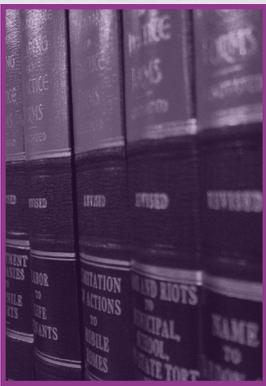


TO: United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

FROM: United Kingdom Children's Commissioners

A children and young people's version of the report that looks at how the UK Government is doing at protecting children's rights.

The top five areas we want you to know about:



1. Children's rights becoming the law

Scotland and Wales have taken steps in the right direction for Children's Rights to become part of the law, but all four countries are a long way away from doing this fully.

We are also worried about the possibility of the UK Government getting rid of the Human Rights Act. The Commissioners want to see children's rights at the heart of our legal system.

2. Child poverty

We are worried that too many children are living in poverty and that this will get worse. The amount of money to support the poorest families has also gone down.

Most children in poverty have at least one parent who is working but they still don't have enough money to support their family. Some families are living in bed and breakfasts and are having to get food from charities because they can't afford their own.



3. Keeping children safe

People should work together and share what they know to make sure children are protected — which does not always happen.

Any child who experiences abuse should get the right help quickly. Children's views should always be listened to when coming up with ways to help. Anyone who works with children should be trained to make sure they know how to understand children's views.



4. Children with legal problems

Children and their families should be able to get free help from lawyers if they need it. We are very worried about the impact on those who are not able to get this.

Also, some children who have to go to court are treated as if they were adults and are kept in places which are not suitable for them. In England and Wales children also don't always get the privacy they should have.

5. Mental health services

Not enough importance is placed by the UK Government on mental health services for children and young people. This often means those who need help can't always get it when they need it.

Children with mental health problems are sometimes told to stay in places only adults should stay.



What happens next?



This report gets published and sent to the United Nations Committee on the Right of the Child to help come up with a list of questions for the UK Government.



The Committee meets the Children's Commissioners and other people to set the list of questions.



The UK Government is questioned by the United Nations Committee. The Committee will then make recommendations to improve children's rights in the UK.



Scotland's Commissioner for Children & Young People



Get in touch if you would like to know more:

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