

The Right Way: Children's Rights in the Early Years

*Training resource for Early
Years practitioners*



Comisiynydd
Plant Cymru
Children's
Commissioner
for Wales

How to use this workbook

'The Right Way: Children's Rights in the Early Years' is a partner resource to the ['Children's Rights Activities for Early Years Settings'](#).

This training is split into two parts, and can be completed as an individual or group. You will need access to this **PowerPoint** to complete the training.

For more information about the Children's Commissioner for Wales and other resources you can visit: www.childcomwales.org.uk

Part One

In part one you will:

- Re-cap your knowledge of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)
- Learn about the Children's Commissioner for Wales and her powers
- Explore and think about how children's rights link to your role as an Early Years practitioner

Part Two

In part two you will

- Learn about our children's rights framework
- Think about the principles of our framework and what your setting is already doing
- Think about changes and ideas you would like to introduce to your setting

If you are taking part in this training as an individual, take some time to reflect on your learning in Part One. If you are taking part in this training with others, take time to reflect together before starting Part Two.

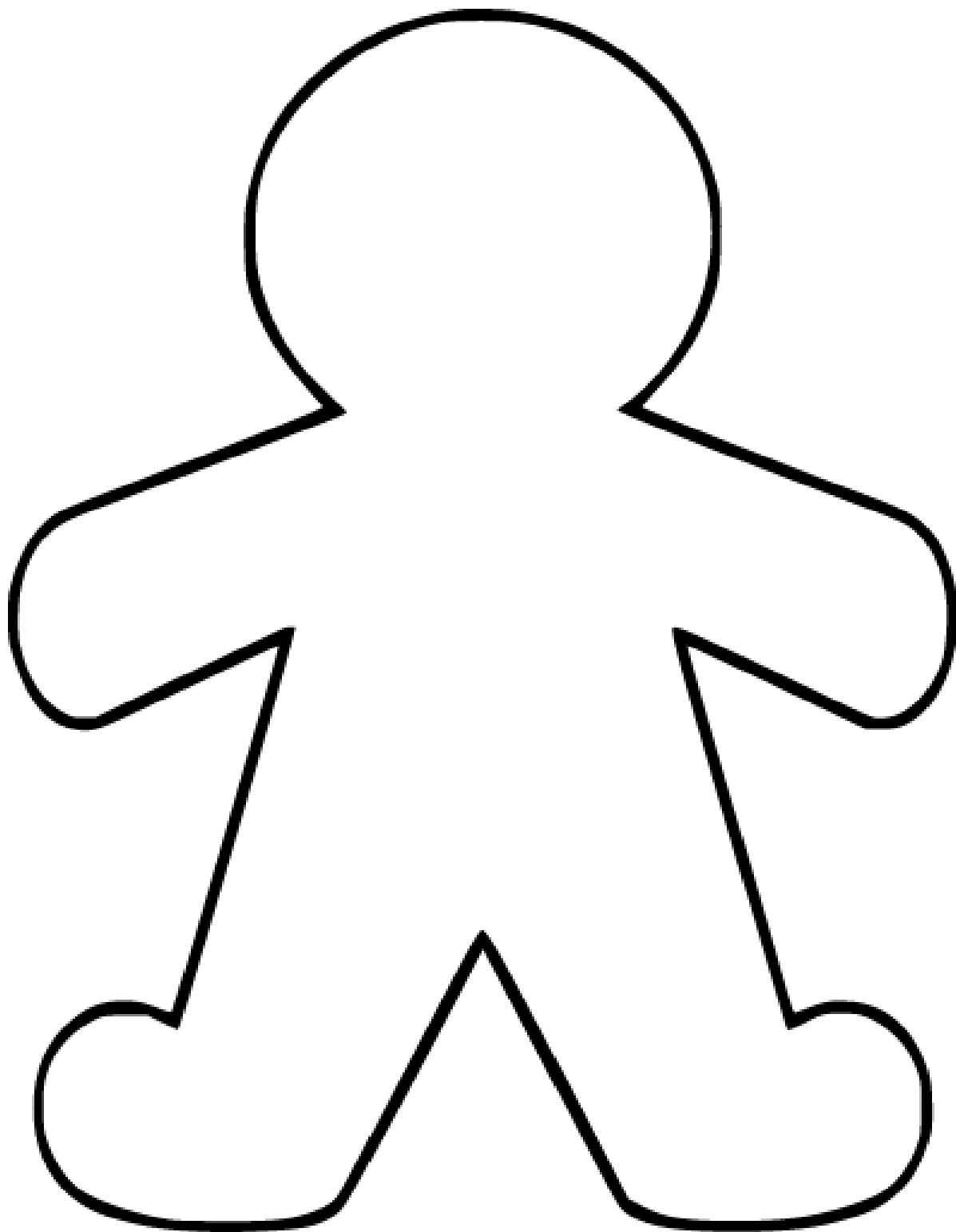
Before you start:

Open the following resources to support your learning:

- [Know your rights poster](#),
- [Symbols pack](#)

Activity 1: What do children need to grow up happy, healthy and safe?

Think about what children need to grow up feeling happy, healthy and safe. Write your answers inside the body. Once you've finished follow the PowerPoint.



Activity 2: Children's rights Quiz

Write your answers to the questions in the boxes below. Don't worry if you aren't sure of the answer, we will explore them in the PowerPoint. We've included an extra box for comments once you've found out the correct answer.

Question	My Answer	Comments
How many rights do children have?		
What age does the UNCRC cover?		
How long has the UNCRC been a convention?		

Activity 3: Children's rights and you

Which rights could be important to your role as an Early Years practitioner? Using a ["Know Your Rights"](#) poster, read through the articles and think about which three are most important to your role.

Write your answers below:

Children's Right	Why I think it's important

Activity 4: Making rights a reality

Take a look at the articles in the table below. What do you do to make this right a reality for children in your setting?

Article	How do I make this right a reality?
Article 8: I have the right to an identity	
Article 16: I have the right to privacy	
Article 19: I have the right to be protected from being hurt or badly treated	
Article 24: I have the right to clean water, healthy food, a clean environment and good healthcare	
Article 29: I have the right to be the best I can be. Education must help me to develop my skills and talents to the full.	
Article 31: I have the right to relax and play	

End of Part One

You have now completed Part One of the Right Way: Children's Rights in the Early Years training.

Before moving on to Part Two take some time to reflect on what you have learned in Part One.

You could do this reflection as an individual or a group. Use the following prompts to support your reflection:

- One thing I didn't know before the training
- Something I would like to learn more about
- The following rights are important to me as an Early Years practitioner

My thoughts about Part One of the training:

Part Two - The Right Way Principles

In Part Two of the PowerPoint we reference the following resources for each principle:

- An explanation of the principle
- Ideas and resources to support the principle
- Questions to support you with your thinking

You can find all of the information you need in this workbook.

We will go through each principle and then provide you with space to think about how your setting already supports this principle. We've also provided you with space to think about things you might want to change or introduce to your setting.

You can also find interesting practice ideas on our [website](#).

Principle 1: Embedding Children's Rights

What does embedding children's rights mean?

Children's rights should be at the core of your settings planning and delivery. All practitioners, including any trustees/ office based staff should understand the UNCRC and why it is important to the work in your setting. Policies and procedures should be revisited to ensure that they are consistent with the principles of the UNCRC. It should be clear where children's rights have been taken into account.

Ideas and resources to support this principle:

- Take part in this **Right Way training** and fill in our [Menu for Change](#).
- **Information for parents and guardians** – link children's rights to the information you send home. For example, you could link Article 24 the right to healthy food to menu choices for food and snacks. You could also share our [guide for parents and guardians](#).
- **Policies and procedures** - Link children's rights to your policies and procedures. For example, you could include Article 19 in your safeguarding policy. You may have thought about this in part one of the training.
- **Link rights to areas in your setting.** For example, you might link Article 24 the right to healthy food and clean water to the water/ snack area. You could do this by using our [symbols cards](#) or making your own symbols.
- **Display boards about children's rights.** This could be a board with an overview of all children's rights or focus on one right at a time. We include ideas to support this in our [Children's Rights Activities for Early Years Settings](#).
- **Posters** - you can use our [Happy, Healthy and Safe](#) poster for children and our Know Your Rights posters for adults to understand children's rights.
- Run our [activities](#) in your setting.

- Create a **charter** with children in your setting (there's an example in the PowerPoint).

Questions to think about:

Do your staff team and adults who support your work know about children's rights?

Are your policies and procedures linked to children's rights?

Do you link rights to areas of your setting for children to recognise?

Which rights could you link to different areas in your setting?

How do you share information about rights with parents/ carers?

Embedding children's rights and my setting

Using the questions on page 10, think about what you already do as a setting.

You should also think about what you could do better, write down notes to help you create your Menu for Change.

What do you already do in your setting?

What could you do better?

Other thoughts about Embedding Children's Rights

Principle 2: Equality and non-discrimination

What does equality and non-discrimination mean?

Equality is about ensuring that every child has an equal opportunity to make the most of their talents and develop to their fullest potential, and that no child has to endure poor life chances because of discrimination. Many children and young people in Wales face discrimination in education settings. Sometimes children face discrimination due to their identity, for example, children and young people can experience bullying due to disability or because they are a member of a minority ethnic community.

Ideas and resources to support this principle:

- [Sam's Story](#) - You could use ideas from our anti bullying lessons to explore this topic with children in your setting.
- [Here I am](#) – You could use ideas from our Here I Am resources to help children explore their identity.
- Ensure any pictures you use in setting / role play corners are diverse and representative of all children in Wales: this includes different family forms, disability, ethnicities and religion.
- Involve families – encourage families to play an active role in their child's time at nursery. This could be by holding family breakfast mornings or stay and plays.
- Involve the local community – you could welcome members of the community into your setting to share their culture and experiences with children.
- Take time to learn about and understand different religions and cultures so you can ensure your activities are authentic and accurate.

- Ensure that crayons/ paints/ pencils in your setting are reflective of all skin colours

Questions to think about:

How do you celebrate the differences of children in your setting?

Do you need to build on your own understanding of different religions or cultures to ensure you are representing them accurately?

How do you ensure that children see themselves and people like them represented in your setting?

How do you promote an inclusive ethos which values the diverse culture of Wales?

How do you provide appropriate opportunities to experience aspects of different culture in authentic contexts?

How do you ensure all families feel welcome? Do you ensure the forms, displays, information and language used is inclusive of single parents, same sex parents, adoptive parents, kinship carers and foster carers?

Equality and non- discrimination in my setting

Using the questions on page 12 and 13, think about what you already do as a setting.

You should also think about what you could do better, write down notes to help you create your Menu for Change.

What do you already do in your setting?

What could you do better?

Other thoughts about equality and non-discrimination

Principle 3: Empowering Children

What does empowering children mean?

Human rights should empower children. Empowerment means enhancing children's capabilities as individuals so they are better able to take advantage of rights, and to engage with, influence and hold accountable the people and organisations that affect their lives. Children should be able to make choices and to affect outcomes for themselves.

Ideas and resources to support this principle:

- Link children's rights to stories and books - You could focus on your setting's favourite books or choose classics like the story of The 3 Little Pigs (rights to a home, to family, to be safe). We use the story of The 3 Little Pigs and recommend other useful books in our [activity pack](#).
- Right of the Month – You could introduce a right of the month. You could create a display board to share this information with parents/ carers and visitors and encourage them to talk about the right of the month at home. We have some right of the month ideas [here](#).
- [Activities](#) – You can use our activities to explore children's rights with the children in your setting. Ensuring they have understood the key messages and have an opportunity to have their say.

Questions to think about:

Do children in your setting know about their rights?

What can you do to enhance children's understanding of their children's rights?

Do you give the children in your setting a chance to identify and express any issues they'd like to change?

Do the children in your setting get information in a way that they understand?

Do you provide opportunities for children to engage in your settings policies and processes? (This could be as simple as the time table and order of the day)

Empowering children and my setting

Using the questions on page 15, think about what you already do as a setting.

You should also think about what you could do better, write down notes to help you create your Menu for Change.

What do you already do in your setting?

What could you do better?

Other thoughts about empowering children

Principle 4: Participation

What does participation mean?

Participation means listening to children and taking their views meaningfully into account. All children should be supported to freely express their opinion; they should be both heard and listened to. Children's views will need to be taken into account and given due weight in light of their age, but young age is no reason for discounting children's opinions or for giving them less attention in decision-making processes.

Ideas and resources to support this principle:

- Responsive planning/ Planning in the moment – If you use responsive planning/ planning in the moment then you are actively listening to children in your setting.
- Choices train/ Caterpillar of choices – some nursery setting use items like caterpillars or trains to support children to make decisions about their day. Children can choose which activities they take part in and in which order they do them. Children can also choose when they have their snack/ drink break.
- Circle time discussing what they'd like to do and how they would like to do it

- Drawing pictures to choose activities – children can draw pictures to explain what they would like to change in their setting.
- Displays with the voice of the children in your setting

Questions to think about:

How do you ensure children in your setting are heard and understood?

How do you respond to children's interests, likes and dislikes?

As practitioners how do you support children to have their "voice" heard (verbal and non-verbal)?

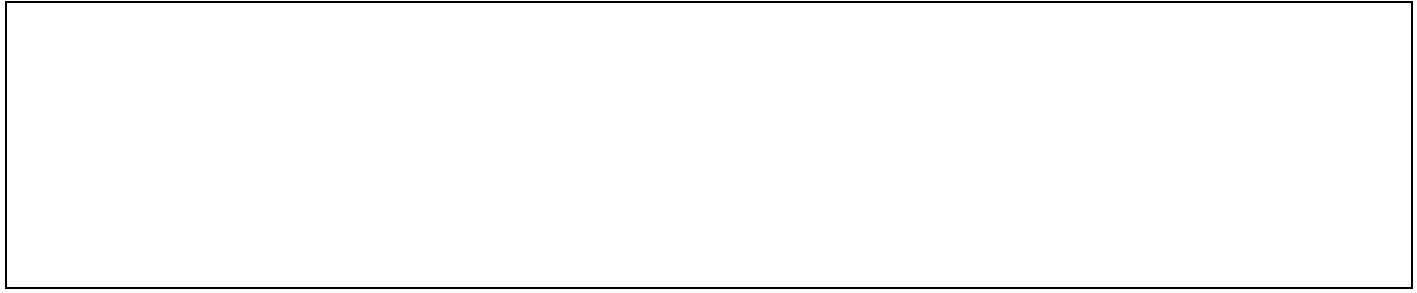
How do you listen to the voice of the child?

Participation and my setting

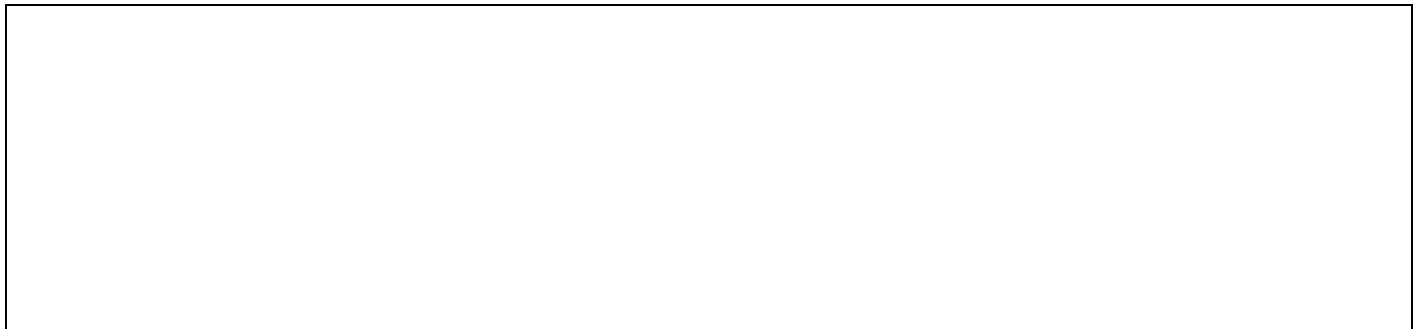
Using the questions on page 17, think about what you already do as a setting. You should also think about what you could do better, write down notes to help you create your Menu for Change.

What do you already do in your setting?

What could you do better?



Other thoughts about participation



Principle 5: Accountability

What does accountability mean?

All staff have responsibilities and make decisions and actions that impact on children. Children should be provided with information and given access to procedures which enable them to question and challenge decisions that have been taken in settings. For this to be effective settings need to be transparent and provide reasons for their decisions and actions. Wherever possible these should be linked to children's rights.

Ideas and resources to support this principle:

- Writing up the answers – you could have a dedicated space in your nursery for writing up requests from children. You should explain to children that you are writing it on the board so you can see if you can make it happen. Be honest with children about things that won't be possible.
- You said/ we did – this is a really helpful way to feedback to children in your setting after they have given you their opinion. You can remind them what they told you and tell them what you changed/ what happened with this information.

Questions to think about:

Do you give feedback to children on opinions they have shared?

Do you show the children how you have used what they said to make a difference/plan for the future?

Do you provide accessible information to children about changes they have influenced?

Accountability and my setting

Using the questions on page 19, think about what you already do as a setting. You should also think about what you could do better, write down notes to help you create your Menu for Change.

What do you already do in your setting?

What could you do better?



Other thoughts about accountability

Menu for Change

After completing all the sections in this training. Use our menu for change to help you create an action plan. There is more information on the PowerPoint to support you with this section.

Starters – One thing you will change/ work on this week:

Main course – One medium term goal you will change/ work on in the next 3 months:



Dessert – one longer term goal to work on in the next year:

If you are working as part of a team you might want to bring together a number of goals under each heading. You should allocate a member of staff to each goal/ action.