing the simplified reporting, the expectation is more specifically formulated: '...measures taken to make the principles and provisions of the Convention and its Optional Protocols widely known to adults and children through dissemination, training and integration into school curricula.'²

In this article, we focus on the training of professionals on children's rights, highlighting the importance of ensuring that parents as well as the general public understand children's rights, especially as they vary and are often subject to misunderstandings and misinterpretations. However, there is often a lack of a child rights-based approach, recognition, and application in daily practice in all areas. The interpretation that children must first learn about and fulfill their obligations and only then become "entitled" to exercise their rights is very common. This is contrary to both human rights and children's rights approaches, according to which rights are unconditional for all human beings, including children, and do not have to

¹ Art. 42 of the UNCRC.

²19 (g), Guidelines on reporting (2015), Available at: <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G15/040/49/PDF/G1504049.pdf?OpenElement> (Accessed: 18 September 2023.)

be earned; respect for them is a fundamental condition in all cases. ‘Every person has the same rights as a result of common humanity. We are all equally entitled to human rights without discrimination. These rights are interrelated, interdependent, and indivisible.’³

According to a survey by the UNICEF Hungarian Committee

only one in three children were aware that they have special rights other than those of adults, but 88% of children thought it was important for them to know their rights. Half of the children surveyed thought that adults did not give them a say in issues that affected them, and one in five thought that adults did not respect children.⁴

A study was conducted in 16 countries with almost 18,000 eight-year-old children on their understanding of their rights and their opinions about respect for their rights. Only a minority of the children were aware of child rights, while most felt that their rights were respected. There was significant variation of responses to every dimension of the investigated rights. Three indicators were found to be relevant: family deprivation, home climate, and school climate are all connected to children's awareness and self-assurance. The authors' hypothesis that children's rights outcomes are influenced by at least three factors—family background, school, and the wider community—including local and national level factors, is accurate.

These findings further enhance the conviction that raising awareness in the widest possible circles in society and providing training to all those working with children can lead to desired outcomes, that is, to educate children on their rights so they can exercise them.⁵

2. Education programs for professionals

Professionals working with children include all those who come into contact with children in the course of their activities, including but not limited to health, early childhood care, education, all other forms of education, social

³ *Child rights and human rights explained*, UNICEF, Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/children-human-rights-explained> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

⁴ Lux, 2014.

⁵ af Ursin and Haanpää, 2018, pp. 1425–1443.

services, child protection, administration, law enforcement, justice, and humanitarian organizations. We have very little or incomplete knowledge and information about where and how children's rights are taught in various professional, basic, and further training courses globally, and there is a great need for research and assessment in this area.

Despite the widely recognized and ratified UNCRC, its implementation is still very limited in most countries, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child can only make recommendations during consultations and concluding observations for the state parties. There are hardly any resources to monitor and evaluate in a systemic way the implementation of the Convention and the concluding observations made; neither the Committee itself nor international and national experts, NGOs, and advocates are in a position to do so.

A wide range of professionals need thorough knowledge of children's rights to develop a common language for a child rights-based approach using the concepts, frameworks, principles, and values used in the Convention and its related documents, optional protocols, recommendations, and comprehensive commentaries. This language should be child- and user-friendly so that it is accessible and understandable. Professionals can help children, parents, and the wider public be aware, understand, accept, and apply children's rights.

There have been several attempts to raise awareness of the need to prepare professionals to learn and teach about child rights and implement them in their practice. The focus has been primarily on educators and only in a limited way on other professionals.

In 2015, UNICEF conducted a study covering 26 countries about teaching and learning child rights. The experts prepared an online survey to collect data on teachers' education on children's rights, including early childhood education and care services, and primary and secondary school educators, looking at an overview of teaching child rights in all these settings by trained professionals. A literature review and collection of case studies were also part of the research done.

The literature review identified several issues about the lack or partial availability of different level policies supporting child rights education, including the need for training and knowledge/skills sharing with teachers to create change and the needed attitude, that could be combined with other education agendas and topics. In case policymakers and teachers are aware of these options, relationships and networks are essential to introduce child

rights education. Possible interpretations and implementations have received an ideological dimension that needs to be considered and addressed.⁶

The survey was a follow-up to learn about the impact and the possible implementation of the Child Rights Education Toolkit, developed by UNICEF in 2014. It provides the opportunity to professionals in formal education settings from early years services until secondary education to empower both adults and children to take action advocating for and applying these at the family, school, community, national, and global levels.⁷

According to the survey, only 11 countries have an entitlement to teach and learn about child rights; in seven countries, some schools or regions include partial child rights education. Rights are linked to responsibilities and not to the UNCRC. In many countries, the central government has no entitlement to influence the national curriculum and lacks any coordination mechanisms to implement Article 42 of the UNCRC. None of the 26 countries could ensure teacher training on child rights or familiarity with the UNCRC.⁸

The International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD) is a Canadian charity that was established to expand the capacity of professionals to use a child rights-based approach and support children to reach their full potential and learn about participation and leadership. Their aim is ‘to enhance the capacity of individuals, organizations, governments and young people to transform systems to fulfill their rights as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.’

Their vision is for children and youth to play a central role in shaping the present and future, with adults offering the support required, so that in collaboration, children and adults can strengthen and transform our world. To achieve this vision, we believe that the approach to children’s rights must change.⁹

⁶ Jerome et al., 2015, p. 7.

⁷ UNICEF, 2014a.

⁸ Jerome et al., 2015, pp. 8–9.

⁹ *About Us*, International Institute for Child Rights and Development, IICRD, Available at: <https://www.iicrd.org/about-us> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

They provide training worldwide to implement child-centered practices by expanding the capacities of professionals working with children.

The Child Rights Education for Professionals (CRED-PRO) ‘is an international training program to improve the well-being, development, and health of children throughout the world by infusing a child rights approach in all aspects of the professional services and policy applied to children and youth.’¹⁰ CRED-PRO is present in 11 countries and four regions, not only providing training but also actively improving the health and well-being of children with a rights-based vision, following the UNCRC principles and values, and working together with local stakeholders. They produce online training materials that are accessible to all professionals and those interested in learning about child rights and their implementation. Ambition is the provision of basic programs adaptable to different professionals, practitioners, and those working in policymaking and research. Considering the different cultures and economic and social structures, the programs are open to modification and are inclusive, sensitive, and flexible. The organization has been struggling with limited resources and interest, however, it is hoped that free, accessible online materials will create openness and attract funders and professionals to use these resources, exchange experiences, and further develop international, national, and local cooperation.

The UN High Commission for Human Rights has developed human rights education materials and training programs for both formal and informal education, including professionals. They also provide resources and information-sharing platforms that contribute to the education of professionals, practitioners, and advocates. This activity is based on Resolution 59/113 of the UN General Assembly in 2004 on the World Program for Human Rights Education to enhance the implementation of these programs in all sectors. It is extended to the second, third, and fourth phases until 2024 to focus on youth empowerment through human rights education.¹¹

¹⁰ *Child Rights Education for Professionals* (CRED-PRO), IICRD, Available at: <http://www.iicrd.org/projects/child-rights-education-professionals-cred-pro#sthash.567iWKiH.dpuf> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

¹¹ *Human Rights Education and Training*, United Nations, Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/en/resources/educators/human-rights-education-training> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

3. Programs in Europe

Several regional programs have been provided to European professionals. The Council of Europe project ‘Building a Europe for and with children’¹² was launched in 2006 based on the decision made a year earlier by the representatives at the Third Summit of the Heads of States and Governments of the Council of Europe. The Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2012-2015 created a vision for the Council of Europe on its role and activities, relying on earlier policies and practices, government requests, and the outcomes of consultations and feedback from stakeholders. As a follow-up among other projects, an e-learning program was developed to support primarily legal professionals to be trained in different areas of human rights, called Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals (HELP)¹³ as part of the Child Rights Strategy of the Council of Europe 2022-2027.

The Council of Europe 2030 strategy for the youth sector is based on the central roles of youth participation, human rights education, and intercultural dialogue in the activities of the Youth Department, including children from the age of 13.¹⁴

A training manual called “Compass” was developed and published in 2002¹⁵ and has since become a reference book for those working with young people in different areas. It has so far been translated into more than 30 languages, and in some countries, it has been a resource reference for rights education in several settings, including schools. In addition to the success of the manual, it faced challenges when rejected by those not in favor of the implementation of human rights and their complexities. Following this success story, another manual was developed in 2007, focusing on human rights education for children called “Compasito.”¹⁶ Both manuals primarily support educators and trainers in learning how to teach human rights and how to implement them in formal and non-formal education. A fully revised and updated edition of “Compasito” will be published in 2021, following several consultations, an online survey on experiences, necessary changes,

¹² *Building a Europe for and with children*, Council of Europe, Available at: <https://www.coe.int/t/dg3/children/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

¹³ *Human Rights Education for Legal Professionals*, Council of Europe, Available at: <https://help.elearning.ext.coe.int> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

¹⁴ Council of Europe, 2022.

¹⁵ Brander et al., 2020.

¹⁶ Gomes et al., 2020.

and pilot training programs. It is available online in three languages (English, French, and Russian) and in several other languages, changing quickly as more translations are made.¹⁷

“Compasito” presents child rights within the broader context of human rights through the process of enabling children, particularly those aged 5–13, to understand their own rights and that everyone has human rights while advocating that children need more protection and have more and somewhat different rights.

The UNCRC identifies the human rights relevant to children. Learning about and experiencing children’s rights helps children understand what human rights are about, understand that they are right holders themselves, and adapt and apply their rights to everyday life. These are the key aims of human rights education.¹⁸

Providing nonformal educational methodology and structure with theoretical and practical support for educators who use the manual, similar to the CRED-PRO program, this program allows an opportunity for adaptation based on local needs and culture. It is based on the joint activities of adults and children, and most of them require trained professionals to facilitate the program and develop knowledge and skills. Learning about human rights and child rights enables children to defend their rights and respect the equality, equity, and dignity of themselves and others.

The Council of Europe has provided partnerships and project opportunities to several international and national organizations in the area of child rights education and training for professionals and children.

‘Training Professionals Working with Children in Care’ was a two-year partnership (2015-2016) between SOS Children’s Villages International, the Council of Europe, Eurochild and partners in Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, France, Italy, Latvia, Hungary, and Romania. This project aimed to improve the living conditions and life prospects of children and young people living in alternative care by providing care professionals with continued training on applying a child rights-based approach to their work. The training was based on two guidelines prepared for children by SOS

¹⁷ Brander et al., 2009.

¹⁸ Gomes et al., 2020, p. 9.

Children's Villages International and the Council of Europe titled 'Securing Children's Rights and Discovering Your Rights.'

A handbook was also prepared: 'Realizing Children's Rights: A Training Manual for Care Professionals Working with Children in Alternative Care, based on the experiences and best practices of different European countries.' International training workshops for two trainers from each country were also conducted by a team of international experts, followed by national training held for 842 care professionals from various care-providing organizations.¹⁹

With additional funding provided by the EU, SOS Children's Villages International, and Eurochild began developing 'A European Recommendations on the Implementation of a Child-Rights Based Approach For Care Professionals Working With and For Children' as another output of the program.²⁰

4. EU funded programs

The European Union launched its Child Rights Strategy²¹ in March 2022, based on consultations with over 10,000 children. The thematic areas of the strategy focus on child participation in political and democratic life, socioeconomic inclusion, health and education, combating violence against children and ensuring child protection, child-friendly justice, digital and information society, and the global dimension of children outside the EU.

So far, there is no specific program aimed at training professionals in child rights. However, the mainstreaming of child rights in different EU policies have started and been encouraged. Several grants and programs have provided opportunities to develop national and regional programs for professionals and children themselves to run training in child rights-related topics, but there is no available catalogue of those programs. Therefore, we cannot provide detailed information on their content and ability. Nevertheless, some examples demonstrate their richness and diversity.

A specific 5 hours training course was conducted on the basic knowledge and skills for a meaningful inclusion of child rights principles and practices in EU Development Cooperation²². It is an interesting example

¹⁹ SOS Children's Villages, no date.

²⁰ SOS Children's Villages, 2016.

²¹ European Commission, 2022.

²² UNICEF, 2014b.

that hopefully would be just the start of an EU-wide program providing training opportunities for professionals in different sectors, based on the EU Child Rights Strategy and its targets.

‘Children as Champions of Change: Ensuring Children’s Rights and Meaningful Participation’ funded by the European Union Rights, Equality and Citizenship Program and implemented by seven UNICEF National Committees: Ireland as a lead partner, Austria, France, Germany, Iceland, the Netherlands and Portugal. Partner organizations will implement several activities individually and jointly to raise awareness about child rights, Child Rights Schools, and child participation between 2021 and 2023, including training for professionals and children.²³

The project, titled ‘Unlocking Children’s Rights: Strengthening the capacity of professionals in the EU to fulfil the rights of vulnerable children’, involved partners from ten European countries, including Coram Voice and Coram Children’s Legal Centre from the UK, FICE Bulgaria, Czech Helsinki Committee, the University College Cork, Children of Slovakia Foundation, Estonian Centre for Human Rights, European Roma Rights Centre (Hungary), Fondazione L’Albero della Vita (Italy), Empowering Children Foundation (Poland), Social Educational Action (Greece), and Family, Child, Youth Association (Hungary).²⁴ The aim was to develop a comprehensive learning system, including face-to-face training modules, e-learning packages, and an online knowledge-sharing resource for professionals working with children in residential care facilities, detention centers, and justice systems across the EU. An accompanying advocacy and dissemination guide was developed to identify how training could be integrated into existing training in different sectors, registration, and accreditation systems.

Following the project, national partners could accredit the training programs and invite professionals to participate in the translated and adapted versions.²⁵

In every country most presumably there are vocational courses, trainings designed and provided to different professionals. However, to our knowledge, no collection of those opportunities has been gathered. It seems

²³ *EU-UNICEF Child Rights Education Project (2021)*, UNICEF & the European Union, Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/eu/eu-unicef-child-rights-education-project> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

²⁴ Coram Children’s Legal Centre, 2016.

²⁵ Család, gyermek, ifjúság Közhasznú Egyesület, 2020.

that no country has designed a comprehensive system for teaching child rights to all those working with children, considering the different needs of relevant professionals.

5. Formal higher education programs

A growing number of universities worldwide provide MA programs for professionals interested in and working on child rights. The courses are most often affiliated with law faculties and schools, but do not aim to reach legal professionals only, covering all other areas and expertise. In many instances, the courses are combined with specific areas of child rights, such as child welfare and protection, the early years of development and care, and humanitarian crises.

There is no information gathered on the presumably hundreds of courses incorporating child rights into the undergraduate curricula; however, according to the scarce information available, they seem to be partial, limited, and do not support professionals effectively to learn how to implement child rights in their practices, how to empower children to be aware of their rights, and the implementation options.

CREAN is a network of more than 30 European universities that offer MA courses on child rights as an interdisciplinary study and strengthens the areas of research, policies, and practices. CREAN enhances the promotion and exchange of research information, facilitates co-operation and knowledge sharing in service provision, and supports members in learning from each other through individual and group activities.²⁶

Several emblematic programs are known for those interested in vocational training for portrayals of child rights. Master of Laws: Advanced Studies in International Children's Rights (LL.M) at Leiden University is conducted in English, attracting a large number of international students, focusing on the legal aspects of child rights, offering specialization among others in children and families, migration, juvenile justice, and digital technology.²⁷

²⁶ *About*, Children's Rights European Academic Network, CREAN, Available at: <https://crean-network.org/index.php> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

²⁷ *International Children's Rights (Advanced LL.M.)*, Universiteit Leiden, Available at: <https://www.universiteitleiden.nl/en/education/study-programmes/master/international-childrens-rights> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

The Centre for Children's Rights Studies at the University of Geneva, Switzerland, is well known for its wide range of programs in child rights, including A Master's Degree in Children's Rights Studies, a Master of Advanced Studies (MCR), a Certificate of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (DAS), and Diplomas on Advanced Studies (DAS). Their summer school, the 'Children at the Hearts of Human Rights' is popular as many well-known child rights experts and former members of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child are teaching there. Their special focus is on those planning to work in child and human rights national and international organizations.²⁸

The Queens University program focuses on research and child rights and provides unique opportunities. There is a growing demand for postgraduate programs on children's rights that focus on an interdisciplinary approach, including research and child rights-based research methodologies. The program also intends to provide high-level knowledge and skills in children's rights law and the practice of value to those working with and for children in different sectors and areas.²⁹

In Hungary, the Eötvös Lóránd Tudomány Egyetem (ELTE) Law Faculty Institute for Post-graduate Legal Studies accredited a post-graduate course on child rights in 2020. The two-year course provides complex knowledge of the approach and solutions to children's rights issues in each branch of law and other professions in health, education, social services, child welfare, and protection.³⁰

Similarly, a four-semester MA Child Rights program is offered by Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, Romania, both in English and Romanian, attracting international students as well, especially as they are members of CREAN and have a long history of teaching child protection at different levels.³¹

²⁸ *Intercultural Centre in Child Rights*. Available at: <https://www.unige.ch/cide/en/> (Assessed: 18 September 2023)

²⁹ *MSc Postgraduate Taught Children's Rights*, Queen's University Belfast, Available at: <https://www.qub.ac.uk/courses/postgraduate-taught/childrens-rights-msc/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023)

³⁰ *Gyermekjogi szakjogász*, ELTE JOTOKI, Available at: <https://jotoki.elte.hu/content/gyermekjogi-szakjogasz.t.428> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

³¹ *Faculty of Sociology and Social Work*, Babes-Bolyai Universtiy, CREAN, Available at: <https://crean-network.org/index.php/membership/members/babes-bolyai-cluj-napoca> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

In Central and South America, the Latin American Network of Master's study program Children's Rights (RMI) offers inter-institutional opportunities at various universities in nine countries in cooperation with Save the Children Sweden (SCS).³²

The Department of Social Sciences at Africa University is a regional center of excellence. As a pan-African institution, it is inviting students from all countries in the region in collaboration with UNICEF to promote the Master of Science in Child Rights and Childhood Studies program from an African perspective.³³

Universities in the Asia-Pacific region seem to provide child rights studies together with human rights courses in several countries such as Hong Kong, Taiwan, Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.³⁴

In North America, Canada has also offered programs at different universities on human rights and child rights, combined or separately, such as at the University of Manitoba, since 2019.³⁵ The US, the only country that signed but has not ratified the UNCRC, has received Human Rights MA courses at a number of universities, for instance, Columbia University,³⁶ Binghamton University,³⁷ and Arizona State University,³⁸ to name a few,

³² Latin American Network of Master study programmes in Children's Rights, Available at: <https://www.childwatch.uio.no/events/courses-and-training/programmes/latinamerican-masters-network.html> (Assessed: 18 September 2023).

³³ *Master of Science In Child Rights and Childhood Studies*, Africa University, Available at:

<https://www.africau.edu/programmes/MasterofScience%20inChildRightsandChildhoodStudies.html> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

³⁴ *6 Human Rights Law Schools in Asia*, Human Rights Carriers, Available at: <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/magazine/human-rights-law-schools-in-asia/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

³⁵ *Master of Human Rights*, University of Manitoba, Available at: <https://umanitoba.ca/explore/programs-of-study/master-human-rights-mhr> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

³⁶ *MA Human Rights Studies*, Human Rights Carriers, Available at: <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/masters/ma-human-rights-studies/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

³⁷ *Master of Science in Human Rights*, Binghamton University State University of New York, Available at: <https://www.binghamton.edu/human-development/human-rights/index.html> (Accessed: 18 September 2023)

³⁸ *Social Justice and Human Rights, MA*, Human Rights Carriers, Available at: <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/masters/social-justice-and-human-rights-ma/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

covering child rights as well, while Harvard is offering an online course explicitly on child rights.³⁹

Other Universities are also offering courses online, such as the University of Geneva on Interdisciplinary Introduction to Children's Human Rights,⁴⁰ the Celsius Center for Excellence, and the University of Strathclyde, Scotland, a very popular online course that is currently not available, titled 'Getting care rights for all children: Implementing the UN Guidelines for the alternative care of children.'⁴¹

All used The Massive Online Open Course (MOOC) technology. These courses are available for free on the Coursera platform, making them accessible to everyone with interest. Those attending courses must pay for a certificate only when they need it.

6. Summary

The training of professionals aims to help them know, understand, and apply the principles of the UNCRC and the obligations of adults and the state towards children. They should promote the rights of children and share their knowledge as widely as possible with communities, politicians, policymakers, and the media so that everyone is aware of and applies the child rights approach and children's rights in programs, policies, training materials, and their practical implementation.

Anyone should be responsible and accountable for ensuring the application of child rights and human rights, respecting principles, and values, and taking them seriously. It is everyone's responsibility to ensure the right to non-discriminatory, inclusive, quality of life, development, and identity of children, providing protection from ill treatment, violence, abuse, torture, and intimidation. Ensuring the rights of children as equal citizens, listening to them, and taking their views into consideration in all matters affecting them and considering their interests in all decisions would make it

³⁹ *Child Protection: Children's Rights in Theory and Practice*, Harvard University, Available at: <https://pll.harvard.edu/course/child-protection-childrens-rights-theory-and-practice?delta=0> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

⁴⁰ *MOOC - Interdisciplinary introduction to children's human rights*, Université de Genève, Available at: <https://www.unige.ch/cide/en/enseignement/mooc-interdisciplinary-introduction-childrens-human-rights/> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

⁴¹ *Getting Care Right for All Children: Implementing the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children*, CELCIS, University of Strathclyde Glasgow, Available at: <https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/alternative-care> (Accessed: 18 September 2023).

possible to mainstream child rights and make it a general language and practice.

There are several challenges to communicating and implementing children's rights. Teaching children about their rights and enabling them to exercise them is only feasible if the adults around them are aware of their rights and feel confident about living accordingly.

If adults feel that they cannot exercise their own rights or the rights of others, or even if they believe that not everyone has the same rights, then they do not recognize or respect the rights of children.

Children learn and follow the pattern of what they see and experience from the behavior, lifestyle, and reactions of the adults around them, not from what they tell them, so it is of paramount importance that they see and perceive that adults respect themselves and others and know and respect human rights and children's rights. This is the best way to transfer knowledge and skills.

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