

Tuesday's Talk on Child Rights



The Campaign for US Ratification of the
Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Do you have the Winning Message?

Yes, it's true that the U.S. is one of only two countries in the world that has not ratified the CRC. This alone, however, is not the reason why the U.S. should ratify this international treaty for children.

We know that you have seen and are familiar with the positive impacts the CRC has had around the world. The CRC has helped establish universal primary education in countries like India and Uganda. Systems and laws have been established in many countries to protect unaccompanied children in times of war and natural disasters. Countries like Sudan, Indonesia and Haiti have established standards for responding to children who become separated from their primary caregivers.

In countries like Sweden, France and the U.K., juvenile justice systems have strengthened policies and programs to better train social workers and judges to fully understand and use the best interest of the child principle.

There are numerous examples of how the CRC over the past 20 years has positively influenced change for protecting and upholding children's rights.

We also know that some of the core rights within the CRC, like the right to expression, the right to assemble, the right to access information, and the right to participate are there because of U.S. influence during the drafting of the CRC under the Reagan Administration. These rights are the foundation of our own Constitution—our own traditional, American values.

Despite the above, we still know that nearly 25% of the U.S. population has never heard of the CRC. Those that have, wonder why it is necessary to ratify such a treaty if the U.S. has some of the best laws and protection systems for children around the world. And, this is where **YOU** come in....

Can you help shape our message by brainstorming with us why you think the CRC can positively impact: Children, Parents, the U.S. as a whole, your state, and U.S. Global relations?

The Campaign is launching a **COMPETITION** to find the best and well-constructed message that is fully rooted in American values. Here is what you need to do:

1. **Develop a one-line sentence or slogan that illustrates why the CRC is important and how ratification will impact the U.S.**
2. **Develop a message for each of the following categories:**
 - **How the CRC will positively impact children in the U.S.**
 - **How the CRC will positively impact parents in the U.S.**
 - **How the CRC will positively impact the U.S. as a whole**
 - **How the CRC will positively impact your state**
 - **How the CRC will positively impact U.S. Global Relations**
3. **Be creative: send us your ideas by text, video, song, podcast, pictures (Videos, songs, and Podcasts should be no longer than 3 minutes, and should clearly highlight the key message.)**
4. **Send messages to Marty Scherr, Co-Chair of the Campaign, at: marty@childrightscampaign.org or Jessica Lenz at: jlenz@childrightscampaign.org**

The winning messages (there will be 5) will be used in the Campaign's awareness-raising efforts and integrated into the overall strategy of the Campaign. Additionally, the message will be fully highlighted on our website and within our communication materials. **Your winning message will help shape this Campaign, raise awareness to the American public, and get us one step closer to U.S. Ratification!**

Sign up and
Follow the
Campaign
on

Twitter
and
Facebook

- **Twitter:**
RatifytheCRC
- **Become a**
Facebook Fan:

<http://www.facebook.com/home.php?#!/pages/Child-Rights-Campaign/106607756035085>



**Urge Your Senator to
Ratify the CRC**

Find your Senator's
contact information
on the following site:

http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

Upcoming Events and Activities

Hearing: State of the American Child

The Senate HELP Subcommittee on Children and Families is holding a hearing on **Wednesday May 19th at 10:00am in the Dirksen Building Room #430**. Witnesses include: Marian Wright Edelman (Children's Defense Fund), Harry Holzer, Ph.D. (Georgetown University and Urban Institute), Alma Powell (America's Promise Alliance), and Elaine Zimmerman (Connecticut Commission on Children)

REMINDER: CALL TO ACTION: It's Time to Go on Record

Write to your senators asking them for their position on U.S. ratification of the CRC. We need to reach every state in the country. Many members have already taken up the action alert, and senators are responding. If you need an example letter to send to your Senator, please contact Jessica Lenz, Campaign Coordinator at: jlenz@childrightscampaign.org. Once you receive a letter of response from your senator send this response to Jessica so that the Campaign can post the statement on our website. Help us put ALL the senators on Record.

Letter Campaign: ACLU and the Human Rights at Home Campaign

The Human Rights at Home Campaign is a coalition of more than 50 human rights, civil rights and social justice organizations working to strengthen our country's commitment to human rights at home and abroad. Its goal is to create a national political culture that supports and advocates for human rights. The campaign has been calling on the administration to issue an executive order aimed at increasing the effectiveness and coordination of the efforts of the executive branch to meet our domestic human rights obligations by creating an identifiable focal point for the administration's human rights activities and policy work. To send a letter to President Obama: https://secure.acLU.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=2297&s_src=UNW100001ACT&s_subsrc=100507_acLUo&JServSessionIdr004=pohabwcv1.app226a

Useful Links, Resources and Announcements

SCOTUS: Juvenile Sentencing Law Struck Down

<http://liveshots.blogs.foxnews.com/2010/05/17/scotus-juvenile-sentencing-law-struck-down/?test=latestnews>

Bryan Stevenson on Juveniles Sentenced on Life Without Parole

Video interview:

http://www.macfound.org/site/c.1kLXJ8MQKrH/b.4464457/apps/s/content.asp?ct=8398961&utm_source=pubaff&utm_medium=email&utm_content=jj_stevenson_lwop&utm_campaign=2010-05_e-annc

New York Times: Justices Bar Life Terms for Youths Who haven't Killed

<http://www.nytimes.com/?emc=na>

Text of Court Ruling: Supreme Court Syllabus Graham vs. Florida

<http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/08-7412.pdf>

New Website Link: The Human Rights of Children

The Children's Studies Program and Center at Brooklyn College/CUNY has created a new website link on The Human Rights of Children at <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/pub/departments/childrensstudies/1648.htm>. The link is designed to provide an educational resource for teachers, policy makers, and the general public, and highlights the Center's work and publications relating to children's rights.

Article 37:

"State Parties shall ensure that: (a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age."